HEALTH TRIP TO THE TROPICS

by

N. PARKER WILLIS

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HEALTH TRIP

TO

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BY N. PARKER WILLIS.

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PREFACE.

THIS volume would hardly represent truly the health-trip of which it is the chronicle, unless fragmented, as it is, with the interruptions of illness. There were intervals when the depression of disease overpowered both the enjoyment of what was around and the faculty to describe it. But the intermediate scenes and sensations were of unexpected novelty and pleasurableness—so much so, that, even without the stimulus of an habitual literary profession, I should feel called upon to record them for invalid cheering and guidance. The trip is, at least, a delightful opiate and recreation within easy reach. By what I enjoyed and described, those interested may judge of what the other parts of this tropical pilgrimage might be, to themselves. I have other notes, made as brokenly, which I may yet write out and publish—but, these being sufficient, thus far, to form a volume, I give them out in the hope that here and there a sufferer may benefit by them, at the same time claiming the kind indulgence of the reading public for their fragmented character.

N. P. WILLIS.

IDLEWILD, on the Hudson, Sept., 1853.

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LETTER No. 1.

JUNE AND GERANIUMS IN MARCH—INTELLIGENCE FOR INVALIDS—GULF-STREAM ATMOSPHERE AND ITS EFFECT ON A COUGH—BERMUDA AN ISLE OF CONVALESCENCE—TOWN OF ST. GEORGE'S, WHERE TOM MOORE WAS ONCE CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICER—NEGRO PILOT—RED-COATED SENTINELS KEEPING GUARD AMID WILD SCENERY—GROUPS OF OFFICERS UNDER ENNUI—JOHN BULL'S PERMANENT QUALITIES—TWO WOMEN TO ONE MAN IN BERMUDA—CURIOUS STREETS—GARDENS—SHOPS AND STORES WITHOUT SIGNS—PEOPLE IDLE AND HAPPY—TOM MOORE'S OPINION OF BERMUDIAN WOMEN—TRADITION AS TO THE ISLAND'S HAVING BEEN SETTLED BY LOVERS OF QUIET—PERMANENT TYPE OF ENGLISH, ETC., ETC.

Bermuda, March 12, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I date, you see, from "the vexed Bermoothes," though I write in the same cabin in which you left me at the wharf of Jersey City—a change of locality it would be as difficult for me to realise as for you, perhaps, had I not just now come off from shore, laden with the flowers and foliage of this eternal summer, and were not the ship-chandlery-atmosphere of my state-room overpowered, for the present, by the orange blossoms and geraniums which I plucked over the garden-walls in to-day's rambles. I am enjoying June, though my date says "March."

Of our voyage hither, there is little to chronicle, except for the invalids whose thronged pilgrimage this route is likely to become. The long aisle of snow, through which the pilot led us to Sandy-Hook and the ocean, promised coldly; but the air of the open sea was mild, and the quick arrival at the borders of the Gulf-Stream gave us a temperature to our mind. It is surprising what a balm for lungs is in the air of this warm channel from the tropics. After having coughed for the greater part of every night for months, I slept the night through, in the Gulf-Stream, as if stilled by an opiate. The sharper breath of the Atlantic, as we once more got out of the floating sea-weeds and warm wind, gave me back my cough, but it manifestly softens with the more genial atmosphere of Bermuda, and, for most pulmonary patients, I am told, this climate is a cure, without going to the more Southern Islands.

The trip from New York to Bermuda will be easily made within three days by the new steamer which Cunard is building for the route; but our little propeller, the Merlin, made four days of it. We left you on Monday, and on Friday forenoon we ran up the inlet which forms the access to the pretty town of St. George's. The pilot who had boarded us was a very handsome negro, and the air of natural authority with which he ordered the white sailors about, divided my attention with the winding shores through which he was our guide. A saucy looking fort gave us its tacit permission to pass, at the entrance of the inlet, and there was here and there a fortification on the way to our anchorage; but, with the exception of these military sharp angles, and the red-coated sentinels, so needlessly keeping guard over these desolate hills with their shouldered muskets, the scenery was like the wilder parts of Roxbury and Dorchester. Cedars and low bushes seemed the only vegetation, and the soil did not look very promising. Nearer the town, where it is more sheltered, the cactus made its gayer appearance.

Arrived opposite the pier, we were a long time warping up to the landing, and, by the groups of officers who had lounged down to have a look at the strangers, it was evident that events are a scarce commodity on the island. John Bull does not Bermuda-fy. He looks just as he does at home. Under a delicate bright sky, and with dry walking, he wears his weather-proof shooting jacket and double-soled shoes—the officers out of uniform looking (till you get a close look at their faces) like laborers waiting about the pier for a job. Setters and spaniels were in unusual plenty. Negro men, women and children idled about, as if work were a thing unheard of.

I will anticipate a little by giving you a statistic or two, from a Bermuda almanac for 1852, which we bought at one of the shops in our ramble. It will tell you, better than I can otherwise do, what population we were about to see. Montgomery Martin states that "there are twice as many females as males in the Bermuda Islands," and yet matrimony seems unpopular. Of the colored males in the Parish of St. George, my almanac says, 90 are married, 326 unmarried—of the females, 101 are married, 523 unmarried; of the whites, 117 men are married, 241 unmarried—114 married women, 265 unmarried; 273 dwelling-houses accommodate all these. The entire population of the Bermuda group of islands is about 11,000. They are scattered in nine parishes, and the seat of Government is at Hamilton, a port on the west side of the main island, fifteen miles from where lay our steamer. A Vice-Admiral (Sir George Seymour, in command of Her Majesty's Fleet on this side the Atlantic) makes Bermuda his station, and Captain Charles Elliott, pleasantly known to Americans, is the Governor.

We got ashore about eleven o'clock, and immediately started for a ramble through the town. After a turn or two, it seemed to me as if we were walking through unroofed catacombs, the stone walls were so close, on either side, and the windows of the houses so small and dark. The stillness of the town added to the effect, as there are no wheels to be heard—a vehicle being a rare exotic on the island. Garden-walls, and the walls of houses, were all built of the same stone, the testaceous base of the Bermudas, which is cut with a saw, like blocks of wood, and hardens with exposure to the air—so that the whole town of St. George's looks as if it might easily be a labyrinth of excavated vaults and alleys. Occupying the hollow of a curve under a hill of soft stone, this is doubtless true of parts of it.

Fresh from New York, where every business street seems broken out in a raging scarlatina of signs, it was odd to walk through streets, and look in upon stores and shops, through unornamented and plain doors and windows. The Bermudians seem to trust their goods to speak from the shelves only. Getting away from this part of the town, we wound away through long and crooked alleys between walls which shut in gardens, and here the negro population abounded. They appeared to be not only perfectly idle but perfectly happy. Every man and woman saluted us with bow and smile, and every one whom we looked at a second time had something to say. They were all out of doors, sitting, lounging, gossipping across the enclosures, idly looking at the troops of children playing in the dirt; and, of labor, there was little or no sign in the grounds and court-yards. The garden-walks were overgrown with grass, and the beds of vegetables with weeds. The lemon and orange groves were in fruit and flower, but they looked ragged and neglected, and the geraniums and roses, in full bloom on the walls, were overgrown and untrimmed. Life looked everywhere easy, superfluous and happy. It was the remark of my companion as well as myself, that a look of care and eagerness of pursuit was suddenly missing from the physiognomy around us—seen last, that is to say, in New York and Jersey. While I write, by the way, one of my fair fellow-passengers has called my attention to a remark that Tom Moore (who, it will be remembered, was, for some time, in office here) makes, as to the physiognomy of the island. "The women of Bermuda," he says, "though not generally handsome, have an affectionate languor in their look and manner, which is always interesting. What the French imply by their epithet *aimante*, seems very much the character of the young Bermudian girls—that pre-disposition to loving, which, without being awakened by any particular object, diffuses itself through the general manner in a tone of tenderness that never fails to fascinate. The men of the

island are not very civilized," etc. It is a query whether Moore made any distinction of color in this remark, as all the white inhabitants are as English as the English are at home.

On the upper streets of the town we found cottages built after the fashion of the suburbs of London, and met here and there a lady walking, with no mitigation of woolen shawl from the March wear in England—June-like as were the sky and temperature. I was prepared to see something that should look Bermudian, in the costume. Tradition says that the islands had no original population, but that Madoc, son of the Prince of Wales, "got with him such men and women as desired to live in quietness," and made the first settlement here. The "desire" seems to have remained in tolerable force, but of the Welsh cap or kirtle there is no sign. All is Woolwich-y and Portsmouth-y, even to the stick of crooked hawthorn in the hand of every walking gentleman. I write, not admiringly, however, of this permanency and definableness. English officers are, at least, all they look or assume to be, and they are to be prized, as the world goes, for adhering to their type, in all latitudes.

I cannot get out of Bermuda in one letter, I believe, so adieu for the present.

LETTER No. 2.

ENGLISH LANDLADY AT BERMUDA—ONE PUBLIC VEHICLE ON THE ISLAND—GOVERNMENT ROAD OF FORTY MILES—FASHION OF ECONOMIZING HERE—ARROW-ROOT NATIVE TO BERMUDA—NO SPRINGS NOR WELLS—NO WILD ANIMALS, AND FEW BIRDS—ENGLISH AND NEGRO HABITS IN CONTRAST—COMPLIMENT TO AMERICAN LIBERALITY—RE-EMBARCATION FOR ST. THOMAS-GETTING INTO WARM LATITUDES—FIRST EFFECT ON INVALIDS—LUXURIOUS IDLING IN SAILING IN THESE TROPICAL SEAS—BRIEFER TWILIGHTS AND BRIGHTER STARS—RUNNING ON A REEF, ETC., ETC.

Bermuda, March 13, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

"Mrs. Tucker" hangs out no sign, though any one who should by chance see her standing at her own door, would know the house for an Inn. Her smile is habitual, her eyes sharp, her person amplitudinous, and her cap of the half-mourning respectability which land-ladies wear. Her parlor received us with the usual welcome of furniture for an English public house—conch-shells and glass cases of artificial flowers on the mantel-piece, Albums on the centre-table, and a chintz-covered sofa. She had offered us dinner at two, and we had promised ourselves some luxury that should tell of the Atalantides—grapes or fruits that should acknowledge the seven hundred miles we had left behind us—but it was England's mutton and pudding, and neither orange nor fresh fig, neither pine-apple nor banana.

The town having but one public vehicle, the ladies of our party had been accommodated first, and had taken their drive while we were taking our walk, before dinner. The red-whiskered carrier of Her Majesty's mails between St. George and Hamilton, for whom such occasional livery-jobs were a perquisite of office, waited for us at the door, and we were soon out from the narrow streets, and winding among the green hills of Bermuda. The road, which looks as if a wheel did not pass over it once in three months, was as smooth as a floor, and, being a Government work, is laid out and constructed with the taste and completeness of a park. There are forty miles of it altogether, and it seems designed only to develope and give access to the beauties of view and scenery. It coquets, in and out, among the hills

which line the shore, and the glimpses of this wonderfully brilliant blue sea, with the foreground of lavish vegetation, and the distant foam upon the coral reefs which encircled the island, are beautiful indeed. Such roads and scenery, with such perpetually fine weather for driving, are an unknown combination of luxuries to the English at home, and yet there is scarce such a thing as a private pleasure-vehicle on the island. Our driver explained it by saying that "nobody came to Bermuda for anything but to economize."

Arrow-root is here at home. Seeing some negroes at work, digging in a field, we stopped to look at it—owing the compliment of a call to the long-tried and nutritious friend of our children and invalids. It is a long root, and grows wrong-end upwards, like a carrot, with ready prodigality. In this genial clime thrive also coffee, indigo, tobacco, and every fruit and vegetable of the tropics, and we saw plants and foliage rare to us at every turn—the walls edged with prickly pear, and, by the road-side, geraniums flowering wild, cactuses and palmettos, orange, lemon and fig-trees. The voyage seemed short which had brought us from bare trees, cold wind and snow, to such summer air and perennial vegetation.

Bermuda has no fresh water, except what comes from the clouds; and quite a feature of the island is the whitewashed slope of the tank, which everywhere supplies the house. Perhaps it is owing to this want that there are no wild animals, and very few birds upon the island.

On our return towards the town, at five or six o'clock, we met the officers and ladies on their afternoon promenade, a mile or two from home —their bright, untropical complexions showing that they were well repaid for preserving their national habits of exercise. Their tea-tables probably assembled them afterwards, for there was no sign of an evening promenade, even to listen to the military band. The merry negroes alone seemed enough enamoured of the climate to stay out of doors without an errand. I understand, by the way, that this is a sort of black man's paradise—the usages, indulgences, standards of conduct, habits and easy means of subsistence, combining, with the respect which John Bull pays to the dark skin, to make life in Bermuda very much to Cuffee's mind. Few who leave it stay long away. They are certainly, as seen in the streets of St. George's, the most happy, saucy, careless and good-for-nothing looking population I ever saw.

We found, on getting on board, that the Admiral, Sir George Seymour, had paid his respects to the name that sent out the Arctic Expedition, by leaving his card for Mr. Grinnell. Five of our passengers had left us, two English Army-Captains, a Bermuda lawyer and his wife, and one invalid;

and thirteen of us remained for the voyage Southward. We got under way the next morning at nine, and with our black pilot to see us safely through the reefs, put out from the green inlet into the smoothest of summer seas. Sea-sickness pretty well over, the wind fair, the air upon deck delicious, our propellor ensuring us six miles in the hour, and the breeze three or four more, we are all content to see the Merlin's beak pointed steadily for the Tropics, and care little for the ground-swell of the ocean.

March 15.—We cannot find clothes thin enough to-day. The thermometer by the open port-hole in my state-room, on the cool side of the ship, ranges from seventy-eight to eighty. The trade wind has brought us along very steadily, and we are now, in our third day from Bermuda, hoping, to reach St. Thomas by midnight. The heat of these tropical seas is singularly debilitating. A sense of unsuppliable gone-ness is complained of by every one. For me, it has somewhat loosened my cough, but brain and limb seem saturated with utter helplessness. Food gives no strength, and sleep only seems to exhaust and weaken. What health is to be found in so prostrating a clime, I shall know, perhaps, when it has wrought its changes upon me—but for the present, I feel sailing towards an equator of inanity.

Our company on board is as agreeable a variety of people as often chances together. We have two ladies who would be the charm of any society, bound on a voyage of health; a couple of courteous Virginians on the same errand; a Barbadoes merchant and his Creole lady; two or three young gentlemen of the ornamental class, and one or two well-matured citizens of the world—an every day breakfast and dinner party, with which one would compromise to summer or winter. We lounge all day on our cushions under the awning, wanting only a little steady grass under us, and a little more energetic atmosphere above us, to make it pass for a three-day *fete champetre*, of the Boccacio quality.

The sudden twilight, which drops over the day in this latitude like a stage curtain, interrupted my letter; and after an hour or two of gazing with new eyes upon the old constellations, which burn so much brighter for these seas than for ours, I went to bed. A heavy crash, and a continued bang of something against the bottom of the vessel awoke me, and my more watchful companion came down below with the news that we had run upon a reef, in approaching St. Thomas, and our propellor was disabled. The passengers, who were mostly on deck, were somewhat alarmed, but the

night was fortunately calm, and the sails sufficed to take us off from the shore we had shaved a little too closely. We are at present becalmed some ten miles from St. Thomas, and have breakfasted on board very much against our will. A row-boat has been sent up to the town with the mails, and we hope for a breeze to follow it. An old sea-captain happened to be among our passengers, and two gentlemen who have made many voyages, and passed their lives in pursuits of commerce; and they have volunteered a letter to Captain Cope exonerating him from blame in the matter, and attributing it partly to defective charts, and partly to the neglect of the man on the forward look-out. It is the agreeable news of every ten minutes, at present, that "she don't leak," though, with a higher sea and a different wind, she would have knocked a hole in her bottom with the descent upon the reef that broke only the propeller. This being the great sea for sharks, we should probably have been digested, by this time.

News of a sail-boat coming off. Adieu for the present.

LETTER No. 3

BECALMED WITH A BROKEN PROPELLER—TAKEN OFF BY A NORWEGIAN CAPTAIN IN HIS SAIL-BOAT—KIND TREATMENT ON BOARD—TEN-MILE COURSE TO ST. THOMAS—NORWEGIAN BREAD AND CHEESE—FRENCH STEAMER TOWING UP THE MERLIN—DISTANT ASPECT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS—TRANSPARENCY OF ATMOSPHERE AND CURIOUS EFFECT ON PERSPECTIVE—HILLS LIKE A SHELF OF SUGAR-LOAVES—HARBOUR LIKE A MOUNTAIN SEA REACHED BY BALLOON-SHIPS—DANISH GUNS, NOT CANNIBALS, TO RECEIVE US—COCOA-NUT GROVE ON THE WHARF—SUPER-LUXURIANT TREE—NEGRO LOAFERS LIKE BLACK DON-CÆSAR-DE-BAZANS—PHYSIOGNOMIES UNTOUCHED BY CARE—HAPPINESS AS A GROWTH OF THE TROPICS, ETC., ETC., ETC.

St. Thomas, March 19, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

The sail that bore down upon us yesterday, as we lay becalmed with our broken propeller, had a cool-looking cockswain in the stern—a gentleman in white grass jacket and trousers, and a straw hat, who was in odd contrast with *you*, the last man I had seen at the port I had come from, buttoned up to the throat in your pilot-cloth overcoat. I mentally put you two, and the two climates together. He turned out not to be a "Virgin-Islander," however. It was Captain Peterson, of the ship Christian, of Copenhagen, who, hearing of our disaster by the boat we had sent on shore, had done as his countryman Ole Bull would have done—manned his boat to come off and bring up the delayed passengers to St. Thomas. He ran alongside, and his offer was gladly accepted. The baggage was passed down; but as the ladies were preparing to embark a steamer was observed coming from the direction of the port, and, on the probability that it was one which had just arrived and was coming to tow up the Merlin before letting off her steam, they concluded to remain.

Three of us took our seats with the manly-looking Norwegian, in the stern of his jolly-boat, and, putting up his helm he ran off upon a side-wind for St. Thomas. The light breeze took a small craft along very buoyantly, and we were soon smelling the shore, and beginning to be found again by open-air appetites. An hour after leaving the ship's side, the captain ordered aft a capacious basket which one of his men had under charge, and gave us a

most acceptable specimen of hospitality—under the Norwegian flag—a bottle or two of Sauterne, with some jugs of Seltzer water; a loaf of sweet rye bread, baked on board his ship, with a delicious old cheese, and some excellent butter; and a glass of the purest of Cognac, for a *chasse-tout* afterwards. Even Blue Beard, the pirate, (along whose caves upon this his island we were skimming so swiftly,) never relished lunch more. Our friend spoke English very well, and was the model of a frank, agreeable, open-hearted sailor; and upon that three hours' sail my companions agreed with me that we should always look, as one of those chance pleasures that overbalance the misfortune they grow from.

For the latter part of our course the wind was ahead; and while we tacked in to the harbor, our steamer passed us, towed by a French steamer of war. We did not arrive quite as soon as we should have done by staying on board, though we had seen the coast of the island to much more advantage, and were otherwise well reconciled to our delay. I studied the look of the St. Thomas islands very constantly on our approach. Unclad in any visible atmosphere, their edges from a distance, look as sharp as cut pasteboard; and, as you near them, their bald round tops, without vegetation, remind you of the shaved heads of a group of patients in a lunatic asylum. It is strange to a northern eye, and like a new sight, to see so far and so clear. We could count the leaves of the cactuses on both sides of the harbor, as we ran in, and perspective seemed suddenly abolished, so equally near seemed every house along miles of receding shores.

An ant, taking a walk on a shelf of sugar-loaves, and stopping in an open space where one had been taken out would have nearly the same relative geography around him, as a boat in the centre of the harbor of St. Thomas. It really looks as if you might stand on the summit of any one of the half dozen hills around, and toss a number of the *Home Journal* (sealed up for the mail) on board any ship in the harbor. The fifty or sixty sail at anchor lie very close, their many colored flags of all nations giving them a very gay appearance, and the numberless boats, plying constantly between them, enlivening the scene exceedingly. Coming from that most unshaded and unoccupied spot on earth, the open sea, we seemed suddenly to have slid into a mountain market-place, with a basin of water in its deep-down bottom, and vessels that must have come thither as balloons. It is a harbor with a strangely mountainous physiognomy.

The guns of His Majesty of Denmark's Moorish-looking castle gave us a stare as we passed before them, and the sentries on the walls, pacing backward and forward, in the hot cloth caps and uniforms of a northern

clime, gave us the comfortable assurance that the Caribs were driven out and no cannibal was expecting to sup upon us. A few rods from the shore, we found ourselves in the range of an avenue of most wonderfully luxuriant foliage, new to my eye, which our steersman informed us was a cocoa-nut grove; and this shades the two sides of St. Thomas's principal wharf. Never eat cocoa-nut again without a sigh to the memory of its mother! It is the most prodigally beautiful tree that gives its children milk under the sun. The fruit clings near the trunk in clusters, and over it bends, in an emerald so vivid and brilliant as to look newly created that hour, the broad and expanded plume-leaves—as superfluous as a mother's heart in their overladen luxuriance. For a similitude of anything more beautiful than was strictly called for, speak of the leaf of the cocoa-nut. I give it to you for your next song, my dear Morris.

A dozen boats met us, twenty yards from the pier, manned by clamorous negroes, eagerly begging to be engaged to carry baggage to the Hotel; and the end of the wharf was packed with a close crowd of them, all competitors for the same job. Their efforts to establish something to be recognized by, were drolly ingenious. Crooks of the finger over the nose, twists of the mouth, grimaces, appealing looks, and pantomimic gestures of every description, were offered to us as mnemonics on which to hook a promise. I was agreeably disappointed in their physiognomies. They were mostly of the small and delicate Spanish features—like well-descended Castilians with black skins—and there was nothing African, or plebian in their aspect or demeanor. Hat, shirt and trousers were their only articles of dress; and, with their slight forms and small waists, their white rags, relieved by the black skins which they enveloped, were far from inelegant. By the expressions of their faces, their hearts, like their teeth, seemed exempt from the ordinary human liabilities; and they seemed, dirty and in tatters as they all were, to

"come from a happy land
Where care is unknown."

I set foot on the shore with a feeling that the climate might give something of this, even to the stranger. In the two days I have now been here, it has grown upon me, and I fancy that to-be-happy-without-asking-questions may be a plant indigenous to the island. I smell it in the perfume that comes out from these near hills at night-fall. You shall have a seed, if I can get it.

The schooner Mary Emeline, a fast schooner, sails in twenty minutes for New York. Mr. Wetmore, her owner, has kindly permitted me to write, up to the last moment of her stay, with a promise to bag my letter without fail. The

time is so nearly up that I must say adieu, adding only that we sail probably for Martinique, Guadaloupe and Barbadoes, to-morrow or day after. My friend, Mr. G., says my cough is backing out from this warm climate, and I quote him, for I have found other things more agreeable to keep the run of.

Yours, thermometer at eighty.

LETTER No. 4

THE PROPER NAME OF "ST. THOMAS"—EARTHQUAKE SEASON JUST NOW—HEAVY PORTMANTEAU CARRIED ON THE HEAD—THE HOTEL AND ITS PECULIARITIES—WINDOWS WITHOUT SASHES OR GLASS—MULATTO CHILD'S BATH—TROPICAL INDIFFERENCE TO OBSERVATION—WALK THROUGH THE PRINCIPAL STREET DURING THE TOWN'S SIESTA—NEW WRINKLE OF ENTERPRISE IN "DRUMMING"—SIGNS BY WHICH THEY KNOW AMERICANS—NEGRO FUNERAL—CHAIRS IN MOURNING—SORROW AT INTERVALS—WHITE GOWNS AND BLACK SHOULDERS—UN-AFRICAN CAST OF FEATURES—REASON FOR TENDENCY TOWARDS THE WHITE MAN'S LOOK—CURIOUS TRIBUTE OF ADMIRATION FOR VIRTUE, PAID BY AN AFRICAN PRINCE TO A GOOD MAN—BURIALS—EFFECTS OF THE CLIMATE ON EUROPEAN HEALTH, ETC., ETC.

St. Thomas, West Indies, March 20, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I should date my letter more properly "Charlotte Amalia"—that being the Danish designation of the town in which I write—or "Tappus," which, in old times, was its more vulgar designation—St. Thomas being about as authentically the name of it, as "Manhattan" is the name of New York. There seems but one reason why St. Thomas is the better name. No spot on earth has ever suffered so frequently from hurricanes and earthquakes, (of the latter of which, this month, by the way, is the particular season.) To live here with any comfort, one must be incredulous that hurricane or earthquake will ever happen again—and St. Thomas was the unbelieving Apostle. The news of this morning is, that there was an earthquake last night which lasted 42 seconds. So, St. Thomas be it!

To begin where my last letter left off—with our landing on the cocoa-tree pier. The negro who had succeeded in making me smile, (and to whose rights, thereupon, to my acquaintance and custom the rest of the sable crowd quietly yielded,) had my large portmanteau placed on the top of his head, took my carpet-bag in his hand, and started for the hotel. What with books and summer and winter clothing, the weight on the spine of that fellow was at least one hundred pounds; yet he walked easily under it, while my chief affliction, at the moment, was the oppressiveness of my winter hat! I should have been flattened, under what he carried, like the ashes of a pastille.

At the other end of the cocoa-grove stood our Hotel—an irregular Moorish-looking structure, apparently all arches, corridors and verandas—but kept by a Frenchman, and said to be the best public house in the West Indies. "No room to be had," was our first salutation; but they finally crammed Mr. G. and myself into a narrow cell on the ground floor, with a window upon a paved court—the court being the lively home of all the spare black females of the establishment, their children, their parrots and their dogs. As I finished my last letter to you, a large negress brought out an earthen vessel of water, and proceeded to strip and wash her daughter, (a pretty mulatto child of ten years of age,) in the open court, within six feet of my inkstand—the two scolding and complaining so vociferously, all the while, that you will easily understand any lack of harmony in my grammar or cadences. Glass windows seem to be considered a superfluity in this climate. We have only a green blind with immovable open slats, and no means of shutting out either the night air or the observation of the curious. Our fair fellow passengers, two ladies from Boston, whose windows open upon the thronged veranda of the hotel, have pinned up shawls and dresses on the inside of their blinds, thus securing a little privacy at a serious expense of light and air. I notice, however, in the manners, habits and faces of all the inhabitants, an apparently entire unconsciousness of being visible to the naked eye, which I suppose must be an opiate effect of the torrid zone on the sensibilities. I will inquire of the Consul how long it takes to become acclimated in this desirable respect.

We had arrived at three in the afternoon, and white skins were out of the sun, enjoying their siesta. There was a shady side to the principal streets, which stretched away from the door of our hotel; and as the negroes seemed to be abroad in multitudes, I was tempted to take a stroll in preference to a nap before dinner. The street was narrow, and it was evident that a wheel went over it very rarely. The shops were low, and looked like rough warehouses, plastered and whitewashed; and, by the signs, I saw that most of the merchants were Germans. Their shelves of goods, indeed, reminded me of Leipsic Fair, for, nowhere else have I seen the same marvellous parade of cheap trifles and gaudy toys and eye-traps. Ready-made clothes and Panama hats seemed the next most abundant supply. There was but one apothecary, apparently, in all St. Thomas, and but one bookstore—a small demand less wonderful as to the pills than the literature. A clerk beckoned me in to one of the variety stores as I went, and expressed his modest hope that he had something for my money; and, on my sauntering return, I was spoken to by several of the shopkeepers, with questions about the news in America, followed by a recommendation of their goods—a "drumming" at

the door, which even the enterprise of Maiden Lane has not yet equalled. I found afterwards, that they know all strangers, in lumps of separate arrivals by the steamers, and that they distinguish Americans from English by our sharper eyes and invariable newness of hat.

A negro funeral was passing the door of the hotel as I re-entered. I could not understand, at first, why two chairs, with backs and legs draped in white crape, should be carried in advance by two women—but they stopped presently, and set them down to receive the coffin and rest the bearers. This was also, apparently, a breathing time for the sorrow of the mourners. I noticed that the staid gravity of sadness with which the twenty couples followed the body when in motion, was instantly laid aside when it stopped, and they fell to laughing and chatting like people at a pic-nic. The only men were the four bearers. The others were negresses in Madras turbans and white gowns—as picturesque a troop, with their black shoulders and arms in such strong relief, as could well be imagined. I looked in vain, in this procession as among the blacks on the pier, for the African features. There was no thick lips nor flat nose. A slight and elegant mould of features seemed almost universal. It is true they were of the various shades of mixed color, and the African gives a good will as well as a ready consent to a white graft upon the blood. There is an amusing historical record of this, by the way, in the "History of St. Thomas" just published by our friend Scribner. The writer speaks of the agents sent out to Guinea by Christian V. of Denmark, to purchase slaves for this island. These agents were described by Abbe Raynal as men of atrocious cruelty. But, says the writer, "the good Abbe mentions one noble exception to these agents. Such was his character for probity and philanthropy, that he was almost an object of worship. People came three hundred miles to see him; and an old prince, living at that distance, sent his favorite daughter, with abundance of gold and diamonds, that the thrice worthy Schildeross (or agent) might give him a grandson."

The book from which I have quoted is an invaluable one to invalids who think of seeking this climate, and a most careful and well written work, extremely interesting to the general reader. It is written by a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church of this place. On the subject of Burials, and on the sanitary advantages of the island, I find passages which I will add in a postscript to my letter, and then bid you adieu for the present.

> "Burials generally take place within twelve hours after death, the funerals being ordered at 5 P. M. Government derives a small revenue from all graves opened. The Jews and Moravians have graves of their own. The poor are buried at the expense of the

country treasury. Government has a burying-ground lying in the north-east of the town, in a romantic spot, for its officers and soldiers; others than these are sometimes buried there by special favor. The keeping of hearses is a monopoly granted by Government to a single individual; and only the rich, or those in good circumstances, can pay for their use. This monopoly entails a severe burden on the poor. They are obliged to convey the dead by bearers, who are not even allowed a hand-bier; which, owing to the distance of the grave-yards from the main body of the town, proves a serious inconvenience. In consequence it is difficult with the poor very often to procure a sufficient number of bearers."

"Whilst foreigners who have taken up their residence in St. Thomas enjoy a good degree of health, as a general thing, and some have remained perfectly well during a protracted abode, yet the great majority find an occasional change to more northern latitudes absolutely necessary to restore the tone and vigor of their constitutions. The continued heat of summer and winter, even with the most careful and temperate, ultimately debilitates the system, and induces disease either intermittent fever, or, more especially, bowel complaints. There are very few exceptions to this, and we believe the remarks apply to all the West India Islands. Hence European and American residents are continually leaving the island for a short sojourn of a few months, during summer or winter, in their native countries. They almost invariably return with improved health to remain a few years, and then repeat the change. If this change of climate can be enjoyed every three or four years, we believe there is no place of residence in any country more delightful and healthy than St. Thomas provided temperance be observed, and care taken to avoid unnecessary exposure."

LETTER No. 5.

TWO MORNINGS A DAY, AND TWO DINNERS—DESCRIPTION OF WEST-INDIAN HOTEL—NO PRIVACY IN THIS LATITUDE—NEGRO FAMILIARITY—DANISH CASTLE AND RUINS OF BLUEBEARD'S TOWER—VIEW FROM HOTEL VERANDAH—DISTINCT TYPES OF BEAUTY AT ST. THOMAS—SIX RACES OF COLORED PEOPLE—BLOOD OF ALL NATIONS CONCENTRATED AT ST. THOMAS—GRECIAN NOSES AND SPANISH DELICACY OF FEATURE GRAFTED ON NEGRO STOCK—NATURE'S EXCEPTIONS—BEAUTIES IGNORANT OF ALPHABET AND STOCKINGS—CURIOUSLY CAUSED PRIDE AND STATELINESS OF DEMEANOR—PICTURESQUE DRESS OF WOMEN—LOVELY SHOULDERS AND HORRIBLE FEET—SUGGESTION TO ARTISTS TO COME AND ARREST TYPES OF BEAUTY THAT ARE PASSING, AND MAY DIE OUT WITH HIGHER CIVILIZATION, ETC., ETC.

St. Thomas, West Indies, March 22, 1852.

Dear Morris:—

We have two mornings a day, in this climate—the second one, at 3 P. M. after the siesta, just now beginning. I resisted these noon indolences, at first, but have given in. From 5 A. M. to 1 P. M. is as long a day as even a healthy man can do justice to, in an atmosphere so steeped in lassitude. The inhabitants eat two dinners in the twenty-four hours. Coffee and bread and butter are brought to one's bed a little before sunrise, and at 10 in the forenoon there is precisely such a dinner on the hotel table as is served at 6 in the evening—a bottle of claret to every man's plate, and meats, fruits and coffee, in regular succession. All the boarders assemble at this meal most punctually, and it is quite as long, conversational and hearty as dinner No. 2.

I wish I could give you an idea of the out-of-doors-y and free and easy character of this "crack hotel" of the West Indies. It has but two public apartments, a vast billiard-room and a vast dining-room. These occupy about two-thirds of the second story; but the other third is a marble-paved veranda, fronting on the bay, and this last serves the purposes of Ladies' Drawing-room, Gentleman's Parlor, Smoking-room and Bar. The ladies are receiving company in one group, while sherry cobblers are being drank in another; ices served here, coffee there, and cigars in all directions. The choice is between this publicity and a very small bed-room; and the preference for the former is unanimous. It seems to be an element of a tropical climate that

nobody can intrude. Privacy seems as much forgotten and out of its latitude at St. Thomas as are muffs and tippets. While our lady fellow-passengers were at breakfast this morning, two young gentlemen were promenading to and fro in the dining-room, with their hats on, smoking and looking at the strangers, as if wholly invisible themselves. It is impossible not to overhear the conversation of the different groups of young men on the veranda. With no sashes nor glass to the windows, there is no shutting out sounds; and the most delicate of invalids must lie on her pillow, listening to the rattle of billiard balls, the shaking of ice in glasses, the laughter and jokes of the drinkers, and, loudest of all, the eternal and vociferous chatter of the negroes—merry, undeferential and omnipresent. The man who waits on me came in to my room last night, after I had been two or three hours abed, and woke me to say that a steamer had arrived. The black laundresses talk French to me, as I sit writing at my window, opening on their court-yard. Every negro in the street will speak to you if you look at him. Your neighbors at table converse with you. Nobody is stranger to anybody. The equator seems to be not only an astronomical, but a moral and social, equalizer.

Our hotel is next door to the Danish castle or fort, which commands the Bay—or rather there is only the Governor's garden between us—and the chivalric structure, with its bastions, battlements and barbican, flag flying, and sentries pacing between the towers, forms a corner to our view from the veranda, than which nothing could be more picturesque. High on a hill to the east of it, stand the ruins of a castle, called "Bluebeard's Tower," looking feudal enough; and in front of us lies the bright bay, walled in with hills like a well, and with an opening like a broad gate to the sea. With all these romantic-looking surroundings, and with the lazy and loose climate and its habits, it is agreeable to find such a careful and modern exotic as a good French cook—but such is our felicity. The *Hotel de Commerce* is kept by a very polite and gentlemanly Frenchman; and his two dinners a day are cooked and spread with a science and variety worthy of a *table d'hote* of Marseilles or Havre. He seats about fifty persons at a meal—no extra charge for claret, finger-glasses and coffee.

Artists know very well that the *original and distinct* types of human beauty and expression are few and rare. In all the engravings of female heads, in France and England, there are not a dozen. The others are variations of these, more or less slight, but all traceable. In St. Thomas, during the four or five days that I have rambled through its streets and markets, I have surprisingly enriched my knowledge of how Nature can vary these priceless *gifts of individuality*. Faces, curiously different from any I had ever before seen, met me at every turn; and it was not till I had reasoned

a little upon the origin and habits of the people, and made some inquiries as to their races and combinations, that I could at all understand it.

My surprises, I should tell you, were all among the colored population, though of the African physiognomy, (as we know it,) with flat nose and thick lips, you hardly see a specimen at St. Thomas. They are mostly of crossed races, and the inhabitants have six general classifications, defining more or less of white blood:—the Negro, the Sambo, the Mulatto, the Mustis, the Castis, and the Pustis. The Spanish occupancy of these islands, and the neighborhood of Mexico, have largely distributed Spanish eyes and fine-cut regularity of feature, and it is in these two particulars that the dark Thomasians mainly vary from persons of color elsewhere. But, when you remember what a nucleus of voyages radiating from all the nations of the world this port is—what marked natural qualities the "bad boys" usually have who turn out sailors because too wild to live at home, the almost entire absence of virtue among this colored population, and their preference for the white man though entirely barred from marriage with him—you will easily see how the world will scarce have a type of feature or character that is not likely to be imprinted in vigorous relief on this sable ground. The variations are startling. A soft blue eye with long black lashes, such as I saw yesterday over a pair of tawny lips curved with the Alhambra's own model of Castilian scorn, looks strangely contradictory; and the singular persistence of Nature in preserving faultless teeth and raven hair to the dark Hebe, whatever other variation of feature she may have, makes them all comparatively beautiful. We think we must go to Athens or Napoli to see the straight Grecian nose, with its thin nostril, in perfection; but no sculptor could better mould one, than from the models of tan and orange which he could beckon to him from every corner of St. Thomas. The short upper lip of high descent, and the delicate small oval of the chin, are equally common. And these gifts, priceless to princesses, are here held in careless unconsciousness by fruit girls, subject to none but municipal laws—the Mustis and Pustis, whose merry eyes never saw alphabet, and whose brown ankles never knew stocking.

Before closing this chapter on colored beauty, by the way, I must mention one other peculiarity of these Virgin-Islanders. Every female is trained, from childhood, to carry burthens upon the head. From a tea-cup to a water-pail, everything is placed on the small cushion at the top of the skull. The absolute erectness of figure necessary to keep the weight where it can best be supported by the spine, the nice balance of gait to poise it without being steadied by the hands, the throwing forward of the chest with the posture and effort that are demanded, the measured action of the hips, and

the deliberateness with which all turning round or looking aside must be done, combine to form an habitual demeanor and gait of peculiar loftiness and stateliness. A prouder-looking procession than the market-women, as they come and go with their baskets on their heads, across the square below our veranda, could not be found in the world. They look incapable of being surprised into a quick movement; and are, without exception, queenly of mien—though it come, strangely enough, from carrying the burthens of the slave.

In dress, these tropical Cleopatras have but one or two ideas, but those are in character, and effective. The Madras turban is universal. The gown is invariably white—of some degree of cleanliness—and worn with no illusions, either before or behind. The neck is about as much *decollete* as a fashionable young lady's at a ball, and the flat back, and plump dark shoulders, certainly come out from the white drapery with considerable artistic effect. Although the gown is oftenest flounced with lace, the feet are usually bare; and I must record, here, the most detracting and almost invariable exception to their beauty—feet large, and unnaturally flattened with the unshod carrying of burthens. A sight of their projecting heels, corded insteps, and outspread toes, is a sad damper to the stranger's admiration.

I will close my letter with suggesting, to some artist who is a philosopher of physiognomy, the value of a visit to these latitudes, and the collecting of such types of feature and beauty as will necessarily be transient with the advance of civilization and morality, but which now might be collected in a portfolio of unequalled novelty and interest. This is the world's laboratory for experiments in the chemistry of blood, and the results are worth recording. Name it to Darley and Rossitur.

Yours, under a very hot sun.

LETTER No. 6.

LOBSTER COCKROACHES AND GRIDIRON SPIDERS—GOOD CLIMATE FOR INSECTS, BAD FOR MAN—SUNRISE EXCURSION TO MOUNTAIN-TOP—TAKING A WALK, WITH A PONY TO DO THE WALKING—COFFEE TO ENCOURAGE EARLY RISING—BEAUTY OF LIGHT ON MOUNTAIN-TOPS ONLY—LOUISEN-HOI, A MOUNTAIN-VILLA—SOIL INCAPABLE OF QUIET GRASS—TREES OF PASSIONATE AND SPASMODIC GROWTH—AIR-PLANT THAT GIVES THE TRAVELLER A CUP OF WATER—EFFECT OF STRANGE AND NEW VEGETATION, ON THE MIND—ENQUIRY INTO PERPETUAL YOUTH OF TROPICAL PLANTS—WHETHER YOUTH, MIDDLE-AGE AND OLD AGE, ALL IN ONE, IS AN ENVIABLE CONCENTRATION OF EXPERIENCE—WOMEN DO ALL THE HARD WORK IN THE TROPICS—LOADS OF STONE CARRIED ON THE HEAD, BY A PROCESSION OF GIRLS—NO LYING DOWN, OUT OF DOORS—INSECTS AND VERMIN—VAMPIRE LIZARD—TROPICAL SHARKS EAT NEGROES BUT DO NOT EAT PELICANS—VIEWS FROM THE TWO SIDES OF THE SUMMIT—HANGING ARCHITECTURE OF ST. THOMAS, ETC.

St. Thomas, West Indies, March, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

The English steamer, from which our Barbadoes packet waits to take the mail, is now three days behind her time; and till she arrive, we are making the most of latitude 17 30. Seeing the other tenants of our bed-rooms—cockroaches that have pretensions to be lobsters, and spiders on which you might lay a beefsteak, mistaking it for a gridiron—you would perhaps fancy we might feel the effect of so thrifty a clime, and grow, as do the insects, with nothing better to do. But I think, on the contrary, that I grow perceptibly thin. These nights, like twelve-hour vapour-baths, and days when the putting of two thoughts together amounts to a perspirative, are not stuff upon which I feel a tendency either to fatten or strengthen. They tell me it is so with all whites from the temperate latitudes. We wane, as the negroes wax under a tropical sun—and, if one is better for coming here, it must be as he is better for a depletive, with little of it. And, perhaps, an ordinary prescription is aided by following also the poet's genial advice:—

“In tropic climes, live like the tropic bird;
And, if a spice-fraught grove invite thy stay,
Be not by cares of colder climes deterred,” etc.

With our kind Consul for a guide, Mr. G. and I made a sunrise excursion, yesterday morning, to the summit mountain ridge which gives a view of both slopes of the island. My companions went on foot; but, with an invalid’s privilege, I was allowed to take the walk with a horse under me, (*promenade a cheval*)—a difference, which, I find, very much assists the admiration of scenery. Coffee, brought to the bedside, to open our eyes with—we contrived to be getting up hill a little earlier than the sun; and nothing could well add more to the beauty of the landscape, than to see the hill-tops first touched with gold, and the harbor below still lying in expectant shadow.

A romantic Dane built the charming villa of Louisen-hoi, on the summit of the ridge, and named it after his wife; and the winding road which reaches it is mainly of his making—a sort of staircase, up the side of the precipitous hill, which nothing but the pony of the country could safely travel with a rider. I was surprised, on the way, to see that this volcanic soil, though rich in coarse weeds and shrubs, produces no grass. The ground is bare around the stems of the wild oleanders and cactuses. The trees have the peculiarity of appearing to seek nourishment rather from the air than the earth, as their roots are generally quite out of the ground; and, on most of them, there are parasite plants, which are fed by the atmosphere, and seem to require only a standing-place where they can inhale the breeze. Our friend showed us one of these, which is called the air-plant, and which catches and retains water in the cup of its flower, giving to thirsty man a drink, valuable enough on an island where stream or spring is a rarity almost unknown.

It curiously enlarges one’s world to be surrounded with an entirely new multitude of trees and flowers. We stopped at every turn of the road to pluck some new leaf, and admire some new beauty, or some new fragrance. Everything grows differently from the vegetation in our climate. The branches oftenest seem to have put forth with passionate irregularity, and are wholly without the orderly symmetry which Nature maintains at the North.

I have taken some pains, by the way, to enquire into the perpetual youth of the foliage of the tropics. Coming from bare trees and frozen grounds so recently as we did, it hardly seemed natural to find everything as blooming and verdant as in spring or mid-summer. I find it is not unusual. There are trees which seem to rest for a month—dropping most of their leaves and putting forth no blossoms in that time. There are others which the hurricane

season finds weak, and strips suddenly, by its first tornado, though they were apparently as green as ever. There are several, however, whose youth, freshness and beauty know no repose and no winter—the cocoa-tree, the citron, the orange, the banana—beautiful creatures, every one, which bud, flower and bear fruit, all in one prodigal confusion of experience. Are they to be envied by us, with our detailed progression of existence, or not?

The women do all the monotonous and hard labor in this climate. The negroes are even the chambermaids, as well as the boatmen, drivers and tide-waiters; but the negresses bear the heavy burthens out of doors. They unlade coal-vessels by a troop of women, who carry baskets, of the incredible weight of two hundred pounds, upon their heads, the men only lifting their baskets for them, and working the windlass which hoists the lading from the hold. As we approached Louisen-hoi, the road was undergoing some repairs, and the stone, which was taken loose from the soil, was to be used in a wall some fifty feet above. Two men were overseeing the job—one, who seemed to be the pathmaster, and stood looking on; and another, who directed the loading of the heads of seven negresses, with fragments of rock, and then walked before them in slow procession to the place of deposit. The poor barefooted girls, straight as arrows, and as deliberate as priestesses in their gait, were submissively patient and grave; and I thought, as I looked at them from a little distance, that you would have to explain, to a new visitant to this planet, that they were not nobler, in their employment and demeanor, than the merchants walking hurriedly and ungracefully about the market-place below.

No man lies down under a tree, in this climate. The ants, lizards, toads and snakes, are in previous possession. On almost every tree, one sees an ant house, as large as a half-bushel basket; and the lizards, accustomed to be well-treated by man, coolly and deliberately walk off from any branch you may direct your hand to, but show no haste or apprehension of violence. The Consul told us there was a kind of lizard, however, of which the natives are very much afraid. Its first impulse, when surprised, is to spring to the human hand, and fasten its teeth and claws into the flesh; and, in proportion as this vampire is resisted or terrified, it deepens its hold, never loosing its clutch till it is cut in pieces. Of this awkward customer we fortunately saw no specimen.

We found the lady of Louisen-hoi rumbling about the grounds with her children, and, when the Consul presented us, she led us to the verandahs of the villa, from which we could see the ocean on both sides of the island. A most lovely bay makes in under the height, and here swam troops of

pelicans—though, why the sharks, which deter the negroes from swimming in these waters, do not gobble up these nice looking birds, as well, I could not definitely ascertain. For me, the pelican would be the better eating of the two.

I did not enjoy the two views of the ocean the less, because I cannot describe them to you. Life has pleasures, and the world has beauties, which cannot be put on paper. I may mention, however, that there was great contrast between the two views, from the difference in the foregrounds—on one side, the wilderness of a volcanic island, and, on the other, a crowded town with its ruined castles, its sentinelled strong-hold, and busy harbor, thronged with row-boats and shipping. Most of the features of this latter picture were entirely new. The houses of the town—hung against the precipices like bird cages against a wall, and with their yellow walls and red roofs—looked like the innovations of yesterday, in strange contrast with the crumbling fortifications of old time. There is a look of *renaissance* about St. Thomas—the castles old enough for the time of Columbus, and the dwellings new enough for Staten Island or Newport. To give you an idea what singularly hanging architecture is the fashion here, I may mention one new house we noticed, where the earthy bank of precipice towered twenty feet above the chimneys, while a wall sustained the basement, twenty feet below the foundations. And to this—a three-story house—there is no access, except by climbing thither on foot, or, in case of illness, being borne up or down on a hand-barrow. With the exception of one street along the water, and one or two in the bottoms of the glens, all St. Thomas is thus hung on precipices.

In riding down, my stirrups, of course, were clattering against the sides of my pony’s bit, and I was a most lengthwise demonstration, as to his body, with the effort to sit upright; but, taking it for granted that he knew the country and its accidents better than I, I threw away my whip of twisted cocoa-leaf and gave him the reins; and he dropped himself safely at my hotel door, and restored me, undamaged, to level footing. People are usually very much tired with this walk; and possibly, my pony was tired with his—but I was unfatigued, and I recommend, to all invalids at least, no ascent of mountain, in this debilitating clime, without a quadruped under the spine.

My letter is getting long. Adieu.

LETTER No. 7.

SECOND EARTHQUAKE SINCE ARRIVAL—DRIVE TO SEE A SUGAR PLANTATION—MAMMOTH COTTON-TREE—MAGNIFICENT WHITE BEARD ON AN OLD BLACK MAN—SUCKING SUGAR-STICK—PAY OF BLACK LABORERS—NAKEDNESS IN TROPICAL CLIMATES—EBONY BABIES UNDIAPERED—EXPENSIVELY DRESSED COLORED BELLES WITH BARE FEET—EMANCIPATED SHOULDERS—ODD WAY OF CARRYING A SHEEP—VILLAGE OF SUGAR-CANE LABORERS—WOMAN WITH SPARE TOE—OLD MAN HAPPY WHILE BEING EATEN BY ANTS—BLACK GIRL TAKING A SIESTA IN THE DIRT—CURIOUS PLUM—NATURAL SHERBET, ETC., ETC.

St. Thomas, West Indies, March, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I write on "*terra firma*," I believe, though we had an earthquake last night—the second since our arrival on this volcanic island. What little rocking the town gets, with these throes of nature, does not wake me, I find, though the inhabitants have a quick perception of one, and, with great precision, give you the exact number of seconds that it lasted, as the news of the morning. Strangers have usually a dread of these phenomena; but I have no presentiment of the earth's opening for me, except by spade and pickaxe.

We drove out, a mile or two along the coast, to see a sugar plantation, this morning—our vehicle an American carry-all, which is the wonder of this precipitous island, and our driver a talkative mulatto, who proudly mentions his indebtedness to one of the most distinguished lawyers of Philadelphia, for what white blood is in him. On our way, we stopped to see a cotton tree, which is considered the largest subject of His Majesty of Denmark; and which perhaps would shade comfortably a Jenny Lind audience of Tripler Hall. My friend took its measure, and found the circumference of the trunk, at ground level, forty feet. The cotton pods, just open, seemed making a million offers, each one of just enough cotton for an ear-ache. It was, altogether, a superfluous extravagant tree, with a great many unnecessary branches—a vegetable spendthrift, in fact, upon which, with my experience, I could not look but with a feeling of compassion. I took a specimen of what he produces, however, and am only sorry it will not shape, like my superfluities, into an article for the *Home Journal*.

Allow me to note one thing which I saw on the road, and which will be appreciable, perhaps, only by artists—the blackest of negroes with the whitest of beards. This *tableau-vivant* was a pauper, of about ninety, apparently, entirely black-bald, and with nothing on him except certain remainders of a pair of trousers, and a part of a shirt, his tawny chest entirely bare, and his snowy beard descending over it in waves—the effect, snowy mustache and all, worthy of the highest high-priest of an Egyptian temple. He was one of a crowd, coming from the morning mass of a Catholic chapel, and everybody jostled and passed him disregardfully—a popular unconsciousness of his extraordinary beauty, which really seemed brutal and unnatural. His face was that of a man who had dignified on animal experience only—(no reason why not, perhaps!)—and if he could have been framed, and hung up, in a drawing-room, I would have given $5000 for him, to re-sell to somebody who could afford to own him as a picture. Black old age is more picturesque than ours.

We passed through fields of sugar-cane—the plant resembling very much our Indian corn in full growth—and alighted at a mill, not just then in operation. Its principle is a general one not confined to St. Thomas,—the sweetness got out by squeezing. Our semi-Philadelphian driver cut a sugar-stick for us, and sharpened the end for us to suck. With nothing better, I could fancy it very palatable. There are no fences at the fields and anybody may cut stick and suck—so that starvation in this country is purely a matter of choice.

While my friend was inquiring into the statistics of sugar, I took a ramble through the village of huts which the plantation sustains. The negroes seemed to have as few wants, and to be about as unconsciously comfortable, as snails and caterpillars. Each family had two huts, built of sticks and thatched with straw—one for cooking and one for sleeping. I stopped at the door of one where the old woman looked communicative. She began by showing me, with some apparent pride, an extra toe which pointed like a raised finger from the centre of one of her feet, and ended by complaining that they had no bread. Her family, then present, consisted of seven persons, who slept altogether in about the space of a hotel's double bed—two grandfathers among them, and one very pretty girl of about seventeen. I have mentioned that there is no grass in this climate. The girl I speak of, lay flat on her back, on the earth at the side of the cottage, with her well-turned ebony arm over her head and only a ragged petticoat over her limbs, as entirely unmoved by a stranger's presence and observation as if she had been a statue of black marble. The immovableness of one of the grandfathers was still more remarkable, however. He sat on a rough wooden

bench, with a pleasant and habitual smile on his face—a decrepit old man—and, of his two feet, which were half-buried in the loose dirt, one was *literally rotten*. His toes were covered with sores, and the ants were upon them in hundreds—yet he leaned with his elbows on his knees, giving me a slow and tranquil look as I stopped before him, and seemed no more unhappy than a cheese with its maggots. Do we not give ourselves unnecessary trouble, with our diseases, after all?

I learned, afterwards, that these pauper laborers got half a dollar a week, for wages, and huts to live in; and have two holidays in the week, Saturday and Sunday. The old and disabled are supported by the young and strong.

Nakedness, I find, is, to a certain degree, a matter of climate. Modesty makes no note of anything under six years of age. Black babies go conveniently bare, to the end of life's first chapter. With the same fitness and adaptation to the latitude, shoes and stockings are dispensed with; and the young black girls, with ear-rings worth two or three hundred dollars, chemises edged with lace, and skirts of brilliant colors, parade in stately deliberateness, protruding, at each step, five shining toe-nails uncompressed by morocco. I must own that I think they walk more gracefully for this. White feet might not do so well, not being so independent of the dirt—but feet that are neatly blacked by nature are certainly as cleanly without "leather or prunella," and vastly more elastic and stately. Two ebony shoulders, un-liable to tan, enjoy the open air by the same philosophy; and they shine along the street, as these black swans sail past, with a luxuriance of effect unknown on the sidewalks of temperate latitudes.

We met a negro walking whistling along the road, with a sheep tied round his neck like a kicking cravat, the feet in a bow-knot in front—the struggles of the animal not disturbing his tranquility at all. Half a dozen others we saw, with their long knives, on their way to cut the sugar-cane, and all looking considerably happier than any white people I ever saw on their way to a place of amusement. I am inclined to think, heathen as they are, that these black and happy ignoramuses would only be educated into a consciousness of things to be troubled about.

I have spoken of the prodigality of this climate, in the fact that

> "Bud, flower and fruit together rise,
> And the whole year in gay confusion lies."

but it is a climate capable of simplifying matters as well. There is a plum, native to this island, which dispenses with the school and college of leaf and

flower, and ripens immediately from the bark of its tree—maturity its first stage and its last. There is also a fruit that would be interesting to Thompson—the anana, or soursop, which has a deliciously flavored pulp, as plucked from the tree, and requires only icing, to surpass the choicest of sherbets in flavor and richness. A slight squeeze, as you hold this fruit to your lips, gives you its sweetness with a delicacy beyond the spoon of the confectioner.

I fancy I have told you of new things enough for one letter, so

Adieu for the present.

LETTER No. 8.

PREDOMINATING SOCIETY AT ST. THOMAS—INVARIABLE TYPE OF GERMAN MEDIOCRITY IN CLASSES—STYLE OF DANES—NEGRO USE OF THE VOICE—DROWNED BABY, AND KEY FOR THE TUNING OF COLORED HORROR—SUNDAY AND CHURCH—WHOLE CONGREGATION OF MADRAS TURBANS—FEMALES DO ALL THE REPENTING—EFFECT OF SUCH A GORGEOUSLY DRESSED MULTITUDE OF BLACK WORSHIPPERS—WORKS IN MARBLE AND WORKS IN EBONY AS RELIGIOUS ORNAMENTS—REVERIE IN CATHOLIC CHURCH—INDISPENSABLE ARTICLE OF FURNITURE WHICH EVERY NEGRESS CARRIES WITH HER—DANISH OFFICER'S POLITENESS—HOT UNIFORMS OF SOLDIERS FROM A COLD CLIMATE—OTAHEITAN FLOWERING TREE—ARRIVAL OF ENGLISH STEAMER—RUSH OF PASSENGERS TO THE HOTEL FOR ICED DRINKS—NEWS OF THE DEATH OF MOORE—POEM AS TO THE SINS OF GENIUS—PROMISE OF SMOOTH WATER OCEAN-SAILING ALONG THE ANTILLES, ETC.

St. Thomas, March, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

Your namesake, our consul here, (Wm. Morris, of Pennsylvania,) has kindly accompanied us in our excursions, and I could give you, from his lips, a very minute account of the trees, plants and insects of the Antilles. He is a close observer, and studies well what is around him. Though most interesting to see, however, such matters are not very interesting to read about, and so I spare you. But, with your earliest "pulmonary complaint," come and see, smell, and examine them.

The predominating society, at St. Thomas, is German. The wealthiest merchants are of that nation, and the largest shops are curiously faithful copies of the booths of Leipsic Fair. Nature having no caprices in central Europe, (German tradesmen never, by any accident, looking like anything *but* German tradesmen,) the male portion of the "best society" of St. Thomas is not very ornamental. There seem to be no Danes, (Danish though be the Government,) except military men and public officials; but these have been voted, by our fair travelling companions, a remarkably handsome and distinguished-looking set of men. There are but six American families, and as few English.

The *voice* seems to be the great escape-valve for all manner of excitement, among the negroes. I rushed to the window, this morning, thinking from the sudden screaming of one or two hundred women, that the town must have been cracked open by an earthquake. The street was full of people, and, for half an hour, I watched the negresses vociferating, like furies, at each other, and with looks that I should have interpreted to indicate a quarrel between every two. One of the hotel waiters came up, after a while, and explained the cause of so much vehement talking. A new-born black baby had been found drowned in the harbor, and was laid out, for recognition, at the Police-office, a few doors above. In any other population, it seems to me, the horror inspired by such a sight would have been expressed by a hush, or an undervoiced interchange of feeling. Here it made a clamor, pitched at the highest possible key. Turn over the philosophy of the difference, at your leisure.

Sunday—and I have been to church. Following the tide of the Madras turbans flowing past the door of the hotel, I found myself at matins in a crowded Catholic chapel, the candles burning before the Virgin, and chant and prayer pouring zealously forth—but myself, apparently, the only male or white worshipper in the congregation. The females of the colored race seem to do all the *repenting*, and to do it devoutly, whatever be their share of the *sinning*. You can scarcely conceive the magnificent effect of such a multitude of turbans, each one combining the most brilliant possible colors, assembled under one roof before an altar. When the chant recommenced, and all rose to their feet, it was like an acre of tulips rising up to pray. The whitest of chemises lay loose around every pair of black shoulders; and, pendant on both sides of every draperied head, hung enormous ear-rings of gold, in strong relief upon the circles of black skin, and glittering in the imperfect light; and, altogether, the spectacle was—what shall I say?—more tropical than religious, perhaps, but artistically most impressive. Well! We are called upon to find hallowed associations in the work of man's hand in marble, on the capital of the Corinthian column—why not find a hallowed magnificence added to a church by the presence of a thousand works of God's hand in ebony, and these, too, all making responses to every appearance devout and reverential? Hours of reverie in Catholic churches are remembered, by most travellers, among the luxuries of foreign lands. I have no reason to thank St. Thomas of the Antilles less than St. Peter of Rome, for the equality before God with which I went in, as one of a crowd of fellow-sinners, and delivered myself over to the influence of the place, I was tranquillized and liberalized, certainly—edified, perhaps.

I notice a little personal convenience, which the negresses almost invariably carry with them—a small wooden cricket. Whenever they meet an acquaintance, or wish to stop and rest, down goes the cricket in the street, and they are seated and comfortable, in a trice. With their brilliantly gay dresses, it looks rather odd to see them sitting anywhere about, on the crowded squares or walks, but they have no idea of dirt on natural earth or on well-swept pavement. If they stop to rest, when alone, they oftenest throw themselves upon the ground, in a reclining position, and place the cricket under the elbow or in the hollow of the arm. Mr. G. and I stopped to admire a spacious black Venus, yesterday, who was lying in this way on the loose sand of the pier, as elegant in her pose and drapery as if she had been modelled by a Grecian sculptor.

We were strolling around the castle, last evening, when a very tall and fair-haired Danish officer, who chanced to be on duty, stepped out and invited us into his quarters. He had a large room overlooking the bay, and hung round with the engraved portraits of the distinguished men of his native land, and his centre-table was covered with books, reviews and newspapers, showing a taste for reading which a soldier sometimes contrives to do without. After a little conversation, he showed us the interior of the castle, the barracks, guard-rooms, etc., and took us up to the parapets, which beautifully command views of the town and harbor. The cleanliness and order of the Danish soldiers, and their quarters and equipments, were admirable, but they looked a little pale upon the climate. Their small cloth caps and tightly buttoned cloth uniforms looked like positive inflictions in this thin-jacket atmosphere. Scribner's newly published book on St. Thomas mentions that the trenches of this castle were formerly defended only by the cactus, whose prickly thorns would keep out any intruder unless in a coat of mail: but, at present the fortifications are all of stone and mortar completeness. In one of the cultivated corners of the grounds, by the way, I stopped to admire a fine tree, bearing a gorgeous crimson flower; and this, our courteous friend informed us, was an Otaheitan product. There is taste as well as discipline among the Danish governmentals. We parted from our friend while the sentry presented arms, very much indebted for his spontaneous and polite kindness.

24th.—The English steamer has arrived, at last—five days behind her time, and twenty-two days from Southampton. Yet this boat, (the Thames) is considered one of the finest and fastest of the line. The passengers have just come ashore, and six or eight of them are seated on the verandah of our hotel, perfectly rabid over sherry cobblers—the first Transatlantic product

jointly and severally thought of and called for. They pronounce ice, as found in the Tropics, a luxury celestial.

In a copy of the London *Times*, brought ashore by one of these gentlemen, I find the announcement of the death of Moore. I little thought, in looking up his “calabash tree,” at Bermuda, the other day, and writing gayly about him, that he was dead at the time. So passes a poet from this troubled planet! Honor to his memory! I saw, by the way, in the same paper, a poetical remonstrance against the fanatical prejudice that denied to Byron a corner in Westminster Abbey, and would now deny it to Moore—for their sins. It was dated at the “Athenæum Club,” and, of course, was written by a man whose opinions would be respected. I copied one verse, the *doctrine* of which I thought might interest you:—

“In our holiest shrine there is but one corner,
Fit shrine to deposit his honored remains,
Not saved for the sinless, but due, tell the scorner,
To genius whose brightness extinguished its stains.”

There will be interesting biographies written of Moore. The society in which he moved is full of anecdotes of him. He was a man whose every action seemed like a trait of character. His pulse beat integers, not ciphers. But, I am forgetting that the subject is probably over-written upon, by this time, in New York.

Our steamer, the Derwent, has waited only for the mails by the Thames, and we start, this afternoon, to pay our respects to islands nearer the equator. I understand that we run under the lee of islands nearly all the way, and that the sailing is as smooth as from Hoboken to Undercliff—so I may write you a description or two from under the awning of the deck, daguerreo-typically.

LETTER No. 9.

TIDE OF ENGLISH TRAVEL FROM SOUTHAMPTON, TOUCHING AT ST. THOMAS—JOHN BULL OUT OF PLACE IN THE TROPICS—NATURE'S TWO JOURNEYMEN AT MOUNTAIN-MAKING, AND THEIR DIFFERENT STYLE OF WORK—TWO HEAVENS NECESSARY FOR THE CARIB AND THE ENGLISHMAN—ENGLISH COLONIAL ISLANDS ALL ALIKE, AS TO HOUSES AND INHABITANTS—DAME NATURE ATMOSPHERICALLY DRESSED OR UNDRESSED—CLIMATE TOO CLEAR FOR THE DISTANCE THAT "LENDS ENCHANTMENT TO THE VIEW"—NIGHTS EXCEPTED AND STARS WONDROUSLY BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL—THE SOUTHERN CROSS—THE FRENCH ISLANDS HAVE RIVERS, THE ENGLISH ISLANDS NONE—AMAZING PRODIGALITY OF FOLIAGE AT GUADALOUPE—ENGLISH ECSTACIES MODIFIED BY FEAR OF HUMBUG—FRENCHMEN COMING ON BOARD AT GUADALOUPE—CLOSE CONTACT, EVEN IN THESE CLIMATES, NEVER ASSIMILATING THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH, ETC.

Dear Morris:—

In taking the steamer for the Southern Antilles, at St. Thomas, we fell upon the tide of English Colonial travel—officers on their way to join their regiments at Barbadoes and Demerara, chaplains and civil functionaries, governesses, nurses, and mercantile agents, all talking unmitigated English—and, with ears so full of London, I have really found it difficult, for the last day or two, to realize that my eyes were full of the tropics. John Bull does not seem to me to belong here. Refined and intelligent as the company on deck is, (and there are two or three remarkably beautiful women among them,) their accent, dress, character and deportment, all seem out of harmony with the climate and scenery. Try to make a vase for a bouquet of magnolias, by tying one of your own particularly stiff and white shirt-collars around them, my dear friend, and you will see a faint type of the contrast I refer to.

We have been gliding along for a day or two, under the shores of these isles of eternal summer, the sea as smooth, (except here and there where the swell of the Atlantic has a chance between two of them,) as the Hudson among the Highlands. They are ranges of mountains in the sea. You have no idea of their outline, because you only know mountains as made by the Deluge. Nature has another journeyman, however—the Volcano—and he did

the job for the Tropics; and very different are the mountains of *his* making. They look, indeed, like Apennines in stacks, waiting for an earthquake to distribute them. The Catskills and Alleghanies are arranged, and in their places. The waves and eddies of the Deluge shaped their summits gracefully, and proportioned them with proper bases and approaches, by slopes and plains. But here are mountains piled up like clouds, at angles with which the law of gravitation seems to have had nothing to do—some lying on their sides, and some bottom upwards, precipices leaning the wrong way, and ravines of the most unaccountable abruptness, one Alp rolled down upon the beach, and half a dozen placed toppling on the edge of what would elsewhere have been a summit range by itself—it really seems as if the rest of the world were made by some tamer standard, to accord with more regular laws of beauty, gentler tastes and passions less tumultuous. The Carib and John Bull would never be comfortable together in the same heaven, I am quite sure, if this scenery and that of England are fair types of their respective natures.

Of St. Eustatia, St. Kitts and Nevis we had only this ranging view, taken from the sea as we coasted along. The English towns, where we stopped to leave the mails, are all alike, angularly built, and looking very unpicturesque. They have no wharves, and, to land you must run your boat upon the beach. With the wonderful rarity of the atmosphere, you can read the signs almost as well from your anchorage in the Bay as from the sides of the streets, and the West Indians who were on board told us that nothing was gained by going on shore, excepting of such other Englishmen and negroes as were not standing on the quay. Having seen the Britisher in one colony you have seen him in all—there being no beginning of a *shading in* to the negro type or habits, notwithstanding the strong emancipation talk against distinctions of blood.

At Guadaloupe, the French island, we found Dame Nature once more with a little drapery on—mists on the mountain-tops, and a visible atmosphere in the valleys—and we suddenly realized how unbecoming had been her absolute nudity during the week gone by. For days and days we had seen no atmosphere—no such thing as distance—no such charm as perspective. Everything looked strangely bare and near, and over all the mountains there was a monotone of tint which would have driven a painter to despair. As to the horizon, it seems so near, that, if you were washing your hands on deck, you might try to throw the slops over it, as you would over the ship's side. The sun goes down, as it were, next door. Fancy comes back discouraged, from any attempt to leave the spot you stand upon. I should except only, that the night is made beautiful, by this wondrous

clearness. The stars are intensely brilliant. Our fellow-passenger, the English clergyman, told me, that, when the moon was not up, (which it is now, and full,) they could always see their shadows on the ground, cast by the evening star. What with this startling brilliancy, and the change in the places of the planets and constellations with our change of latitude it seems as one lies on his back on deck, like looking up to a strange sky, in some "brighter and better world." If I had time to get my muse into training, I should certainly write some poetry to this glorious Southern Cross, that gleams over the Equator like an illuminated crucifix. For my self-denying prose, just now, heaven reward me!

Dress one mountain in leafy June, and let all the mountains around be stripped for leafless November, and you have a fair similitude of Guadaloupe in contrast with the islands we had passed before coming to it. St. Thomas, St. Kitts, St. Eustatia, Nevis, and Montserrat, are comparatively bare. They are volcanic islands without rivers, their inhabitants depending on the rains for water. But Guadaloupe is plentifully coursed with rivers that start from its mountain-tops, and, as you approach it from the other islands, it is, to the eye, like a sudden plunge into mid-summer. Of the prodigality of leaf upon its tropical trees, no language can give you any idea. Like "velvet of three pile," it is a June thrice heaped—a group of the loveliest-shaped mountains, burthened three Junes deep with foliage. From the time we began to distinguish this island, somewhere about seven in the morning, until we had passed its southernmost point, a little after noon, the passengers on board were as much absorbed with it as an audience with a play. It was like a panorama of Nature idealized. The families of the English officers, the chaplain and his wife, the merchants and others, all stood in wonder at the railings of the quarter-deck, expressing their surprise and delight with London's most emphatic though most unpoetical exclamations. Guadaloupe's "cheeks must have burned"—that is, if an island can know when it is sitting for its picture.

We rounded to, off Guadaloupe, as at the other islands, to deliver mails and take and leave passengers, and received quite an accession to our company in a number of Frenchmen, bound to the other French island of Martinique, which we were to reach, farther on. The white kid gloves of these polite gentlemen, their shirts with ruffled sleeves, and their very ornamental manners, made a strong contrast with the studiously inelegant travelling costumes, and laboriously un-humbugy-y manners of the English passengers. How these nations do stay dissimilar, to be sure! Here is Guadaloupe, between two English Islands, Antigua a few hours North, and Dominica one hour South, and yet no symptoms of assimilation between its

inhabitants and their neighbors. The distinctions of that Babel business have lasted a great while!

But I must to my berth. Good night.

LETTER No. 10.

ALTERATIONS IN PUNCTUATION BY ANTS—PROBABLE ETYMOLOGY OF "ANTILLES"—ALTERATION IN PLANS—PREFERENCE OF MARTINIQUE TO BARBADOES—EMPRESS JOSEPHINE'S BIRTH-PLACE—MARTINIQUE THE "FIFTH AVENUE" OF THE ANTILLES—GOING ASHORE WITH AN UNUSUAL LAP-FULL—JERSEY FERRY OUTDONE—NOTE ON NEGRO LANGUAGE—LOSS AND RE-CAPTURE OF BAGGAGE—CUSTOM-HOUSE VEXATIONS—RECEPTION AT HOTEL—USES OF PERSEVERANCE—APPARITION OF CREOLE BEAUTY—THE GOOD STAR OF WOMAN'S KINDNESS—NEGRO MANNERS AFTER FOUR YEARS OF EMANCIPATION—INSOLENCE AFTER BEING OVERPAID—LANDLORD PITCHING A NEGRO HERCULES DOWN STAIRS, ETC.

Martinique, April, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

My date, just written, is a little illegible, and I take the opportunity to beg you to guard the printer against the alterations made in my manuscript by the omnipresent *ants* of this teeming climate.[1] I called my friend's attention, just now, while I counted to him thirteen, who we're running up and down on the quill with which I was writing. They are all over my table and paper. The pitchers and washbowls are full of them. You clean your teeth with ants and water—wash in ants and water—sleep on ants and a mattrass—all well enough, if they were not attracted by fresh ink as well as by other moisture. They do not sip, either. They first *walk through* the liquid of which they intend to taste, and hence you see my tribulation. They turn my periods into commas, my semicolons into notes of admiration, my quotation-marks into stars, etc., etc. Perhaps it never occurred to you before, why these Islands are called the "*Ant*illes"—a corruption of the plain English word *ant-hills*, if my experience goes for anything.

[1] To show you that others have found tropical insect life as "teeming" as I have, read the following passage from a work on these islands, written by Henry N. Breen, who was thirteen years a resident here:—

"The most remarkable insects are the scorpion, woodslave, annulated lizard, locust, tarantula, centipede, wasp, blacksmith, musquito, bat, cockroach, fly, chigre, beetle, fire-fly, spider, wood-ant, butterfly, bete-rouge, caterpillar, grasshopper, cricket and bee. Of these, the scorpion and centipede are the most dangerous, the ant and wood-ant the most destructive, the musquito the most troublesome, and the cockroach the most repulsive. The destruction caused by the ant is generally confined to plants and flowers; but the

depredations of the wood-ant extend to the houses, furniture, and even clothes of the inhabitants and the mischief they occasion is no less incredible than the promptitude with which it is accomplished. The following humorous remarks appeared some years ago in the *Edinburgh Review*:—The bete-rouge lays the foundation of a tremendous ulcer. In a moment you are covered with ticks: flies get into your nose, you eat flies, drink flies, breathe flies. Lizards, cockroaches and snakes get into your bed; ants eat up the books; scorpions sting you on the foot. Everything bites, stings or bruises; every second of your life you are wounded by some piece of animal life. An insect with eleven legs is swimming in your tea-cup; a nondescript with nine wings is struggling in the small-beer, or a caterpillar, with several dozen eyes in its belly, is hastening over the bread and butter. All nature is alive, and seems to be gathering her entomological hosts to eat you up, as you are standing, out of your coat, waistcoat and breeches."

Finding Guadaloupe so beautiful, and so much more picturesque in its architecture and cultivation than the English Islands, and hearing that Martinique was still more beautiful and interesting, we were induced to make a little alteration in our plans. Barbadoes, where we had intended to make a short stay, was described to us, by the intelligent clergyman on board who resided there, and we gathered that it was merely a very large and prosperous colony, peculiarly English, and with nothing either of scenery or society that would be to us anything of a novelty. Martinique, on the contrary, (which we were about to pass in the night time, unseen,) was described as a garden of romantic beauty, more conservatively French even than the old towns of France, peopled with a charmingly graceful and courteous Creole population, (of whom the Empress Josephine, as you will remember, was one,) antique in its buildings and habits, and isolated from the poetry-killing mediocritizing of the times. The name by which the island goes, in France—"The Faubourg St. Germain of the Tropics"—was, in itself, a stimulus to our curiosity.

The steamer's jolly-boat had twenty-four passengers to take ashore at Martinique—all French with the exception of ourselves. It was close stowing. I sat in the stern, next the "middy" at the rudder, and in *my* lap sat a broad-based pyramid of a negress, while, in *her* lap, was her baggage, viz: a well-packed basket and the article of crockery without which a French woman seldom commits herself to the chances of travel. The glorious moon in the heavens had seldom looked down upon so much flesh and blood, (and its baggage,) in so limited a compass. The bay was smooth, however. Half a mile or less was not far to carry even such a lap-ful of emancipation as mine. We were safely pulled ashore, and debarqued into a confusion and clamor of negroes which promised very little for the comfort of the place. Of this, our *premier accueil*, I must still further describe the annoyances; because, though I have to commend Martinique as probably the most delightful of all

the world's neglected spots, I should frankly prepare the traveller for a first arrival that is a little discouraging.

Deposited with our trunks and carpet-bags upon a narrow frame-work, or bridge, without railing, that juts out from the beach as a landing for canoes and row-boats, we had half an hour's struggle with innumerable negroes, to keep our baggage together, and ourselves from being crowded and knocked overboard—a struggle which amounted, at a moderate estimate, I should say, to about seven Jersey-Ferry experiences condensed into one. The screaming jargon of the almost naked wretches was, to me, wholly unintelligible. I rescued my heavy portmanteau repeatedly from the tops of woolly heads upon which it had magically mounted, determined not to make a start without my friend, who had been missing from the first moment. I was seized hold of, by two furious baboons at a time, who had crowded me to the corner of the platform, and fought with fist and tongue for the possession of me. There was no light except the moon's, nobody to give the slightest intelligible hint of whom to trust or where to go. I should have liked to make some inquiry for my lost companion—but, to keep my identity together, trunk, carpet-bag and owner, required my full presence; and, in the deafening tumult of unintelligible language, I tried in vain to make myself understood. The name of the principal hotel—which I learned from the lady in my lap, while coming on shore—was the only syllable they seemed to recognise:—"Hotel des Bains!" "Oui, massa, oui!"[2]

[2] The writer from whose description of these islands I have already quoted, says of the dialect which I found so incomprehensible:—

> "The negro language is a jargon formed from the French, and composed of words, or rather sounds, adapted to the organs of speech in the black population. As a *patois*, it is even more unintelligible than that spoken by the negroes in the English colonies. Its distinguishing feature consists in the suppression of the letter 'r' in every word in which it should be used, and the addition of 'ki's' and 'ka's' to assist in the formation of the tenses. It is, in short, the French language, stripped of its manly and dignified ornaments, and travestied for the accommodation of children and toothless old women. The less you know of French, the greater aptitude you have for talking negro. I can say for myself, that although possessing an extensive knowledge of the French language, acquired during a sojourn of five years in France, I have failed in obtaining anything like an adequate notion of this gibberish, during a residence of nearly fifteen years in St. Lucia and Martinique."

As the other passengers and their luggage thinned away, my friend became visible at the shore end of the bridge, and we succeeded in coming together, and getting our respective effects mounted upon the woolly summits of two emancipated spines—it being the understanding among them, apparently, that on one negro head could be placed all that could

possibly belong to any one traveller. We followed on—as we supposed, to our hotel. They crossed a broad avenue of trees, that looked like a public promenade, turned off to a side alley, and suddenly entering a narrow vault, paved with round stones, and walled in like a dirty cellar, they made a deposit of our baggage. We were made to understand directly that this was the custom-house. Our passports and keys were demanded by officers in a sort of uniform, and, while one of them examined nose, chin and eyes, to see if they answered the description which was signed by Daniel Webster, two others undertook the over-haul of the portmanteau.

In all the custom-houses of the world—and I have been in most of them—I never saw such needless and minute official impertinence. It was probably a merely wanton gratification of their own curiosity and that of the crowd of negroes who had followed us from the landing—but not an article in my trunk escaped display and examination. With no ventilation in the narrow horse-stall of a place, a hundred odoriferous blacks packed round us like cigars in a bundle, and the thermometer at 82, it was a little trying. The cut of my shirts was looked into, and the patterns of my cravats. Boxes were opened, cough-medicines carefully smelt of, coats held up, boots stethescoped, squeezable things squeezed and hollow things shaken. And, when everything was flung back, pell mell, into the portmanteau, how to get lid and bottom parallel again was a warm problem. My friend had his negro audience, as I had mine. We were both completely exhausted and used up with this rude and needless ordeal of official impertinence. Yet *he* looked very little like a smuggler, and *I*, I should hope, not overmuch. How is it that travellers, for pleasure or health, with only ordinary baggage, meet with this kind of reception, on landing at the politest of the French islands? I ask the question—as I have written the description—in the hope of bringing it to the eyes of the chief of the black and white Police of St. Pierre, and thus suggesting a remedy of the evil for which other travellers and invalids may be obliged to me. The custom-house of Martinique is, at present, a very dirty gate to a very bright little strangers' paradise.

At the risk of being tedious, perhaps, I must give you, in this letter, the remainder of that evening's experiences—the next morning's sun having risen on matters describable only in a less complaining key.

From the custom-house to the hotel was a traverse through several dark and narrow streets—half-past ten, not a soul abroad, nor a light in a window on the way. To rise at day-break, as they do in these climates, they must needs lengthen the night at the other end. The city seemed abed. Our barefooted conductors dodged at last, into the low door of a building without

a sign, and we found ourselves in the presence of several marble tables and a *comptoir*—the inseparable belongings of a French *cafe*. The landlord made his appearance with a candle, a handsome man whose fine condition spoke volumes for the cooking that could do it, and staggered us with the intelligence that he had not a bed to spare. He would go up stairs, however, and see if there was any possibility of accommodating us. As our baggage was still on the negroes' heads, I motioned to them to follow, and, on the floor of a corridor in the second story, I ordered them to unload—quite sure that this was the best hotel of the town, and bent on making a lodgment if perseverance could do it.

Each of our herculean black porters had two or three followers; and, while these were chattering like frantic monkeys—night-caps visible through inquiring doors—we pleading and the landlord protesting—a new and interesting feature was added to the scene. A plump and graceful female figure, rather above the middle height, glided indolently towards us from the end of the corridor, with candle in hand, and eyelids still heavy with sleep that had at least been thought of. A long, primrose-colored *peignoir*, without a girdle, seemed her only article of dress, except a gorgeous Madras turban half loosened from her head; but, withal, she was draped magnificently, and, to her Creole complexion, dark eyes and snowy teeth, the faint yellow of the robe was in *relievo* most becoming. To my surprise—(for, noisy negroes and all, we were not a very desirable-looking group for a lady to approach)—she quietly seated herself on my portmanteau, and, with the most unconscious expression of dreamy curiosity, listened in silence to the arguments and chatter. She was to be the arbitress of our fate. Her quiet study of us and our troubles for five or ten minutes ended in our favor; and, with a word or two to the landlord, she gave him an idea for an arrangement. There was an unfurnished saloon in another part of the house. If we would accept of mattrasses, for the night, upon the floor of this saloon, she would give us her own room in the morning. Our good star—for that island—shone in the dark eyes of Madam Stephanie.

We were not yet rid of our sable convoy, however. They were to be paid—and they looked more like Caribs waiting for a cutlet, than like porters waiting for their money. The leading man, particularly, was the ideal of a soulless herculean brute; and, remembering that the neighboring island of Guadaloupe was, at that moment, under martial law from a suppressed insurrection, and that a massacre was still fresh in the history of Martinique, I looked at the manners of the two-legged savage and his followers with some curiosity. No one of them, I observed, showed the least deference to the presence of our host and hostess. There they lounged, in the saloon, with

their hats on, strolling about the room and conversing with an air of confident insolence together, and only changing their look, when they spoke to the white man, by putting on a scowl of dogged dislike. Not understanding their language or prices for labor, I had given the landlord a gold piece, and requested him to pay them for us; he did so, and giving them about twice as much as would have been asked by a New York carman for the same porterage. But, such a hurricane of vociferation and gesture as followed this, I had never before witnessed. The sputter of gibberish, the hoppings about the floor, the violent gesticulations, were like the frenzy of a half dozen exasperated baboons. It was hard to realize that these animals were represented, color and opinions, in the National Assembly at Paris. Our handsome landlord was evidently used to this sort of thing, however. He stood the colored threats and eloquence for about five minutes very coolly, merely pointing the black leader to the door. This being repeated once or twice, and no attention paid to it, he advanced a step, and quietly asked the man whether he would go out of the door or out of the window. The next moment he had seized him by the shoulder, spun him round two or three times by a dexterous twirl, and when his face was rightly directed, gave him an impetus which sent him headlong down the steps into the entry. My friend and I stood looking on with no little interest—travellers seldom receiving such active service from their host—but expecting somewhat that it would end in a general *melee*. The negro did not return, however. His brother gesticulators and vociferators were suddenly silenced, and followed him as if they preferred to help themselves to an exit, rather than give the landlord the trouble; and so ended our "arrival at Martinique." As it was quite a melodrama, taken all together, you will allow me to drop the curtain.

LETTER No. 11.

TROPICAL PERSUADER FOR EARLY RISING—THE BUSINESS-DOING SEX AND THE PRAYER-DOING SEX GOING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS—THE MARTINIQUE RIALTO—PICTURESQUENESS OF NO WHARVES—RESEMBLANCE OF ST. PIERRE TO THE STRUCTURE OF A THEATRE—AIR OF CARELESS ELEGANCE ABOUT THE BLACK AND WHITE MERCHANTS—TROPICAL SLOVENLINESS OF COSTUME—GENERAL AIR OF THE GENTLEMEN—NEGROES DRESSED IN TWO POCKET-HANDKERCHIEFS—CURIOUS ACCOMPANIMENT TO THE SURF-ANTHEM—DESCRIPTION OF COASTING-BOATS AND CREWS—STREETS OF ST. PIERRE AT SEVEN IN THE MORNING—VENERABLE BUILDINGS—BRIGHT RIVER IN EVERY STREET—RETURN TO BREAKFAST—INSTALLED IN MADAME STEPHANIE'S BOUDOIR AND BED-ROOM—RESIGNATION TO OUR CALAMITIES—TROPICAL BREAKFAST WITH PARISIAN COOKERY—STRUCTURE OF HOTEL AND POSITION OF EATING-ROOM—NEGRO GUESTS IN THE HOUSE, AND THEIR POLITENESS—BEAUTY OF OUR CARIB WAITER—COURSES OF DISHES—THE UNUSUAL ADDITION TO OUR BREAKFAST—DESCRIPTION OF MADAME STEPHANIE ROUGE, OUR CREOLE LANDLADY—HER HUSBAND, ETC., ETC.

St. Pierre, Capital of Martinique, April, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I was up as early as *your* five o'clock, this morning—being about one hour on the other side of a New York sunrise—and, by the tall silver flagon of chocolate and two cups of exquisite china, which were there to encourage us out of bed, I saw we had awaked to be well treated. We were to take the morning walk, (our first in Martinique,) and come back to find ourselves installed in the quarters kindly relinquished to us by our hostess.

As sunrise is the hour to be "on 'Change," in the Tropics, we bent our steps first toward the Martinique Rialto, to see the business-doing sex of the place, though, as it was also the hour for matins, we encountered a current of the prayer-doing sex, going, "the other way, the other way"—a reproof for our earliest morning errand, which we should have heeded, probably, but that we could take the more pious walk in the evening. There are no "vespers" in business.

The "Wall street" of St. Pierre is a beautiful avenue of tamarind and mango trees, extending along the beach of the harbor, and edged on one side by a row of old and picturesque stone buildings, and on the other by the white surf of the sea. Some of the larger trees are protected from the chance roll of a sugar-hogshead by a triangular seat of solid masonry; and, along under the inner line of trees, facing the sea, are benches at short intervals, with sloping backs, mostly occupied, at the moment of our first seeing them, by lounging and half-naked negroes. There are no wharves, except a short projection at one end of the promenade, where heavy freight is rolled, by a railway of a few feet, into scows or lighters; and the vessels lying in port are, of course, at anchor in the Bay—leaving the clean beach of sand comparatively unobstructed, and adding as much to the picturesqueness as it subtracts from the convenience of the harbor. When I add that a hemisphere of mountains closes around this spot, almost as erectly and abruptly as the galleries close in the pit of a theatre—the Rialto promenade extending across it like the row of foot-lights, and the city located behind it like the seats of the parterre—you will get a very correct similitude by which to judge of its shape and position. As these high and forever-green mountains are on the east side, of course the shops, the business-promenade, and the churches, enjoy an hour or two of the most refreshing and protecting shade in the morning, which makes the first dawn the most active and stirring hour of the day.

The first general novelty which struck us, in the look of the crowd upon the promenade, was the universally elegant and *insouciant* indolence of gait, look and gesture. Black and white gentlemen merchants strolled up and down, or stood in groups and couples under the trees, conversing, as the French do, with abundant action, but with no approach to an angular movement, or any of that sharp and sudden impatience of glance, or change of posture, which would characterize a business dialogue in Wall street. Every man had a cigar in his mouth, and every man smoked indolently. There was a certain slovenliness in the costume of the climate—the slouching straw hat, the loose coats and pantaloons, and the careless cravats —but, withal, there was an air of Creole grace and *laisser-aller* in the *ensemble*, which harmonized well with the make and movement of the men; and well with the climate, to which they looked native-born and related. They seemed to me considerably above the average height of the French race, generally very thin, and of sallow complexion. The air of grave courtesy in the countenance, and in the manner of accosting and parting, was very different from that of business crowds in most places, and very attractive to a stranger.

The beach was a very busy scene. Numberless boats with their prows run high upon the sand, were lading and unlading—the black crews half the time in the surf, and working with a headlong vehemence and want of mechanical contrivance that threw away a great deal of their strength. Their dress amounted, generally, to *two* pocket-handkerchiefs, *one* around the head—and the sweat rolled down their broad black backs and ebony legs with the profuseness of a summer shower. To heat and the sun they seemed altogether insensible. Their merry joking, and most noisy and unceasing chatter, kept their white teeth in perpetual display, and gave their work the appearance of a game for fun. The deliberate and solemn thunder of the surf upon the beach, and the curiously superficial and un-impregnated cadences of the negro voice, were in singular contradiction. To the eternal "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," there seemed a reply of baboon laughter.

The "coasting-boats" that were coming to town from the villages on the Southern shore, (and which come up with oars against the trade wind, and go back with sails,) were very picturesque. They are long crafts, with about six oarsmen on a side; and these dozen propellors lessen their labor by the principle of gravitation—rising to their full height with the dip of the oar, and falling flat on their backs to make the pull by their inclining weight. It was a curious sight to see a boat moving ahead by the action of a sort of spontaneous quarter of a wheel, whose paddles were six naked negroes on a side.

From the thronged quay we passed into the streets, scarcely less thronged at seven in the morning, and fed our eyes upon forms, costumes and manners, of which I will speak, by and by, with more study and better knowledge. The look of the town is romantic, in all its features; and peculiarly unlike American cities, as well as unlike the other island towns of this Tropical Archipelago. The trashy *temporariness* of the architecture elsewhere is not found here. An English writer apologetically says:—"The French colonists, whether Creoles or French, consider the West Indies as their country; they cast no wistful looks towards France; they marry, educate and build, in and for the West Indies, and for the West Indies alone." In English colonies it is different; they are considered more as temporary lodging-places, to be deserted so soon as they have made money enough by molasses and sugar to return *home*. It was delightful to my eye to see no sign of fresh paint, white, red, or green. Every building is of venerable stone, antique in structure and windowed with deepest *jalousies* and massive outside shutters, the doors unprojecting beyond the smooth wall, and the overhanging roof frowning with moss covered tiles. The streets are narrow, as the climate requires; but, as there are no carriages, and the pedestrian has

only to make way for the occasional rider on horseback, they are broad enough for convenience; while the closeness of the dark walls to each other makes a dim light along the *pave*, which is a timely relief from the glare of a tropical sun.

But I have saved for a separate paragraph the mention of the great charm and peculiarity of the capital of this lovely island. It is built on a declivity, at the foot of a range of mountains, and a *bright rivulet of the most sparkling water courses rapidly down the centre of every street*. The pavements being everywhere admirable, and sloping toward the centre, and the beds of these sparkling currents being well-laid flat stones, there is no dirt except what is thrown out from the houses on the way; and, with the perpetually swift flow and the large quantity of water, this carrying off of the city's daily rubbish is quite imperceptible. It is a continually bright stream, running before every door and filling the town, night and day, with its pleasant music. The little naked black children sit in it, up to the waist, and play. The women come out and wash their dishes in it, or sit and sew by its side as by a brook in the country. The rider stops to let his horse drink at it. The loaded burthen-carrier, with the enormous weight upon her head, stands in it for a minute or two, bathed up to the knees and refreshed and cooled, without stooping. It is an inestimable blessing to the inhabitants, and one originally provided at great enterprise and cost. The mountain rivers are brought down through aqueducts contrived with the finest of engineering science, crossing ravines and rounding precipices, and built with a solidity which will defy accident and decay. In the present state, Martinique would be far from undertaking or accomplishing such a work—but it was done in days when the Simplon was designed and achieved, and when the colonies were the California of France.

We were to breakfast at eleven—the hungry hour in these latitudes—and we returned from our long ramble to make a preparatory toilet in the new quarters provided for us. We found our baggage removed into the luxurious bed-room of Madame Stephanie; and, after the close and unsavory berths and cabins in which we had been, for some weeks, cribbed and confined, it was, indeed a contrast to enjoy. Like all French conjugal sleeping-rooms, this was furnished with two large beds, of richly-laced pillows and immaculate curtains and linen. There was a dressing-room at the side. The mirrors and furniture—(for it served the fair Creole as both boudoir and bed-room)—were of the most tasteful costliness and luxury. A library of French books occupied one corner, and, with wardrobes and easy-chairs, and the heavy bronze *coffre-fort*, which, like every French wife, she kept, in her character as family Treasuress, the room was just sumptuously crowded. My friend and I looked around us, and while we tied our cravats by the broad

mirror, forgave, with all our hearts, the disasters which had enlisted the sympathies of the lovely occupant we had dislodged. It would not have been impossible, perhaps, to pray for more annoyances—at the same rate of compensation.

Of the breakfast which followed I must try to give you a picture—not for its luxury merely. Cookery more exquisite was never tasted in Paris—so exquisite, indeed, that, if I had not a companion innocent of poetry, to affidavy to the truth of my chronicle, I should scarce venture to locate such a breakfast in an isle of the Caribbean Sea. The surroundings and accompaniments, however, belonged to the climate—and these, perhaps in contrast with the Parisian delicacy of our dishes may make so sensuous a matter as a meal worthy of definite description. The invalid, at least, (who may make up his mind, at my recommendation, to try Martinique,) will thank me for detailing, with some particularity, how his "daily bread" will be ministered to him.

The hotel is built round an open court; and our eating-room, on the second story, faces the kitchen—to which messages are sent, not by bell or servant, but by a call more or less vociferous from the window. Of course, in this clime of perpetual summer, there are no sashes of glass, and this, like every apartment in the house, is open to all the sounds of savory directions, fault-findings, etc., and to the responses and conversation of the *chef de cuisine* and his chattering menials. The room itself is a large hall with bare floor, and without an article of furniture in it, except the chairs and tables at which we eat. It is also the passage-way to the sleeping-chambers—and this, by the way, secures to us a polite bow from every guest of the house as he passes to or from his room, and, among others, from two very well-bred and well-dressed black gentlemen, strangers in town like ourselves, who remove their hats and give us the "good morning" or "good evening" with the courtesy of *la veille cour*. The public *cafe* and the large and sumptuous billiard-room are on the floor below; and, of the visiters to these resorts, we see nothing—our more private *salle a manger* being for the guests of the house exclusively.

The small round table set for Mr. G. and myself, is attended by two ragged and barefooted waiters, in only shirt and pantaloons—one a negro, and the other a cross between the Carib and the Spaniard—so handsome and so unconsciously picturesque a fellow, and, withal, so proudly and fiercely majestic in his attitudes and demeanor, that his likeness would be worth preserving, if only as a type of the now nearly extinct race of his mother. He seems to have no beard except a long mustache of lustreless and ashy black,

which draws lines of singular expressiveness across his oval and leaden-colored cheek. His features are of Spanish fineness and regularity, his nostrils thin and open, and his chin as beautifully moulded as Apollo's—while his luxuriant flakes of massive straight hair, and the attitude of folded arms with which he stands, bending his large and never-winking eyes upon us while waiting for our orders, make me feel, now and then, as if the usurping race were his inferior, after all, and as if we should be waiting on him, not he on us. I have said almost as much to him, (since making the pencil memoranda of which my letter is the inking over,) and his only answer was a request to be taken as a servant to America—a proposition to which his proud mien was even a greater objection than his speaking only the French language. House, horse and servant may easily look too splendid for their master.

Our three or four dishes of meats cooked with Parisian science, are flanked by the numberless vegetable novelties of the tropics, and followed, both at breakfast and dinner, by a course of game—the wild birds of these islands—which are truly of unsurpassable flavor. Then comes a course of fruits, of which this climate is an open-air-museum—the five kinds of banana, the strange alligator-pear, pine-apples of various kinds, and others of which the mere naming would only tantalize you—and, with these, the delicate wines whose true gusto can only be tasted in the air of these latitudes; and all followed by unsurpassable French coffee, and (for my friend) a cigar. You see, (dear invalid reader! for I write this with you in my eye,) how your appetite (and consumptive patients have proverbially good appetites,) may be coquetted with, on the lip of the Equator.

But there is still an unnamed luxury—one I have not found added to a breakfast in any other climate, and which I suppose, therefore, to be indigenous to latitude 14.40—the society and kind attentions of a charming hostess, during the meal. With the removal of the covers by Fedzee the Carib, the indolently graceful figure of Madame Stephanie sails into the room, and giving us the "*bon jour*," with a smile and a bouquet she has brought from the market, she lounges into the vacant chair at the side of the table, and gives us a *carte*—(spoken instead of written) of the delicacies before us. She tells us what to eat first, and with what vegetables to accompany fish, flesh or game—watches which we prefer, so as carefully to repeat our preference at another meal—comments on our taste with the naive simplicity of a child—frankly questions us of our country's habits, our families, and our professions—gives us the gossip of the island, tells us what shops to visit, describes the fashions, directs our walks and rides, inquires into our health, sleep, and comfort, as (it seems to me) only the French can

—and all this with a careless and queenly *supremacy of unconsciousness*, which seems to me as tropical as a palm tree, and quite as prodigally beautiful. Our breakfast and dinners, (for I write this after nearly a week's enjoyment of them,) have invariably had this added luxury—each meal occupying at least two hours, and the plump and fair Creole's vivacity never flagging during these long sessions, and charming them away like minutes. She rises courteously, now and then, to change a plate for us, or give us a glass for some choice wine sent up by her husband, or to sail over to the window and call out to the cook for some luxury new thought of; but, for the most of the time, with her elbow upon the table, and her heavily turbaned head supported on her plump hand, she chats and lounges, laughs and exchanges compliments, as if there were no other world than that small table, and nothing to be thought of except that hour's happiness. Whether the other hotels of St. Pierre have the same dainty addition to their entertainment, or whether, as rare travellers from a country with which France has a sympathy, we were treated as privileged strangers, I have no means of positively deciding—but, if you go ever to Martinique, inquire for the "Hotel des Bains," and commit yourself to the *petit soins*, kind and bewitching, of Madame Stephanie Roque. Of Monsieur, her husband, you will see less—but he is a high-bred gentleman, who has taken to hotel-keeping after losing a fortune, and he is quite as watchful and complimentary in looking to your comfort, in *his* way.

And so, having introduced you to our host and hostess, and shown you how we live, you will please remember it as the accompaniment to what I have yet to record of our daily experiences. Yours, etc.

LETTER No. 12.

DULL INK, INSENSIBLE TO CLIMATE—POETRY DESCRIPTIVE OF TROPICAL DELICIOUSNESS—TOM MOORE A CUSTOM-HOUSE OFFICER ON THE ISLAND WHICH WAS THE SCENE OF "THE TEMPEST"—DIFFICULTY OF REALIZING ARIEL AND MIRANDA, AT "MRS. TUCKER'S TAVERN"—HORSEBACK RIDE IN THE SUBURBS OF ST. PIERRE, MARTINIQUE—GARDEN OF PLANTS—PRECIPICES WITH BEARDS—AIR PLANTS AND THEIR HUMAN COUNTERPART—YOUNG LADIES ON HORSEBACK WITH A NEGRO FOOTMAN, ON FOOT, CARRYING THEIR PARASOLS—DESCRIPTION OF MARTINIQUE COUNTRY-HOUSES—TROPICAL HABITS OF LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—CLIMATE RENDERING COMFORT UNNECESSARY—SCIENCE OF COMFORT A RESULT OF NORTHERN LACK OF PLEASURE OUT OF DOORS—QUESTION AS TO THE COMPARATIVE RESULTS OF CLIMATE—CHARMING INCIDENT OF CREOLE HOSPITALITY—YANKEE LUMBER-YARD—MADAME STEPHANIE'S KIND INFLUENCE—CHATEAU PERRINEL—NEGRO SOLDIERS AND THEIR VARIATIONS FROM WHITE SOLDIERS, BEFORE AND BEHIND—USEFUL FACT FOR GENERAL MORRIS, ETC., ETC.

Martinique, April, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I wish that the ink with which I write could make a distinction or two as to the atmosphere in which it fulfils its destiny—for, surely, never was ink dried upon paper by summer air so delicious, and never did I so long for the ink to daguerreotype to you the balm in which the poor thoughts it brings were afloat when inveigled into it. Really you must come here to know how much happiness may be taken in at pores and nostrils. Bring but some life, done up in one-day parcels, or a little opiate in your pocket, that will enable you to forget the Past and the Future, and I will warrant you, at Martinique, the bliss of Paradise in breathing only. Before resuming my memoranda, let me refresh your memory with the way in which two poets have written about the kind of luxury I am enjoying:—

> "The laggard Spring which but salutes us here,
> Inhabits there and courts them all the year;
> Ripe fruits and blossoms on the same trees live,
> At once they promise what at once they give.
> So sweet the air so moderate the clime
> None sickly lives, or dies before his time.
> Heaven sure has kept this spot of earth uncursed,
> To show now all things were created first."

So wrote Waller, in his "Battle of the Summer Islands;" and Tom Moore (who, you will remember, *was English custom-house officer on the island where Caliban served Prospero*, and who, thus—strange contrast of use for the same scene by two poets—went to the "vexed Bermoothes" to prevent smuggling, as Shakspeare's imagination went there to create Miranda and the "delicate Ariel") sings thus of what he found in the scene of "The Tempest:"

> "The morn was lovely, every wave was still,
> When the first perfume of a cedar-hill
> Sweetly awaked us, and, with smiling charms,
> The fairy harbor wooed us to its arms.
> Gently we stole, before the languid wind,
> Through plantain-shades, that like an awning twined
> And kissed on either side the wanton sails,
> Breathing our welcome to these vernal vales;
> While, far reflected o'er the waves serene,
> Each wooded island shed so soft a green,
> That the enamored keel, with whispering play,
> Through liquid herbage seemed to steal its way."

I may as well confess, however, that, when at Mrs. Tucker's tavern, on that same island of Bermuda, a week or two ago, I did not very distinctly realize that it was the spot from which Ariel started to "put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes;" nor did I remember that Moore had written so beautiful of the waters that wrecked the lover of Miranda. The imagination must have its "distance," I find, to "lend enchantment to the view," even of a scene in Shakspeare.

But to my diary:—

We started this morning, on horseback, to get a sunrise view of the four or five miles of country-seats on the north side of the city. From the streets,

the road opens directly up a ravine of the most romantic beauty, tracking the course of a river which has the curious name of "Madame." The city being supplied with water by Madame and her sisters of the mountain, the massive architecture of the aqueducts and bridges, and of the roads which round the precipices upon the sides, are in strong contrast with the wildness of the scene; and indeed, it is this which makes its most prominent impression. It is the prodigal and untrimmed luxuriance of a new country with the solid and venerable conveniences of the old. One other feature I will add, in the way of general portraiture:—the vegetation for which the *air alone is sufficient*, and which clothes the faces of precipices with vines, creepers, mosses and tendrils, in a way wholly unknown in other climates. The rocks have bare faces or chins. They are all bearded with verdure. And so are the caves below. Nakedness there is none. I regret that I have no book of reference at hand, to inform myself better of this family of plants for which the rich atmosphere of the Tropics is soil enough—but you will look them up, for yourself, in any dictionary of flowers. See, also, if you please, whether there is not a correspondent class in the human family. I have a vague instinct that living on air and being ornamental only, was the original destiny of some men, as of some plants.

About a mile out of town, on this road, we stopped to visit a public Garden of Plants, laid out originally with royal magnificence among the terraces and precipices on the banks of the river. The accumulation of wonderful trees, (for which no glass roofs were needed,) must have been made with large cost as well as directed by taste and science; but it is now a somewhat neglected garden—everything luxuriantly overgrown, and the effect of the gorgeous flowers, on the untrimmed limbs of huge trees, more hay stack-y than tasteful. The eye refuses to take in so much brilliant magnificence at one time. It is a wilderness of labyrinthine shades, where you are shaded more by trees of flowers than by trees of leaves—Nature overdrest—a surfeit of beauty.

The country-houses, for the three or four miles that we followed the road, are as near together as spacious grounds will permit, and they seem built for a world where there is no suspicion, nobody to shut out, no reserve, and little or no privacy. I presume we saw every member of every household we passed. The fences are very ornamental, but quite open, and there is no vine or shrubbery between house and road. The high foliage of tall trees is like a portico, under which we looked, with no obstruction except their trunks, like pillars far apart. The houses themselves are mostly of one story, with high and spacious apartments, and the windows are so large and partitions inside so few, that we could see through them as through bird

cages. The ladies were walking about in loose *neglige*, some with cups of coffee in their hands, some feeding the chickens and turkeys, (which, here, are admitted into good society, rank as pets, and walk in front of the house or where they please,) and some leaning indolently over balustrades, talking to the negroes or watching the pranks of naked black children—but it so happened that we saw not one with a book in her hand. The gentlemen of almost every house seemed to be lounging on easy chairs under the portico, reading the newspapers. From the difficulty of raising or preserving grass in these latitudes, the grounds about the houses are very bare, except where rich flowers are cultivated, and this is in unpleasant contrast with the sumptuousness of the wooden architecture, the fence-posts crowned with vases, the gaudy colors and general air of *magnificence only*. Of *comfort* there is no sign—the climate doubtless rendering it unnecessary. How much the English, (by the way,) owe, of their perfection in comfort, to the *compulsion of climate*; and how much of the Northern taste for privacy, unpromiscuousness and hedge-about-iness, is an unnatural and fastidious growth of excessive in-door life, are questions that occur to one, in looking at these people. To feel nobody's eye, and be as unconscious of observation as a bird, seems to be a universal result of the Southern habits; as, to be nervously exclusive and social only by effort, seems a result of the Northern. It is a very pretty dinner-table topic, as it stands—and so I leave it.

As the sugar-cane fields began to appear, and the road grew mountainous, we turned our horses' heads—meeting, at the moment, two young ladies of very marked style, and faces very sweet though plain, riding on horseback without bonnets, but with a black servant, *on foot*, carrying their two parasols. Their ponies were on an easy pace, and the servant on a slow trot. This barefooted and literal *foot*man, in unembarrassed shirt and trousers, was rather a variation from a London footman with gold lace and cocked hat—but it was a fair exponent of the habitual *laisser-aller* of the Creole.

I must incorporate, into this mention of the suburbs of St. Pierre, an incident which occurred to us on the other side of the city, and which will illustrate the kind manners of these unceremonious dwellers in the country. Mr. G. and myself had mounted the high hill which overlooks the Bay, shutting in the town on the southern side, but found it difficult to get a view without encroaching upon the private grounds of the beautiful villas which edge the declivity. Seeing a gate temptingly open, however, and which led to a terrace overhanging a bold precipice we had walked under, we ventured in. The blinds of the house were closed, as it was still the lingering hour of the siesta; but a seat stood invitingly before us, and upon this we made ourselves

comfortable, supposing we had done so unobserved. The city lay at a biscuit-toss beneath us, the harbor spread away before, and the verdure-laden mountains rose in grand magnificence beyond; and we were giving our eyes their first cursory feast upon all this, when there was a rattle of opening shutters in the house behind. A barefooted negress was at our elbow the next moment, with the compliments of Madame and a request that we would walk in. Thinking that we might have been mistaken for authorized visiters, I explained that we were only intruders, desirous of getting a view from the terrace, and charged the servant with our apology and a hope that we should not give the lady of the house any trouble. We rose to go, with this, but, upon the portico before us, stood a tall and slight lady, of a manner of very high-bred repose and easy self-possession, who repeated the invitation with a graciousness it was impossible to decline. We followed her into a large drawing-room furnished with French elegance and luxuriousness, and after enlightening her as to our country and our purpose of travel, conversation turned upon general topics, and a half hour passed away very delightfully. Two lovely children bounded in, after a while, giving me an opportunity of describing those I had left at home, and, with these more personal topics, we were soon as well acquainted, at least, as a letter of introduction would have made us. The mingled ease and dignity of our fair entertainer impressed my friend as well as myself very strongly. It was the French courtliness with the Creole[3] abandonment to indolent grace. The setting sun was throwing its yellow rays into the room when we rose to go, but it was with great difficulty we resisted a pressing invitation to remain to dinner, or to take wine or some refreshment before leaving. A request that we would repeat our visit, and a profusion of compliments in return for our expressions of grateful pleasure, sent us on our way with renewed wonder upon what planet of unworldliness we had dropped—a feeling which every new change of our Martinique experience seems but to confirm and brighten. Try and see the French under a tropical sun, before you die, my dear Morris!

[3] Thiers (whose works I find in Madame Stephanie's library) describes the Creole, in his portraiture of the Empress Josephine:—"Josephine etait Creole de naissance, et avait toutes les graces, tous les defauts ordinaires aux femmes de cette origine. Bonne, prodigue et frivole, point belle mais parfaitement elegante, douee d'un charme infine, elle savait plaire beaucoup plus que des femmes, qui lui etaient superieure en esprit et en beaute."

Josephine's mother, I find, remained in Martinique, and still lived in St. Pierre when Napoleon was made Emperor. The Governor of the island gave a grand illumination and ball, on the occasion, at which the old lady was, of course, the lioness. There are still relatives of the family here, and the present harbor-master is one. The family name was Tascher de la Pagerie.

By way of respect to our nativity, Mr. G. proposed a walk to the American wharf—the lumber-yard of St. Pierre, off which was lying a down-easter at anchor. As we had heard no English spoken since we landed,

we had some hope of falling in with the skipper—but in this we were disappointed. The planks and boards smelt saw-mill-y and looked like a Sunday walk opposite Hoboken. So far was our patriotism refreshed—and no farther. This had led us to a part of the town we had not before visited, however, and we kept on to see what a large building, in the distance, might be. It had a spacious court-yard, filled with officials, and, while we stood looking in—waiting to ask a question of some communicative-looking man—our good genius, Madame Stephanie, suddenly stood behind us. She was just from the market, near by, and her hands were full of flowers as her heart was full of kindness. In a moment she had called one of the custom-house officers to her, an acquaintance of her own, who seemed only too delighted to do anything to serve her, and we were shown, with every honor and respect, over the public store-house that it was—but this was not what I set out to describe.

In the course of the conversation a neighboring chateau was mentioned, which was an object of interest to strangers, and which we had not yet visited, and Madame Stephanie's recommendation availed us to have one of the public offices locked up while the polite incumbent went with us in quality of cicerone. Passing a very beautiful cemetery, (whose every grave was in the midst of its little flower garden watchfully tended,) we crossed one of the city fortifications, and arrived at a chateau built on the high bank of the river Madame, at the point of its junction with the sea. This was a costly site, with its great natural beauty and its close neighborhood to the city, but its structure and its grounds were originally of a grandeur and magnificence quite royal. The massive stone building with its stately wings, and the gardens with their statues and artificial lakes, summer-houses and innumerable walks, are still untouched—save by time. It is still in the hands of the family who erected and kept it up—that of the Marquis de Perrinel. The present lord of it, however, is high in office in Paris, under Louis Napoleon, and the family estate, though still held, seems almost forgotten. M. Perrinel's eldest son had arrived, on a visit, a few days before, and the old gray-haired negro domestic who was showing us the portraits of the family and the remains of their magnificence in furniture, etc., took us into a large room where the table was laid for his breakfast. He must look around with a melancholy feeling—the roof of so much past grandeur over his head which he has no longer the fortune to sustain. We were told by our courteous conductor that the hospitality of the chateau, and the beauty and accomplishments of the family, were famous and proverbial for many generations. So burn out the bright lights of worldly splendor! But I should

like, for one, to refill, trim, and sustain some of them, still burning on, to be admired. We live in an age of making all lamps alike comfortably dull.

On our return home, we passed a sergeant with a relief guard, and two of his soldiers were *black*. They enlist here without reference to color—but it rather spoils the *uniform*-ity of the uniform. I dare say they would fight as well, and have just as much right to enrollment among the "unnamed demigods" as any whiter soldiers who die on the field of battle, for their country or a shilling a day. The large development, which is one of the differences of the negro form, made the cartouch-boxes rather stick out behind, but, in other respects, they were better built and more military-looking than the other soldiers.

And with this military item, which you may some day have occasion to use in the way of your command, my dear General, I think I may gracefully close. So adieu.

LETTER No. 13.

INTRODUCTION TO A BLACK BELLE WHO “GOES INTO SOCIETY” IN MARTINIQUE—REASON WHY SHE HAS NO SURNAME—NEGRO PASSION FOR CHANGING THEIR NAMES—MADEMOISELLE JULIETTE THE FRIEND OF OUR HOSTESS—DESCRIPTION OF HER COLORED BEAUTY—THE SPLENDID GOLD ORNAMENTS PECULIAR TO THE MARTINIQUE NEGRESSES, CINQ-CLOUS EAR-RINGS, ETC.—THE DARK BELLE’S RECEPTION OF US—HER MANNERS—HER LOVE OF FUN, AND HER AMUSEMENT AT THE NEW YORK DISTINCTIONS OF PROPRIETY—EXCHANGE OF KEEPSAKES WITH HER, AND ADIEU—COMPARATIVE SOCIAL POSITION OF BLACKS AND WHITES ON THE ISLAND—DISTINCTIONS OF COLOR GIVING WAY—BOTH COLORS ALIKE INVITED TO THE BALLS AND FESTIVITIES OF FORT ROYAL, THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT—MORE RELUCTANT AMALGAMATION AT ST. PIERRE, THE LARGE CAPITAL—SOCIETY CHECKED BY NEGRO HOSTILITY AT THIS—ADMISSION OF BLACK FEMALE PUPILS TO THE ARISTOCRATIC SCHOOL OF THE CONVENT—CURIOUS SCANDAL AND ITS RESULT—MONS. BISSETTI, THE COLORED REPRESENTATIVE, AND HIS HISTORY—THE NEGRO LOVE OF CHANGE—LAW TO CHECK HIS FICKLENESS—HIS PASSION FOR WIVES AWAY FROM HOME—INTERESTING EXTRACTS ON NEGRO CHARACTER, ETC., ETC.

Martinique, April, 1852.

Dear Morris:—

I will commence my letter, I believe, with introducing you to a *belle* of a new color—my Hon. friend and myself having just been presented to a jet-black young lady, who is “in the best of society” of Fort Royal, (the seat of Government, twenty miles from here) and who is said to be more admired, by the French officers stationed there, than any other lady on their visiting list. Of that city of ten thousand inhabitants, Mademoiselle Juliette Celestine, we were assured, is quite the fashionable young lady most attended to.

I do not give you, (you observe,) the patronymic or surname, of Mademoiselle Juliette. As far as I could make it out, she has none—and upon this point I was a little troubled, till I recalled an explanation of it in Breen’s work on these islands. He states it as a peculiarity of the negro race,

that they *refuse to be enslaved to any particular name*. Let me quote the conclusion of his remarks on the subject:—

> "Nor is this corruption of the language (by the negroes) confined to mere words: it extends also to proper names; so much so, indeed, that there are few persons on the island that are not designated by any name but their own. Some have the *sobriquet* of Moncoq, Montout, Fanfax, Laquerre. Others have their names mollified by means of certain dulcet, endearing terminations: thus Anne becomes *Anzie*; Catherine *Catiche*: Bessie *Bessonnete*; whilst the greatest number, dropping altogether the names given them at the baptismal font, have adopted others of more modern vogue. Jean Baptiste is supplanted by *Nelson*; Francois, by *Francis*; Cyprien, by *Camille*; and, what is still more preposterous, not only are the Christian names altered in this way, but *the patronymics of many are entirely suppressed*. Monsieur Jean Marie Beauregard considers Jean Marie too vulgar, and adopts the name of Alfred; and his friends consider Beauregard too long, and omit it altogether in their dealings with him. By this process, M. Jean Marie Beauregard is metamorphosed into plain *M. Alfred*: and his wife, if he have any, goes by the style and title of *Madame Alfred*. This confusion of names would be merely ludicrous, if it were not pregnant with mischief to the community. From being first sanctioned in the intercourse of every day life, and introduced into family circles, the alterations and substitutions had gradually crept into the more serious relations of trade and litigation; so that, when the Commissioners of Compensation were about to adjudicate upon the claims and counter-claims from St. Lucia, (the neighboring island,) scarcely a single individual was found to have preserved his *proper name* in the different documents submitted on his behalf. Difficulty and delay were the result; and many persons only succeeded in establishing their identity and securing their property, by obtaining affidavits, certificates of baptism, and notarial attestations, at considerable expense."

Mademoiselle Juliette Celestine, (whose name is entitled to your respect, with this explanation,) is an intimate friend of our fair hostess, and it was to this happy chance that we owed the privilege of a presentation to her. She was in town for a few days, and had called, yesterday; and, on Madame Stephanie's mentioning, this morning at breakfast, that she was to call again to-day, we so expressed ourselves as to be sent for on her arrival.

M’lle. Juliette is of the blood that does not thin with the climate, as do the whites. She is about nineteen, and as plump as Hebe—her original model from Nature apparently just perfected. Her skin, though as black a one as I ever saw, is fine-grained and lustrous, and her shoulders, (there was no denying,) quite beautiful. The gorgeous colored Madras turban covered her forehead to the eyebrows, and, with a long sweep of twisted fold over the cheek, concealed the hair—the lace hem of her snowy chemise being the next downward interruption to the lines of rounded ebony. Her features are strictly African—the lips full, and the nose of that degree of flatness which is only affectionate, and which I take to be the highest expression of this shape in contradistinction to the more repelling aquiline. Her eyes would have been beautiful if there had been anything white in the neighborhood with which to contrast them—but black eyes on so black a ground were “coals to Newcastle.” They had one fine quality, however; they had never been contracted with a suspicion, or a withdrawal of confidence, or an attempt to understand anything that did not speak for itself; and they were, consequently, as tranquilly open as the cups of two water-lilies. Her smile was of the same never startled confidingness—coming and going with the ease of a shadow—and her teeth were only too white and perfect for any piquancy of expression. No jeweller could have cut them more evenly out of pearl. Her little fat black hands were daintily tapered, and looked lady-like. She wore large rings, and these, with her heaps of gold chains and the enormous gold ear-rings, which they call *cinq-clous*, made a sort of barbaric glitter, with her lively gestures and expressive motions of the head, which seemed to me very picturesque. I was pleased, by the way, with the consistency with which she adhered to the dress and ornaments exclusively worn by those of her own color. The *cinq-clous* ear-rings, particularly—masses of solid gold, resembling five small kegs welded together by the sides—are seen in every respectable black ear, never in a white one. It would have been natural and reasonable for her, considering her means and social position, to have graced her beauty with some of the French fashions, abundantly within reach and worn by the Creole ladies with whom she associates.

Mademoiselle Juliette’s reception of us was politely cordial and entirely without embarrassment. It seemed odd to us, at first, to hear the French, which we consider an accomplishment, come so fluently and elegantly from a mouth of that color, but it heightened the novelty and charm of her impression. After a little talk upon climates, conversation turned upon the usages of our ladies, and the differences of etiquette in our different countries, and she laughed immoderately at some of the American

distinctions between propriety and impropriety in female manners. Love of fun seemed to be her uppermost quality, and her own views and notions, though entirely modest and delicate, were a singular mixture of frankness and droll mockery. I could easily see how the French officers at Fort Royal might find a constant pleasure in her society. Our visit ended with an examination of her monstrous ear-rings, (for which she held her cheek towards us with the simplicity of a child,) and, with an exchange of souvenirs between her and myself—I giving her my watch-guard, and she giving me two berries of the acajou tree, which she carried as charms in her pocket. My friend and I agreed that we had made a charming call, and that Mademoiselle Juliette Celestine was a memorable addition (of a new color) to our acquaintance.

I have made many inquiries as to the comparative social position of the blacks and whites on the island. The distinctions of color are fast giving way. The French, as we know by our Indian history, amalgamate more easily than any other nation, with whatever race they fall among, and there are families of blacks who have the entire freedom of all the best society of Martinique. There is a difference, however, in this respect, between the large commercial and fashionable capital of St. Pierre, and the smaller town of Fort Royal, which is the seat of Government. The *official* orders are, to allow no distinctions to be made; and the Governor's balls and parties, and those of the officers and civil functionaries, are attended as numerously by blacks as by whites. In St. Pierre, there is still a reluctance to admit colored persons into society; and the discontent which this creates has almost put a stop to the gayeties of the town. If an exclusively white party is given, the blacks of the lower orders collect around the doors and make such disturbances as effectually to interrupt the pleasure of the evening. With the constant dread of insurrections, and the memory of the massacre of the whites which occurred a few years since, the inhabitants do not feel safe in defying these interruptions of their comfort. It is a recent triumph of the blacks, that the famous and aristocratic convent of this place has been compelled to admit colored young ladies, if offered as pupils. Another triumph has been added to this, in the shape of a result of a matter of some scandal. A wealthy planter, when dying, a year or more since, recommended to the special care of his young wife, a negro youth, one of his manumitted slaves, who had been his favorite. The black boy, after a month or two, was found dining at his mistress's table, and it was at this point of intimacy that her aristocratic relatives interfered and made their greatest opposition and remonstrance. The course of time, however, brought about more serious proofs of intimacy, and then the relatives gave up opposition, the matter was

compromised, and the planter's widow and her manumitted slave were very recently married, with all the usual forms and ceremonies. The whole affair is still a lively topic of Martinique gossip.

An introduction, kindly offered us, to Monsieur Bissette, the negro representative from Martinique to the National Assembly at Paris, has been prevented by his recent illness. The history of this now celebrated man is dramatic enough to be remembered. A tract which he wrote upon the hardships of the negro slaves in the colonies, drew upon him the hostility of the local government, and he was arrested, tried, branded, and condemned to the galleys. On arriving in France, an able lawyer, feeling a sympathy in his case, undertook to procure him a new trial at Paris. He succeeded, pleaded his cause, and procured his acquittal. Bissette returned to Martinique in 1848, and his reception by the negroes was the most tumultuous scene ever witnessed in the country. The planters and citizens expected, of course, that in him, they had now, a dangerous and bitter enemy; but, on the contrary, his whole course and policy have been to establish a kindly understanding between the whites and blacks of the island. As Representative and citizen, he has shown himself, every way, a man of enlarged and liberal philanthropy. A class of the blacks has fallen off from supporting him, naturally; but, in the general esteem of the inhabitants, of both colors, he stands higher, perhaps, than any other man.

The negro's *inordinate and uncontrollable love of change* is the greatest obstacle which philanthropists find in the way of bettering his condition. Physiologists say it is a quality in his blood. He is constant to nothing which he can set aside. The law has lately made an attempt to correct this fickleness, as far as it affects service in families and on plantations. Since emancipation, it has been found impossible to retain them, except for a little time in each new place; and laborers often occasioned great loss to the planter by suddenly leaving him when his crop was ripe on the ground and needed immediate harvesting. The new law compels a written agreement for every term of service, and binds both parties, by heavy penalties, to adhere to it. New servants and laborers are not to be employed without a certificate, from the last place, that these conditions have been fulfilled. All this excites great discontent, among them, however.

A curious proof of the negro love of novelty was mentioned to us by a most intelligent gentleman who has resided twenty years on the island. They work on estates where there are usually as many females as males, but they never form intimacies on the estates where they live. They must have their temporary wives on plantations three or four miles off; and thither they go

nightly, at both great inconvenience and great danger—the walk after dark, and the return before daylight, exposing them to the venomous snakes which sleep coiled upon the roads, and the fatigue being a heavy addition to their day's labor. This evil, however, will disappear gradually before the growing ambition to be "respectable"—the first step of which, usually, is to marry legally and legitimatize children. They then become extremely punctilious and etiquettical, never addressing each other without "Monsieur" and "Madame," and going through all forms and ceremonies with ludicrous pertinacity and gravity. Breen makes some remarks on these points which are valuable, from his well weighed knowledge of the race:—

> "Amongst the numerous peculiarities of the negro character, as it is moulded or modified by French society is their constant aping of their superiors in rank. During slavery, the most venial offence, the most innocent familiarity, was regarded as an '*insolence*,' and, all the year round, the din of '*Je vous trouve bien insolent*,' resounded in the negro's ear. From long habit this expression has now become a by-word with the lower orders: it is, in fact, the style of their abuse of each other, and the most opprobrious epithet in their Billingsgate vocabulary. *Canaille* is deemed too vulgar, and *negraille* too personal; while '*in-so-lent*' carries with it a pungency which receives added zest from the recollections of the past.
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> "But if, to be deemed *insolent* is the lowest step of degradation, to be held *respectable* is the highest step in the ladder of social distinction. Nothing can be more amusing than to observe the talismanic effect of this word upon the lower orders; even the common street-criers take advantage of it in the disposal of their wares. Some time ago a female servant being commissioned to sell a quantity of biscuits of inferior quality, hawked them about to the cry of '*biscuits pour les dames respectables*.' As she passed along the street, the conceited recommendation did not fail to attract the attention of those for whom it was thrown out. The hawker was stopped at every door, and so great was the anxiety of the negresses to test the quality of her biscuits as a patent of respectability, that, before she had reached the end of the street, she had disburdened herself of the contents of her tray.
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> "The negro's pretensions to respectability are founded more upon the contrast between himself and the European laborer, than

upon any positive good qualities that he can lay claim to. In some points there is a decided superiority on his side. His person and his hut, apart from the influence of the climate, are cleaner than those of the white peasant; his holiday dress more stylish, and his gait and attitudes less clumsy and clownish: but he is surpassed by the white man in the more solid qualities of industry and perseverance. A negro espies his fellow at the end of the street, and, rather than join him in a *tete-a-tete*, he will carry on a conversation with him for several hours at the top of his voice, to the unspeakable annoyance, perhaps the scandal, of those who may occupy the intermediate houses. Should the wind blow off his hat, and warn him to depart, he will continue the conversation, and let some one else pick it up for him; or, if he condescend to notice the occurrence, he turns round, with an air of offended dignity, puts his arms a-kimbo, takes a quiet look at the hat as it rolls along, shrugs up his left shoulder, and walks leisurely after it, until it meets with some natural obstruction.

"The general character of the French negro, physical, moral and social, may be summed up in a few words. His person is well-proportioned, his movements are brisk, his carriage easy, without stiffness or swagger. His disposition is uncommonly gay and good-humored; he is always singing or whistling when compatible with his actual occupation. He is submissive, but never obsequious; and, though born and bred in slavery, there is not a trace of servility in the outward man. Unlike the European peasant, who seldom presents himself before a clean coat without a feeling of crawling degradation, the French colonial negro is polite to a point; he can touch his hat to any one, but he will not uncover himself in the open air, even for the Governor of the colony. He is docile, intelligent and sober; active, but not laborious; superstitious, but not religious; addicted to thieving without being a rogue; averse to matrimony, yet devoted to several wives; and, though faithful to neither, he can scarcely be deemed debauched. His friendship is sincere, his gratitude unbounded, and his generosity to all about him only surpassed by his affectionate attachment to his children. In him the undisciplined character of the African is tempered by the accident of his birth. He is, in short, a compound of savageness and civilization—the rude production of the desert, transplanted to a more congenial soil, and polished off, externally, by the decencies and humanizing contact of

> English and French society; but without that culture, in religion and education, which alone can impart either weight or moral dignity to the social man.”

This was written, you well remember, some years ago, and, with the progress since, it is to be read with some grains of difference. Of the *present* state of the advance class of the negro race in these islands, Mademoiselle Juliette and Monsieur Bissette may be to you very fair points of estimate and comparison—one social, the other political. In this respect, what I have put together may be of some value, and I believe I will confine this letter altogether to the *coloured* topic, and close where I am.

LETTER No. 14.

GOOD FEATURE OF THE CATHOLIC RELIGION—HOUR OF REVERIE IN THE CATHEDRAL—GIRLS CROWDING TO THE CONFESSIONAL—SWALLOWS NESTLING BEHIND THE PICTURES OF THE VIRGIN—A NEGRO WOMAN'S PRAYER PROBABLY ANSWERED—SUNDAY MORNING MASS IN LENT—THE FASHIONABLE CREOLES IN PARISIAN TOILETTES—THE NEGRESS IN FULL DRESS—AFFECTIONATENESS OF FRENCH PEOPLE TOWARD MATRONS—NEGRESS' SUBSTITUTE FOR WOOLLY HEAD—MADRAS KERCHIEFS PAINTED EVERY WEEK—CASCADE OF TURBANS POURING DOWN THE STEPS OF THE CATHEDRAL—DESCRIPTION OF MARTINIQUE FEMALE DRESS—BUST LEFT TO ITSELF—UNGRACEFUL MANNER OF HITCHING UP THE PETTICOAT—NO STOCKINGS ON BLACK FEET, BUT PATENT-LEATHER SHOES THOUGHT ELEGANT—FORTUNE IN GOLD ORNAMENTS—FAMILIES AND NEIGHBORS SEATED IN THE STREETS—NO IN-DOOR LIFE—NEGRESS AND HER ORANGE—THE FRANGIPANE, A WONDERFULLY BEAUTIFUL FLOWERING TREE—POLITENESS OF FRENCH GENTLEMEN MET IN A WALK—THE DIFFERENCE OF THESE SUBURBS FROM OURS, AND THE VARIOUS NEW SIGHTS SEEN IN THE FIRST MILE OR TWO OUT OF ST. PIERRE, ETC., ETC.

Martinique, April, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I cannot but think it a good feature of a religion, that the service attracts idlers to its church every day—whatever be the immediate motive of their curiosity. Good thoughts are apt to drop upon a man, from sacred roofs; and without being a Catholic, one may have so put his heart within reach of gentler and better influences, by daily reverie amid impressive architecture and ceremonials, as to owe a great deal to Catholic churches. The sight of people praying sincerely is very moving; and the living picture seldom wanting in any dome or cathedral, is some poor wretch who has come in, from a world without pity, and in finding relief and consolation in kneeling where there is hope and mercy.

The church, this morning, (into which I had strolled, with an hour to spare,) was a delightful shelter from the glare of the sun, our usual sight-seeing ramble having extended far into a southern forenoon—nine o'clock. There was no service, except a priest in every confessional box, and six or seven young girls, at each one, waiting with sins to disburthen. A young

negro priest was busy about the altar, arranging its silver furniture and dropping to his knee whenever he passed before the image of the Virgin, and the only sound that interrupted the shuffle of his slippers was the whir of the wings of a flock of swallows, a dozen or more of them having built their nests between the holy pictures and the walls of the chancel. I found a seat for my tired limbs—(the dim light and lofty roof an easy-chair for my tired mind)—and, for an hour, enjoyed at least the luxury of the spot.

Several had come in and told their beads while I sat there, and the turbaned heads had one after another, been laid against the brass plate, (the other side of whose secret-keeping holes were at the priest's ear in the confessional box,) and, when I rose to go, I was almost alone. One negro woman was the only worshipper I saw—a hideous-looking object, she seemed at first—who had apparently just ventured to creep within the threshold, and setting down the wooden tray with which she had brought in a load for the market, had sunk into a heap of rags and misery upon her knees. I was passing her, when the expression of her face arrested my attention—complete exhaustion and suffering, softened with an inexpressible sincerity of imploringness. She prayed as if she felt, that, if there were a God in heaven, she would then be heard—that she had suffered enough, and was poor enough, and old and weary enough, to make it sure—and she was waiting to be answered. I stepped over the ashy white soles of her skinny and dusty black feet turned up on the edges of her rags, and as I rounded the post of the porch near which she knelt, dropped a piece of money into the dirty cloth she had laid aside upon the floor, the cushion which softened the weight of her tray upon her head. To her it was an answer to prayer, there is little doubt—and, if the angel did not do it, (perhaps they did, by prompting me,) she probably believed they did; and there are illusions, if this were one, which it is better should be believed in.

We were at the Sunday morning mass, at this same church, and as it is the season of Lent, it was unusually thronged. We saw, we were assured, the choicest of the female society of the place—and female, almost to a man, the congregation was. The Creole ladies were in unexceptionable French toilet—charming bonnets of the newest Parisian fashion, beautifully worn as well as beautifully chosen—and there was no look of the Tropics about them except in their complexions. A sallowness, of the hue of handled ivory, (which I am growing to think rather elegant than otherwise,) is on the youngest and healthiest cheek, and of roses there are none. But we were charmed with one thing, which delights the traveller wherever the French are found—the affectionate and caressing respect with which the elderly ladies of the crowd were treated by their younger friends and acquaintances.

As the dispersing congregation poured out of church, the centres of the groups were the gray-haired matrons—(who, by the way, were dressed with a care and an elegant propriety that expressed their social value)—and who were beset, and questioned, and kissed, as if to be loved and admired, it were only necessary to be old. The manners of the gray-haired favorites were most winning, I thought—their dignity and ease being mingled with a kind of condescending playfulness and gayety that must make the young people at home in their company, and which showed, besides, how completely restraint was removed, and how sincere and natural were the exchanges of compliments and kind words. Life brightens to the end, in this way, as the sun sets.

But the Sunday mass, we had been told, was the great opportunity to see the holiday costumes and demeanor of the middle and lower classes of the island—and a show of no small magnificence it was. The French negress gives up her wool, as impracticable of coiffure; but she makes up for her disowned peculiarity as a thunder-cloud is replaced by a rainbow. Her Madras turban is not only of every color that can be woven, but the squares in it are painted with brighter colors, renewed after every washing. In any street of St. Pierre on a week day you may see the black beauty with pots and paint-brush, preparing her bright kerchief for Sunday wear. You can have no idea of the effect of a thousand of these gorgeous heads coming down the steps of a cathedral. It was like a Trenton Falls of tulips and bouquets—a slow cascade of negresses crowned with rainbows—the black faces giving the relief of velvet under flowers. A true copy of a cathedral with such a congregation issuing from it, would astonish even Williams and Stevens's show window.

The remainder of the dress—the fashion of which they adhere to, with singular universality—is primitively simple. It is a chemise and a petticoat—nothing else. The short sleeves of the white under-garment hang very loosely about the shoulders, and as it is not shaped at all to the form, there seems to be no particular design of concealing the bust either by young women or old. As to figure, indeed, they have evidently no idea of any differences of beauty in it, or display of it, except by the colours in which it is draped. The petticoat is a mere skirt of brilliant dyes, tied over the chemise at the waist, and they have a very unbecoming fashion of wearing it so long that it cannot be loosed upon the ground, but must be caught up and hitched at the side. It, consequently, clings ungracefully close behind, showing, sometimes, to be sure, a well-turned and polished calf of a black leg, but otherwise quite spoiling the beauty of these stately Cleopatras. I have not seen a stocking on one of them, since I have been here, and they

are usually barefooted—but it seems to be the height of elegance, with here and there a dressy one, to wear gentlemen's walking-pumps of patent-leather, in which the skin sets like a neat black stocking. The gold ornaments are of such monstrous massiveness and quantity as to be the feature which catches the eye, however. I am told that a girl usually carries her whole fortune in them, and to her ebony complexion, the rich yellow of the gold is certainly very embellishing.

A walk through the streets of St. Pierre on Sunday afternoon, is not very much what a walk through the streets of New York would be, at the same hour. The whole population are seated outside—the white people in chairs around the doors, the black people in the middle of the street, squat on the pavement—and all in costumes of the gayest colors. The climate, which, at the North, is simply air to breathe, here furnishes several things beside, viz.:—a drawing-room with a blue roof, happiness when idle, and several articles of dress.

A house, for the negro, is only a place to sleep and be sick in. He and his family reside in the open air and, on a holiday evening, every corner you turn seems to present you with an immense game of "hunt the slipper," played by the opposite neighbors on the pavement between their houses. I have described to you the bright rivulet in the middle of every street, and the cleanliness of every one of them, from there being no vehicles and seldom a horse passing—and this makes the front of every dwelling like a court-yard and it is so used. The naked children sit in the water or run about like a litter of puppies; the men and women lounge on the flat stones, and smoke, and look on; the old folks lean against the wall, happy in their segars; young girls coquet with their finery, straightening up and taking an attitude as the stranger comes along; nobody looks "bored," nobody particularly grave, everybody content, and half the world, at least, very merry.

Through all this, it is very amusing for a foreigner to stroll, and, to me, it is a succession of *tableaux vivants* of which I never tire. One picks his way through seated neighborhoods of people, and around groups, making the circuit of a fat beauty and her dress, or stepping over a child or its grandmother, and, really, sees more of the physiognomy of the people and their habits, in half an hour, than elsewhere in a month. "Interior life"—of which the stranger may see nothing, in other cities—is here all open to him. *Le diable boiteux*, who looked down through the roofs, could scarce see more.

An instance of negro politeness which we fell in with, the other evening, may amuse you. My friend and I were sauntering slowly toward the lovely

suburbs of the town, when I found myself compelled to go round a fat negress, very gaily dressed, who sat on the pavement in the street, and was indolently dividing an orange. The segments of the fruit looked so ripe and tempting, that I ventured to put thumb and finger toward one of them, and ask for it with a *s'il vous plait.* She nodded her chin quite down into her black bosom as she handed the orange up to me, but, seeing Mr. G. at the next moment, she insisted on my taking the rest of the fruit and sharing it with my friend. With a broad smile of good nature that had not a shadow of servility or obsequiousness in it, she waved her fat hand with an adieu, and we went on our way, enriched with a new acquaintance. I have met her once since, and taken off my hat, with quite as much pleasure as a bow usually gives—and the world would be happier, I think, if this were a specimen of its every-day intercourse.

A little farther on, in the same walk, we passed a garden in which there was a flowering tree, of a beauty quite new to us. Its green foliage was very full, and the tree was about as tall as the common tulip tree—but it looked precisely as if a soft damp snow had fallen in the night and laden down its branches with as much as they could bear. The rich white flowers lay cupped in the middle of each spreading branch—a large lap-full in every clustre. We learned afterwards that this was the *frangipane*—and it seemed an exotic, for we in vain enquired its name, of two very intelligent-looking gentlemen who were passing at the moment, but of whose politeness I wished to speak, by the way, as illustrating the manners of the better class of white inhabitants. They raised their hats very courteously at my abrupt question, stopped, and entered into conversation, and parted from us, after five minutes' discourse upon the trees and plants of the island, with the civility of friends or acquaintances. As we were bound to a public promenade, we passed these same gentlemen again, seated on one of the stone benches, and they took off their hats to us again with the same genial courtesy and a polite phrase of recognition. This is not much, perhaps, but as a feature of national manners, I think it very admirable. The stranger is made to feel at home by such kindness, and there is an out-door hospitality in it, which, for the pleasure it gives, leaves "letters of introduction" far behind.

Poor people, here, live in the city—not in the suburbs; and a walk out of town is, consequently, a pleasanter thing than where the suburbs are shanties and pig-styes—(a three mile gauntlet of vile smells, as it is at New York.) Gardens and villas commence immediately at the ends of the streets, and, to an American eye, at least, there are few objects, moving or stationary, even for the first mile out of St. Pierre on the north, that are not new and picturesque. So it seemed to us. A little altar, at the side of the road, had one

poor candle burning before its rude image of the Virgin, and a negro knelt praying before it. The ladies sat smoking their segars under the porticoes. Yoked together by the horns, and with their noses crowded down to the dust, the poor oxen, that could not turn their heads, toiled past with their monstrous loads, and gave us a side glance out of their great mournful eyes. A new volcano, lately broken out in the side of the mountain beyond, (and in which the inhabitants rejoice, as a vent for what might otherwise have been an earthquake,) sent up its black column of smoke to the sky. Charming waterfalls, sluices from the sides of the massive aqueducts, poured over the precipices that were not born to the honor of so white a veil. Soldiers off duty were strolling over the hills in their bright uniforms. Naked black children were playing everywhere on the road, stamped with daguerreotypes of the white-dusted stones they had sat down upon. Flowers of the most brilliant dyes grew wild on all sides. The air was an unmingled deliciousness to breathe, and everybody's countenance indolently and contentedly expressed it. Take me such a walk in your temperate zone, my dear Morris!

And with thus getting the better of you, I will close this letter.

LETTER No. 15.

NUNS NURSING SICK SOLDIERS—DESCRIPTION OF MILITARY HOSPITAL—BEAUTY OF BEARDS IN BED—VISIT TO FREEMASON'S LODGE—CURIOUS VINE—COFFEE-PLANT AND NATURE'S LAW OF FRUIT-BEARING—NEW WAY TO CARRY A CHILD—TEMPORARY MARRIAGES AND THE MANNER OF BREAKING OFF—FASHION FOR GENTLEMEN'S HAIR, IN MARTINIQUE—THE SHOPS WITH NO DISPLAY OUT OF DOORS—MARKET FOR BRILLIANT HANDKERCHIEFS—FEMALE CLERKS—NEGRO FAMILIES IN MOURNING AND THEIR SINGULAR COSTUME—LONG SKIRTS IN THE STREET—RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION ON THE FEW AND ON THE MANY—BLACK MAN BEATING A WOMAN—NEGRO JOURNALISM—PERIODS OF WAKING AND SLEEPING IN WARM CLIMATE—UNHEALTHY JUST BEFORE DAWN—INCIDENT OF POLITENESS—SUGAR, IN THE MUD ON ONE'S BOOTS, ETC., ETC.

St. Pierre, Martinique, April, 1852.

Dear Morris:—

My walk of this morning has been through the wards of a military hospital—a kind of walk I used to be more fond of, in days when the picture of life more needed to borrow shading. This was different, in some respects, from the hospitals I have seen; one might covet a fever to be so lodged and tended. The building was a massive and imposing one, shelved on a terrace close to the bright green hills which embosom the town, and with the courts and gardens of a palace around it. There were two picturesque peculiarities—one of which had a touch of sentiment also: the attendants were Sisters of Charity, nuns nicely coiffed in white, and with their black crosses suspended over the whitest of aprons, whom it looked as if it might be a pleasure to be nursed by. Then the sixty or seventy sick soldiers were heavily bearded; and, as they lay reading, or sleeping, in their long rows of white beds, their heads upon the clean pillows—mustaches, imperials and all—were studies for an artist. Grow your beard, if you wish to look well in bed, my dear General!

Our charming hostess had put me under the charge of one of her friends, a polite French gentleman, who took me from the hospital to the courts of law, and thence to the Lodge of the Freemasons—the latter a labyrinth of access, and full of the mystic symbols of the Order, but not very distinctly describable. What the eyes in the wall meant—the columns with single

letters on them, the daggers on the desks, and the blazing suns with mystic inscriptions—I did not venture to inquire of the venerable negro who showed us the premises. He opened a concealed cupboard in one of the rooms, however, and offered me a glass of brandy and water, and it needed no mutual finger-twist to understand that. Over one of the arbors in the garden grew a vine which was new to me, and which looked like a "washing" of embroidered lace spread to dry in the sun. The leaf was as large as a sheet of note paper, and snowy white, except that in the centre was its own picture in green—a small green leaf, looking precisely as if painted upon the white one, with exquisite art. It seemed native to the soil, and grew most luxuriantly.

I have inquired for the coffee-plant, here, but, though it is one of the products of the island, I cannot get sight of it. They say it is now nearly unproductive, from the ravages of a worm which destroys the leaf. The effort to reproduce the leaf so exhausts the plant that it bears no fruit—a law of Nature, my dear poet, of which you will see many a pretty and similar operation in human character and vicissitude. What berries of delicious flavor some hearts and intellects might bear, but for the worm of care that uses them up with eternal re-producing of the mere foliage for common necessities.

The women of St. Pierre carry their babies to good advantage, by putting them astride the hip. In this position, the child rides as comfortably as in a saddle, while the left arm of the parent, relieved entirely of the weight, has only to steady the little one in its place, leaving her right arm entirely at liberty. The youngster so spread, with one leg before its mother and the other behind her, has probably a better chance to grow, than one tightened into a heap by the squeeze of a tired arm. I saw a nurse, yesterday, by the way, leading a white child of perhaps four years of age, with a beautiful little French cap on its head, but otherwise entirely naked. Children, here, are considered clothed by the climate. I am told, that, when the temporary marriages of the negroes come to an end, they separate in the most friendly manner, the father taking the girls and the mother the boys, and that no family interest is felt afterwards between the children of the same parents. As they change their names whenever the caprice seizes them, brothers and sisters are very likely to meet without being aware of their relationship, unless enlightened by instinct or resemblance.

Hair is unfashionable on this island, as an article of gentleman's wear. They clip it as close as scissors will do it, letting the beard out, however, with proportionable luxuriance. Our handsome host pleads the heat of the

climate as the reason for the fashion; but, cushioning the lips and lungs while the skull is shorn, seems to me a careful cooling of the brain, with a strange forgetfulness of the more sensitive respiration—and excessively unbecoming. The taking off the hat, here, looks like a polite uncovering of a cocoa-nut. The negro probably likes the fashion, as it effaces one distinction between the white man and himself.

I have said nothing of the main street of shops in St. Pierre, though it is part of our daily stroll—but there is less to describe than in such localities usually. There is no outside show—or so little, that, in standing at one end of the street and looking up or down, you would suppose it to be a thoroughfare of dark-fronted dwelling-houses. The display of goods is all inside, and the sign, if there be any, is about of the size and ostentatiousness of a New York attorney's tin "shingle." Still, the finery on sale for the negroes is excessively gay, and kerchiefs particularly are made for this market, which altogether out-glory Canal street and Maiden Lane. For a flashy morning cravat, to be worn with a dressing-gown, there is no place where an exquisite could make a pick so brilliant. And, for a foulard to twist into a turban, or put pockets to, for a lady's apron, even Paris could not show such wealth of variety. The shops are tended by women, as in France, and most graciously and courteously it is done, as the money in your pocket feels and freely comes out to acknowledge.

Among the common sights of the streets of St. Pierre are the negro families *in mourning*, on their way to matins or vespers. The erect and graceful gait adds to the picturesqueness, perhaps, and their autocredulity or complete belief in their own solemnity and propriety, probably adds to the effect; but they certainly are groups to turn and look after. The dress is entirely of black, with the exception of a snow-white turban, even the huge gold ear-rings being covered with crape. The skin of the neck and arms seems to be part of the "funeral sable" also, and the white head-dress is in most unbroken and striking contrast. The going barefooted, as is not inconsistent with a ceremonious toilette in this island, of course makes no speck of white on the moving darkness of form and petticoat.

There is a part of the more ordinary costume of the negress of Martinique which is less artistic, however. With no time or place for a trailing skirt, they still make their dresses as long as a court train, and, in the street, are obliged to bring them round and hitch them up at the side or front. The close cling of the drapery behind is not redeemed by the sight of the projecting heels and glimpses of black ankles as they walk—and, indeed, to all display of the beauty of mere form, the negress seems quite insensible.

Her chemise sits loosely about her chest, and her waist is only defined by the string of the skirt carelessly tied. This is more unaccountable, for so ostentatious a tribe, considering that the best models of Parisian embellishment of form are continually before them. The Creole white lady of Martinique dresses with faultless French elegance.

You will not understand me as portraying the whole, or even a large portion of the negro population in the specimens which I thus select for description. The great majority of the blacks seem to be content with the merest animal existence, idle, ragged, dirty and saucy. Emancipation seems to have degraded the many, while it has elevated the very few. With the French facility of amalgamation of color, the more intelligent negroes, when set free, found the way to respectability easy, and some of them have unquestionably taken advantage of it; while, to most of them, freedom was but the license to be as brutal as their nature dictated, and viciously idle. In our evening walk, yesterday, we came upon a group who were quietly looking on, while a stout fellow was furiously beating a woman over her naked shoulders with a heavy stick; and a more rascally looking half dozen human beings I never saw. The men and women, as little clad as is desirable, lie down any where in the dirt together, caring, apparently, for nothing on earth but the perpetual cigar—an existence which nothing but the liveliness of bad passions prevents from being the most sluggish order of brainless vegetation. Of the negro intellect in activity and cultivation we have not yet, perhaps, full means of judging. I find very contradictory opinions among the residents here, as to their probable progress with time and freedom—the majority declaring, however, that the negro relapse into barbarism is instinctive and inevitable, and that the presence of the white man, who will soon be outswarmed and driven from these latitudes, is all that hinders their sudden and complete abandonment of the restraints of civilization. Some negroes who returned educated from France, by the way, started a journal at St. Pierre. It lasted about two years, and was little except a tissue of personal scurrilities. It was finally quashed by suits for libel.

The periods of the day, here, are a little difficult to adopt. The cocks crow, and the people rise, at least an hour before dawn, though whether the roosters take a compensatory *siesta* at noon, as well as the people, I have not yet inquired. All those who cough, know very well that there is a change in the air, towards morning, which starts the throat’s unwilling music; and my landlady informs me that it is a common opinion, (in this land where window-glass is unknown,) that it is unhealthy to sleep for the two hours preceding day. So everybody sees the stars come *and go*, and half the business of the day is over at our common hour of rising. The *siesta* seems

to me an unnatural sleep, which it takes time to learn the trick of, however, and waking being always a sort of disastrous sensation, it is a pity to make it come oftener.

The tropical insensibility as to being looked at, (of which I have before spoken,) adds very much to the pleasure of the stranger. One likes to scrutinize new faces in new places, and there is a certain agreeable freedom in finding that a full indulgence of this natural curiosity is not considered an impertinence. In one of my daily lounges along the busy water side of the harbor, I was attracted by the unlading of one of the coast-boats, the freight of which appeared to be mostly baskets of fruit and vegetables, from the estates along the sea. The crew, eight or nine athletic negroes, dressed only in the two pocket-handkerchiefs which form the boatman's attire, were landing these on the beach, and a crowd of town servants apparently were waiting to receive them. One neat-looking mulatto girl, as tasteful and attractive in her costume as she could well be, seemed very much embarrassed among the thirty or forty packages, and finally, after questioning in vain several other servants in the group, she looked around, and came up to me, with a most easy and graceful curtesy. "If Monsieur can read writing," she said, in a most deferential and daintily pronounced French, "will he please come and tell me what is written on a basket?" Her thanks, when I had picked out the one which was labelled for her mistress, were expressed in the same modest and graceful way, and I could not but make a white mark for a country where politeness sat so becomingly, even on servants.

In a land where sugar grows there is no starvation. After a walk along the shore where the sugar-hogsheads are perpetually rolling, the sugar-mud sticking to one's boots would probably sweeten the coffee for a family breakfast; and I observed, that, while the coopers were heading the casks, any ragged beggar or urchin was at liberty to help himself to a handfull. This being in a climate that requires no clothing, the two great evils of hunger and nakedness are thus tolerably lessened. Adieu once more.

LETTER No. 16.

EXPERIENCES IN APPROACHING MAMMOTH CAVE—THE TAVERN AT BEAR-WALLOW, AND ITS ACCOMMODATIONS—A CARRIAGE IN REDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES—SPLENDORS OF A KENTUCKY WILDERNESS—DESCRIPTION OF MAMMOTH CAVE HOTEL—BREAKFAST PARTY AND THEIR UNDERGROUND EXPERIENCES—THE LOST BRIDEGROOM AND HIS RESTORATION—JENNY LIND'S GUIDE, STEPHEN—DESCRIPTION OF THIS PICTURESQUE CHARON—HIS INTENTIONS AS A SLAVE—THE UNIFORM PROVIDED FOR ENTERING THE CAVE—SUGGESTION OF SOMETHING MORE PICTORIAL—HISTORY OF THE OWNERSHIP OF THE CAVE—ITS EXTENT, AND THAT OF THE ESTATE ABOVE GROUND—FARMS WHICH IT PROBABLY RUNS UNDER—ATTEMPT TO MAKE IT A PULMONARY HOSPITAL—THE TWO WIVES WHO BURIED THEMSELVES IN THE CAVE WITH THEIR CONSUMPTIVE HUSBANDS—TERROR OF A DEATH IN THE CAVE—THE LOST TRAVELLER—COUNTY UNDERGROUND NOT REPRESENTED—SCENERY FOR POEMS, ETC., ETC.

DEAR MORRIS:—

Mammoth Cave, one may say, is in the depths of Kentucky, far away from thoroughfares and buried in the woods. The nearest public house is the celebrated "Bell's Tavern," six miles south; and from hence there is a stage-coach to the cave; but the approach from any other direction is by private vehicle, and fifteen or twenty miles through the wilderness. Coming across the country from the North-East, I was told that "Bear-wallow" was the nearest point upon the stage-route from whence a conveyance could be obtained, and at this place with the ominous name, I was dropped at midnight. Asleep when we arrived, the coach drove off before I was fairly awake, and I found myself, with my baggage and a full moon, in front of the only building anywhere visible—a ten-foot shanty with a single room that served for Post-Office and "Store." Upon inquiry of the Postmaster, (a barefooted young gentleman in shirt and trousers,) I learned that there was one other building in the village, Hare's Tavern; but as this, the house of his only neighbour, was nowhere visible, I requested the Postmaster to show me the way to it. "No sir-ee!" said he, "that man and I don't speak! I aint been tharr in twelve months!" upon which he prepared to close his door, leaving me and my baggage to the tender mercies of the moon. Persuading him, apparently against his will, to house my portmanteau till morning, I

shouldered my carpet-bag, and trudged “just up the road,” as directed, till I came to the tavern, where I was violently set upon by two dogs—and, after a fight with sticks and stones for fifteen minutes, succeeded in rousing a black girl from her sleep, and gaining admittance and a bed. I am giving you a very literal description of all this, because great wonders throw a charm over their neighbourhoods, and one must tell how Mammoth Cave is approached, as Mr. James describes no castle, without first telling how “a horseman was seen winding up the avenue.”

Spite of the dog-welcome given to the traveller, Bear-wallow Tavern is liberally and kindly kept. A negro came into my room in the morning with a large tub of water, (a bathing luxury not common even in more frequented places,) the breakfast set for me alone would have fed twenty persons, and the society of the landlady and her head man was thrown in—charge for lodging, bath, breakfast, and the conversation of two very agreeable persons, only fifty cents. The large, grassy front yard is nicely shaded, the bed-rooms spacious, the parlour well-furnished. As one of those solitary inns for which a man sometimes sighs, where he may go to “forget and be forgotten” (for a week,) this seemed to me worthy of a memorandum. Bear-wallow, I should add, was named by the hunters, and was formerly known as the greatest resort in Kentucky for bears.—They came to wallow in the mud of the ponds in the neighbourhood.

The sixteen miles through the woods, from Bear-wallow to the cave, would be the most beautiful of rides on horseback, but a rougher track for wheels could scarcely be imagined. My conveyance had seen better days. Its torn curtains and shabby panels told the story of “reduced circumstances,” though to which of those numerous “first families of Kentucky” it had once been the pride and glory, my black driver was unable to tell. Under miles of beach trees, every third one an unsung monarch—through orchestras of mocking-birds and thrushes—over rocks, stumps, and gullies, and through streams and quagmires—we made our varied way. It was an interesting ride —for one never tires of the primitive wilderness with its fragmented sublimities and splendid accidents of beauty—but the sight of the more civilized looking fence, which betokened an approach to the place of our destination, was a considerable relief. Those who come to the Mammoth Cave must prepare for rough riding.

We emerged directly from the woods upon a great mass of irregular building—like two streets of log houses shoved up close, and added on to a two-story tavern—and this clapboarded and porticoed heap seemed islanded in the forest. Its acre or two of court-yard was surrounded by an ocean of

foliage, and the whole place looked like a village that had crowded together from a sense of loneliness. Not a soul visible. The visiters, if there were any, were probably underground. But my driving up to the door brought out the mammoth landlord—a towering and broad-shouldered Kentuckian, with a very kind and hospitable face—and I was soon installed in a clean room with broken windows and no handle to the door, and as comfortable as need be.

At breakfast, the next morning, I met a party of five—two ladies and three gentlemen—for whose reappearance from the nether world we had "waited tea" the night before, but who had not returned till after bed-time, their underground pilgrimage having occupied all day and part of the night. They had penetrated *nine miles* under ground—an eighteen-mile walk, in and out—and their exchange of enthusiasms and felicitations, recounting of adventures and recalling of splendours and wonders, was all very exciting to the curiosity. One of the gentlemen, an elderly Boston merchant, was something of an invalid, and he had achieved this wonderful walk very much to his own astonishment—attributing his unforeseen energies partly to the exciting interest of the scene, and partly to the cool and sustaining dryness of the air. To my own damaged chest and weak limbs this was very encouraging—though instances were mentioned of travellers whose strength had failed them, and this when they were in so far that it was very difficult to get them out. A newly married man, among others, had left his bride above ground—and, passing the Styx, (the cave's subterranean river,) had penetrated six miles when he fainted from exhaustion. The famous guide, Stephen, (of whom honourable mention is made in Benedict's account of Jenny Lind's visit, and every other description of the cave,) actually brought him back, six miles, in his arms; though, considering the ladders to go up and down, the holes to creep through, the crags to climb, the rivers and lakes to navigate, the slippery abysses to edge around, and the long passages in which it is impossible to walk upright, it was considered almost a miracle. It seemed a pity that they did not give the bride an opportunity to make a new version of the story of Eurydice, by summoning her to cross the Styx and bring out her Orpheus. Things come so provokingly near being romantic, sometimes, in these common-place days!

The ladies of this party were talking with a very picturesque-looking personage, after breakfast, and he was presently pointed out to me as the charon of the Kentucky Styx—the remarkable "Stephen." As this was the man who was to take me to "Lethe," (and bring me back again!) ferry me over the "Styx," and show me, on the way, such wonders as "Purgatory," and the "Bottomless Pit," (names of different portions of the cave) I was

interested to see him. I stepped up and joined the group, and the first glance told me that Stephen was better worth looking at than most celebrities. He is a slave, part mulatto and part Indian, but with more of the physiognomy of a Spaniard—his masses of black hair curling slightly and gracefully, and his long mustache giving quite a Castilian air to his dark skin. He is of middle size, but built for an athletic—with broad chest and shoulders, narrow hips, and legs slightly bowed, and he is famous for the dexterity and bodily strength which are very necessary to his vocation. The cave is a wonder which draws "good society," and Stephen shows that he is used to it. His intelligent face is assured and tranquil, and his manners particularly quiet—and he talks to charming ladies with the air of a man who is accustomed to their good will, and attentive listening. The dress of the renowned guide is adapted to dark places and rough work. He wears a chocolate-coloured slouched hat, a green jacket and striped trousers, and evidently takes no thought of his appearance. He is married. His wife is the pretty mulatto chambermaid of the Hotel. He has one boy, takes a newspaper, studies geology, and means to go to Liberia as soon as he can buy his wife, child and self from his present master. After sixteen years' experience as guide to the cave, he is anxious to try his hand at some one of the above-ground ambitions. I would warrant him success wherever the specific gravity of merit has a fair chance. He has tact, talent, and good address. You see I am getting a little before my story and giving you some of my after knowledge of Stephen—but I wish you to comprehend why he figures so prominently in my own and other descriptions of this subterranean Switzerland; and he is so likely to be heard of, some day, as President of Liberia or Ambassador from St. Domingo, that his portraiture cannot be wisely slighted.

There is an extraordinary uniform provided by the Hotel for visiters to the Cave. At one end of the long hall is a row of pegs, where hang the articles for ladies, and at the other end are pegs for gentlemen. You are directed to go up stairs and equip yourself before starting. I cannot say that the dress is becoming. A stuffed skull cap of mustard-coloured flannel, is worn by ladies to guard them from knocks on the head where the cave is low. Then "Lethe" and "Purgatory" being muddy and slippery places, and the ladders to "Fat Man's Misery" and "Bottomless Pit" being wet and perpendicular, short-skirted petticoats of this same mustard-coloured flannel are provided, to be worn with trousers of the same, or Bloomers of the lady's own. Gentlemen wear the skull cap sometimes, and a short devil-may-care is very generally worn—all of the same unpleasant yellow—the crouchings in the wet boats, where the river roof is low, and the lying on the back to see the "Milky Way" to more advantage, being dirty work for coats. In the two

or three days that I remained at the Hotel, I saw several parties start for the cave in this singular costume, and the effect of their procession out of the grounds, I must say, was very funny, though it so happened that the ladies were too pretty to be made to look unsightly, even by ugly head gear and unaccustomed Bloomers. I should like to make a suggestion to visiters to the cave, however. In the dark pictures which impress them so powerfully, while under ground, their own party form the figures of the foreground. A dozen or more persons, each one with a lamp, passing in slow procession through those gloomy halls and corridors, add prodigiously to the effect of the perspective, and one need not be a painter to understand how much the picturesqueness might be aided by something pictorial in the costume. A slouched hat and plume instead of the skull cap, and short coats instead of those disfiguring frocks, would add essentially to the pleasure and beauty of the pilgrimage.

This preparatory information has spun out till I see that I shall not have room for a description of the cave itself. I will save it for another letter, adding to this an item or two more of the lesser history of the great wonder—such, at least, as I picked up in stage-coaches and table-talk on the way thither.

Col. Croghan, to whose family it belongs, was a resident of Louisville. He went to Europe some twenty years ago, and, as an American, found himself frequently questioned of the wonders of Mammoth Cave—a place he had never visited, and of which, at home though living within ninety miles of it, he had heard very little. He went there immediately on his return and the idea struck him to purchase and make it a family inheritance. In fifteen minutes' bargaining, he bought it for $10,000—though, shortly after, he was offered $100,000 for his purchase. In his will, he tied it up in such a way, that it must remain in his family for two generations, thus appending its celebrity to his name. There are nineteen hundred acres in the estate—three square miles above ground—though the cave probably runs under the property of a great number of other land owners. For fear of those who might dig down and establish an entrance to the cave on their own property—(a man's farm extending up to the zenith and down to the nadir)—great vigilance is exercised to prevent such subterranean surveys and measurements as would enable them to sink a shaft with any certainty. The cave extends ten or twelve miles in several directions, and there is probably many a backwoodsman sitting in his log-hut within ten miles of the cave, quite unconscious that the most fashionable ladies and gentlemen of Europe and America are walking, without leave, under his corn and potatoes!

The equable air, and the good health of the miners, who were at one time employed in digging saltpetre from near the entrance, started an idea, some time since, that a hospital for consumptive patients might be profitably established in the cave. Stone huts were accordingly constructed, in the dark halls beyond the reach of external air, and, among those who tried the experiment, were two consumptive gentlemen, who with their two healthy wives, passed six weeks in hideous seclusion from daylight. One of the gentlemen died there, and the other received no benefit—but the devotion of those voluntarily buried wives should chronicle their names in the cave's history. Another patient, who went in and remained some weeks, was attended by friends and a servant—but, his end approaching, the death-scene in that dark and silent abyss became so appalling, that they fled in terror—friends and servant—and left the dying man alone. Nothing could induce them to return, and, when others went in, the poor man was found dead with an expression of indescribable horror upon his features. Those who have seen these dreary huts, miles away from the sunshine—who have smelt the grave-like air, barren of the pervading vitality which vegetation gives the atmosphere above ground—and who have realized the intense Silence and Darkness that reign there like monsters whose presence is felt—can appreciate the horror of being left alone at the last hour in such a place.

The side avenues of the cave, into which visiters are not usually taken, are said to be labyrinths of interminable perplexity, and the guides are instructed to let none enter them alone. A gentleman who left his party a year or two ago, and ventured to explore for himself, lost his way, and was only found by Stephen, after many long and vain searches. He had stumbled and put out his lamp, and had been *forty-three* hours alone in the darkness. When discovered, he was lying on his face, benumbed and insensible. Stephen brought him out, several miles, upon his back, and he recovered—but he had had the experience of a death in darkness and solitude.

The Mammoth Cave is as large as a county, but having another county on top of it, it is not represented I believe, in the Kentucky Legislature. In the country's literature it will be strongly represented, some day—for there is scenery for a magnificent poem—a new Dante's Inferno—in its wondrous depths. It is a Western prairie of imagination—still wild and unoccupied.

LETTER No. 17.

DESCENT INTO MAMMOTH CAVE—CHANCE COMPANIONS, AND THEIR CORRECTION OF EACH OTHER'S IMPRESSIONS—THE GUIDE'S BASKET WITH ITS AIDS TO ENTHUSIASM—FUNNY LOOK OF PARTY IN MUSTARD-COLOURED COSTUME—ENTRANCE TO THE CAVE—REALIZED VALUE OF THE DAY TO BE LOST—FIRST HALF MILE—STRANGE ATMOSPHERE, AND DREARY LOSS OF SMELL OF VEGETATION—FIRST DISAPPOINTMENT OVERCOME—GORIN's DOME—CURIOUS IMMORTALIZING OF A MASTER BY HIS SLAVE—WONDERS OF ROCK DRAPERY—EMBARRASSMENT OF MULTIPLIED OBJECTS OF ADMIRATION—STRANGE IMPRESSION MADE ON THE FANCY BY THE MAMMOTH CAVE—ITS ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER—AN ANTEDILUVIAN HERCULANEUM—DIFFICULTIES OF THE WAY—THE STYX—LETHE AND ITS BOAT—PLACE FOR ADIEU, ETC. ETC.

Mammoth Cave, June.

Dear Morris:—

After luxuriating a day or two in the blessedly uncatechised idleness of a tree in the woods, expecting a party of friends who were to accompany me under ground, I gave up the hope of their coming, and joined the Monday's chance gathering of travellers. They were five—one lady and her husband from Nashville, one French gentleman from New Orleans, a Boston merchant, and the Danish Professor Koeppen, whose Lectures you may have seen reported in the *Picayune*. We were quite a miscellany, as to local origin, habits, and experience; yet, as my companions were all very cultivated people, I rejoiced in the correctives we were likely to be to each other's impressions, and was made more sure of not being misled by novelty and enthusiasm, and of discovering, by the variety of minds what was truly beautiful in what we were to see.

I looked with some interest at Stephen's basket. To walk eighteen miles, on a common road, I should simply have thought impossible; but here were *eighteen* miles of pathway over broken rocks to be traversed lamp in hand—ladders to be ascended and descended, precipices to be climbed, half mile holes to be crept through, tight places to be squeezed in and out of, crags to be scaled, hanging rocks to be crawled under, and chasms to be scrambled over—all by the aid of excitement from sublime objects. With every

reasonable confidence in this stimulus, I ventured to hope that Stephen had provided ham and chickens *also*. The white towel in the basket, I found, upon inquiry, covered a generous supply of these less capricious sustainers of the system. There was also a bottle—contents confidential. Stephen's history afforded a grain of comfort, besides. He had brought out, upon his back, two gentlemen from the innermost depths of the cave; and into the weight of these I made a precautionary inquiry. One weighed 180 pounds, the other 165. My own avoirdupois being only 135 pounds, I could make sure of coming to light again, even should the sublimity and the cold chicken fail to sustain me.

Time is less pressing when there is to be no sunset to tell how it passes, and our party for the dark regions were a little slow in making their appearance. The reluctance to appear in the mustard-coloured costume added a little to the delay, perhaps. We were all *mustered*, at last, however, and I presume no one of us, as he fell into the procession behind Stephen, would have liked to have been seen by the gentleman destined to write his "obituary notice." Irving himself would be unidealized and ludicrous, described in such a costume. Exception must be made in the lady's favour, only—for the Bloomers and other changes gave a look of charming *espieglerie* to her appearance, and we felt our descent to the Styx very much graced by her company.

After leaving the house, we turned down a pretty ravine, and, on the right of the descent, came presently to a hole in the earth, which we might have passed without noticing, as it was somewhat hidden by overhanging trees and creepers, and the entrance was a short turn backwards, under the way we had come.—The first subterranean hall, indeed, is said to be directly under the dining-room of the hotel.

The lighting of our lamps occupied a few minutes—and as the day was one we were to see no more of, I could not help taking particular notice of its beauty. It was the first warm and sunny morning, after rather a chilly week, and to let so sweet a day suddenly pass unenjoyed into a yesterday, gave one a feeling of regret which made its balm and beauty more delicious. From the air of the cave, meantime, we all turned back, as it came up in a strong current several degrees colder than the atmosphere around us.

Stephen took the basket of provisions on his arm, slung his canister of oil over his shoulder, and gave us our lamps—the poor little flames that were to light our way through such labyrinths of darkness, shining very dimly in the brilliant sunshine. Down the steps into the darkness went the chocolate-coloured slouched hat we were to follow, down went the pretty

feet in their Bloomers, down went the mustached Professor, the respectable merchant and the elegant Frenchman—each with his lamp swinging in its wire socket, and growing brighter as the gloom thickened—and I followed, with a cough which protested bitterly against the cold wind coming to meet us.

At the foot of the rough stone staircase we entered upon a tolerably level road, marked with wheel tracks, and hemmed in with a wall of the loose stones removed to make it; and this, with other belongings of the saltpetre works formerly carried on near the entrance of the cave, occupied the first half mile. The cavity which we were pursuing was from fifty to sixty feet high, enlarging once or twice into roomy openings, fancifully named—such as The Rotunda, Kentucky Cliffs, Gothic Galleries, etc.—all very dingy and gloomy-looking places, to eyes fresh from the sunshine, though grand when one remembers where they are, and for what ages of gloom their vast solitudes have been unsunned and unvisited. This part of the cavern is less striking, to casual observation, from the smoke and dust which the pursuits of mining industry have left upon the walls. It looks more like a succession of vast old warehouses, abandoned to dirt and cobwebs, than like the structures whose fine names have been given to it.

The air had, after the first half mile from the entrance, become perfectly dry. So hushed with stillness, too, I could easily understand why its unvarying temperature and tranquility had been prescribed for the invalid. Yet its quality was disagreeable to me, from the strange absence of the smell of vegetation. I had never before realized how much the common air is impregnated with the scarce-recognised perfume of grass and leaves. The cave seemed to have the skeleton of air without its flesh and blood—an underground-y and sepulchral dryness, wholly destitute of the cheerful vitality of the common atmosphere. At the same time that my lungs made no complaint, and I had less disposition to cough than usual, my nose, (or the nose of my imagination,) longed for a sniff of common earth, with roots and weeds which the sun had shone upon. A mile or two farther in, we found a sprig or two of mint upon a rock—the remainder of a julep, intended or perpetrated, by a party who had preceded us—and its homely and sunny-bank fragrance was indescribably welcome—welcome as a spring in the desert.

Whereabouts the feeling of disappointment ceased, and I began to feel the sublime presence of the Spirit of the Cave, I could not definitely say. But, after hearing Stephen discourse eloquently of a mile or more of successive wonders, and regretting that I felt somehow less enthusiastic than

he seemed to expect, I found myself stopping still with surprise at the *wonderfully new kind of places* that we came to. Life's new sensations are few and precious. Here was one—a discovery that there were *places*, of which I had never before conceived the character and existence—utter novelties—effects of form, structure, space and combination, which were strangely unexpected, at the same time that they flooded, satiated, staggered, the craving sense of the love of the wonderful. What they call "Gorin's Dome," was the first point where I openly acknowledged this victory of the Cave over my incredulity. The approach to it was by a long and narrow passage through the rock, Stephen telling me, on the way, that he had named the Dome for his former owner, Mr. Gorin, and that Mr. Gorin had once taken him to Louisiana to sell, but brought him back because nobody would give him eleven hundred dollars for him. I was stumbling along by the light of my flickering light, musing how oddly a man might chance to have a Dome named after him, and how a handsome and intelligent fellow might be too dear at $1,100, when we stopped before a hole in the wall. Here our guide left us, requesting us to wait for a moment till he could light up the Dome.

We stood wondering how a "Dome" could be produced out of a corner in the cave where we could scarcely find room to stand, when a light began to shine in upon us through the hole in the wall, and Stephen called to us to look through, one by one. In my turn I put my head out of the rocky window. He was holding up, and throwing down, sheets of medicated paper, commonly known as "Bengal light," which produced a brilliant illumination above and below. I looked down first into a profound abyss, and then up to a height of which I could see no termination, and it was hard to realize that such vast depths and altitudes were all under ground—graves dug and trees growing far overhead—but it was not the extent upward and downward that formed its novelty and beauty. It was like a steeple built over a gulf, but both steeple and gulf seemed curtained with uncut velvet of creamy richness, fringed at all its folds and edges with elaborate embroidery. The stalactical ooze which had been employed since the Deluge, or since creation, in draping and embellishing this cavernous temple, had fallen in fluted folds, like the most massive yet artistic drapery, and with its superb doublings and overlayings, it was indeed the upholstery of giants. A tyrant would forbid his courtiers to see such a place, for the contrast would impoverish his grandeur. The damask and velvet of a throne would look scanty and poor after it. Height and depth together, this magnificent Dome measures three hundred feet, and the window through which we saw it is one hundred and sixty feet

from the bottom. The path to it, from the entrance of the cave, is about two miles.

I have omitted a whole mile of the wonders of subterranean architecture, and, indeed, I have no intention of giving you a detailed description of the cave. In the language of Appleton's Guide-Book, "it is said to contain 226 avenues, 47 domes, numerous rivers, 8 cataracts, and 23 pits;" and Stephen estimates the aggregate length of the different corridors that branch off at the sides, (most of which are not visited by travellers,) at several hundred miles. Every rood has something to wonder at. Every eighth-of-a-mile has some miracle which it would take a newspaper column to describe. Adjectives would give out, if your patience did not. I think I shall try, mainly, to convey to you the *impression* which the visit to the cave made upon me—using as much special description as is necessary for this; but referring you to the Guide Books for a detailed account of its wonders.

That the Mammoth Cave is an antiquity of the world before the Flood—a city of giants which an earthquake swallowed, and which a chance roof of rocks has protected from being effaced by the Deluge and by the wear of the elements for subsequent ages—is one of the fancies which its strange phenomena force upon the mind. *All is so architectural.* It is not a vast underground cavity, raw and dirty, but a succession of halls, domes and corridors, streets, avenues and arches—all under ground, but all telling of the design and proportion of a majestic primeval metropolis. It is not a cave, but a city in ruins—a city from which sun, moon and stars have been taken away—whose day of judgment has come and passed, and over which a new world been created and grown old. By what admirable laws of unknown architecture those mammoth roofs and ceilings are upheld, is every traveller's wondering question. In some shape or other, I heard each of my companions express this. No modern builder could throw up such vast vaulted arches, and so unaccountably sustain them. And all else is in keeping. The cornices and columns, aisles and galleries, are gigantically proportionate; and as mysteriously upheld. Streets after streets—miles after miles—seem to have been left only half in ruins—and here and there is an effect as if the basements and lower stories were encumbered with fragments and rubbish, leaving you to walk on a level, with the capitals and floors once high above the pavement.—It might be described as a mammoth Herculaneum, first sepulchred with over-toppling mountains, but swept and choked afterwards by the waters of the Deluge, that found their way to its dark streets in their subsiding. What scenery and machinery all this will be for the poets of the West, by and by! Their Parnassus is "a house ready furnished."

We were walking, meantime, with feet constructed since Adam and Eve, and the roughness of the way was very modern and unendurable. Up hill and down dale, (and there was a great deal of ascending and descending,) every step had to be picked over broken rocks, by the light of the lamp; and, where there was so much to be seen above and around us, the careless steps were many, and the twists and scratches abundant. Now and then we came to the foot of a ladder and a sort of ascent up a chimney was to be performed by the very ladies and gentlemen who had just been wondering at the sublimities of their route. Or, there was a ladder to lead us more pokerishly downward. One place, called “the Fat Man’s Misery,” was the mere zigzag through cracks in the rock. Another was a quarter of a mile called “the Valley of Humility,” along which we almost crept upon hands and knees, the ceiling was so low. “Great Relief” is the name of the avenue which immediately succeeds this, and then comes the “Bottomless Pit,” over which there is a comfortable new bridge, with cedar posts, as passable as the most sanguine sinner could desire.

The impression that, by this time, you are as deep down into the bowels of the earth as you could well go, prepares you for a surprise when the path comes to the brink of “The Styx,” and you look over into a profundity of darkness and hear the stone which is thrown in, splash, far below, and echo up from a vast cavern of stillness. This far-down subterranean river is disclosed as if through the merest chance, by a cleft in the rocky roof that shuts it in, and it seems an abyss unfathomable—one that, with its very look, asks to be left alone with its secrets. None who have ever gazed into its black depths are likely to forget them. They have come back upon traveller’s dreams, I venture to say, with every lobster salad’s beckoning finger.

From “The Styx” to “Lethe” is a short walk. It is by a gradual and easy descent, and, as its unrippling waters stop the way, it is here that a boat is taken to go farther on. My companions seemed glad to set down their lamps—blest with the idea of, at least, some new mode of conveyance. The three miles of climbing, scrambling and wandering, had given me some premonitory symptoms of fatigue. I began to wonder how far on the other side of Lethe we should get something to refresh the mortal appetite that might remain to us. For six miles beyond that black stream, our journey was yet to continue, but, as the extremest mile was said to reveal the greatest wonders, I felt no disposition to turn back—the dinner, which we were to eat at the far end, adding (I am free to confess) its modest encouragement to my enthusiasm.

But my letter is getting long, and Lethe’s brink is a good place for an adieu. While the guide is embarking his basket and his canister of oil, I will drop the curtain trusting that you will look for my experiences beyond Lethe, spite of the forgetfulness with which those commonly turn back who here take their leave of the voyager.

LETTER No. 18.

PASSAGE DOWN THE SUBTERRANEAN RIVER OF OBLIVION—A BRIDE BACKING OUT, ON THE BRINK—NICHES FOR DISAPPOINTED POLITICIANS—WONDERFUL ECHOES AND VICINITY OF PURGATORY—FIRING A PISTOL NEAR THE INFERNAL REGIONS—LANDING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STYX—OLE BULL'S PERFORMANCE IN THE CAVE—THE CROWNING OF OUR COMPANION, THE DANISH PROFESSOR—FATIGUE OF THE EIGHTH MILE—BLESSED STOP TO DINE—RELICS OF FORMER VISITORS—MODESTY OF STEPHEN THE GUIDE, AND OUR REMONSTRANCE—CLARET AND ITS TASTE UNDER GROUND, ETC., ETC.

Mammoth Cave, June.

DEAR MORRIS:—

We were three miles under ground at the close of my last letter, and the subterranean river called "Lethe" was before us. The voyage looked un-tempting. A shallow skiff waited to receive us, and the stream, black as ink under the dim glare of our lamps, disappeared suddenly around a corner of rock, leaving all that was beyond entirely to the imagination. Dark and gloomy cliffs walled in and roofed over the entrance. Not a weed, nor a ripple, nor a breath of air, gave token of life further on. It was to be a launch into blank darkness.

And the worst of it was, that we were to leave behind us all that was particularly young and lovely, in our party. The one lady who had accompanied us thus far, held a side conference with her husband while the lamps were being trimmed, (they were a newly married couple, we understood,) and the result was a decision to leave Oblivion for the present un-tempted. There was a spare guide, fortunately. He could return with them to daylight and the bridal moon. They waited kindly to see us off, however, and really, as they stood with their swinging lamps on the receding shore, the lovely bride smiling and joyous, and with one little foot already turned from under her short petticoats to retrace her steps, I thought, lights, groupings and all, I never had seen a more dramatic picture. We dropped silently down the stream, with our lamps hidden in the bottom of the skiff—Steven's slouched beaver, raven mustache and large melancholy eyes looking even more poetical than old Charon, as he shoved from the shore—

and in the next minute we were hidden from view, afloat and alone on a breathless and rayless river. And thus romantic is the first launch upon Lethe! Be comforted, oh many bards!

The passage of Lethe is like an aisle of a cathedral, a mile long, traversed with a lamp at midnight. The gliding between its gray walls in a boat, silently and without effort, adds a strange mysteriousness to its effect. The ceiling of arched rock, which roofs it in, varies from twenty to forty feet in height; and, half way up, runs a shelving gallery, as designedly architectural as a thing could well seem; and, along under this gallery, is a succession of empty niches of the shape commonly constructed for busts—a natural Westminster Abbey for the likenesses of disappointed politicians, which makes its name, as the river of forgetfulness, singularly felicitous. "Salt River," you will remember, is but sixty miles from this.

There is a short interruption of a sand-bank after the first quarter of a mile, and, crossing this, we took another boat and resumed our glide down the dark river. From the remarkable echoes along this last mile or three-quarters, Stephen gives it the separate name of Echo River—but this seems a needless multiplying of names, for it is all one stream, and Lethe is (if anything is) a name for continuance. We stopped oar and tried the echo. There seemed to be remote caves which only answered upon very long and deliberate reflection—yet as sweetly as reluctantly. Stephen sang a negro song, and the echo of the first line came back about the time of the fourth. It struck me that it would be a pretty thing to imitate in a duett—suspending the last line while the leading sentiment, (say a struggle against the river's tide of forgetfulness,) recurs with a mournful echo. My brother the composer will build good music for such a song, and you can do the words, being as good at that. If a passenger down Lethe is wanted, I am good at most kinds of victim, and will do that part of it. So copyright your tears, my dear Morris, and begin.

The dead silence with which we floated downwards most of the way—Stephen having a fine idea of the dramatic, and suspending oar and voices for very effective intervals—was far more affecting and impressive than I can well give you an idea of. It was like the pathos in a play. I thought an interlude might be agreeable, and having seen the handle of a pistol in the pocket of our *comme il faut* companion from New Orleans, I asked leave to try the echo with a discharge. Chapultepec! what a roar! The immediate thunder was like the coming down of the rocks about our ears, but the long-continued and far-off reverberations seemed to tell of caves that had never before been reached or found utterance. I have omitted to mention that there

is an avenue called "Purgatory," which runs parallel with this river, and the loudest echoes were doubtless from that. Whether it was a disturbance, or an agreeable variety, to the spirits who thus groaned back their answers, we had no "medium" to tell us. It seemed as if the echoes would never be done. Silence after a while, however—and silence—and silence. The grass must stop growing, and the stars hold their breath, to give you, above ground, any idea of that silence.

My companions expressed great regret at disembarking from the breathless river of Oblivion. Even the lively Professor, who was making a pedestrian tour on *the other* side of the Styx, (your side,) resumed his legs and his lamp very unwillingly for the dark explorings still beyond. I was the last to leave the boat, being probably the most tired of the party, but contriving to be the last, throughout the trip, for the sake of adding my friends and their procession of lamps to the beauty of the picture. However splendid the avenue or the dome, a foreground of half a dozen illuminated figures is a great embellishment—I record it as a hint to any reader who may visit the cave after me.

Picking a corner of a stone, for every step one takes, makes a mile very long, besides keeping one's eyes and enthusiasm more busy with one's toes than with the surrounding scenery. Stephen called my attention to the even loftiness of the roof of "Silliman's Avenue," (forty feet high,) but I only remember that it was as

"Long as a pilgrimage on peas to Rome."

And, of a tedious labyrinth called "The Infernal Regions," I remember nothing but Stephen's cautions against stumbling into pits. We stopped in one large opening called "Cascade Hall," where there is an anonymous waterfall, heard but never seen. We turned a spacious corner which singularly resembles the hull of a ship, and is called "The Great Western." "Ole Bull's Concert-Room" is just beyond, and here we sat down and listened to Stephen's very graphic description of the romantic Dane's underground performance. George D. Prentice, the poet-editor, was present, with his wife, and, except the "spirits whose walk is there," I understood Stephen to say there was no other audience. Those applauded who had the wherewithal. The reverberations were fine. The hall is eighty feet wide and sixty feet high, and three unexplored passages open from it in different directions. Ole Bull seemed very much excited, and gave Stephen new ideas of the agility of music. As the Dane walked back seven miles through the woods, (after his departure from the Cave Hotel,) to take one more

pilgrimage under ground, he doubtless found it a genial atmosphere for his wild nature. I forgot, when at Louisville, to ask Prentice about that trans-Lethean performance, but he ought to record his impression of it. Ole-Bulliana will be interesting, by the time the Cave find its poet and historian.

Our Danish Professor, with his wit and eccentricity, had given us an occasional half mile of uproarious laughter on the way, and when we came to a stalactite singularly like a suspended crown, we placed him under it and unanimously elected him Emperor—Kœppen the First. To make a bad pun, his long blonde mustache looked sufficiently *be-Czar* for the occasion. This gentleman, by the way, has been for several years one of King Otho's Professors at Athens; and, stored as his mind seems to be with information on every scientific subject, and speaking half a dozen languages with perfect fluency, I should suppose him and his Lectures valuable additions to our community. His knowledge also of real life, (as different from the same thing in books as figs before packing,) would be a valuable ingredient in the compound of a College Faculty. He has been lecturing at Brown University, and more recently at New Orleans.

Great wonders, but weary miles. "The Pass of El Ghor" I mentally promised to remember and admire, with more strength and better leisure. The "Hanging Rocks," "Martha's Vineyard," "Black Hole of Calcutta," and "Elindo Avenue," I duly recognized, at Stephen's request, as remarkable things and places—hoping, all the while, that the next announcement would be the kindly rock on which we were to dine. The eighth mile, I observed, was a procession performed in profound silence, lamps no longer lifted to admire, nor lingerings made to examine and philosophize. The Cave is too large and too long. Its nine miles, in one iteration of wonder, are like nine dinners in a day. Writing this as I do, in the hungry abstinence of distance from the spot, it seems to me as if any one of those numberless halls and sparry grottoes which we tracked so wearily with little notice, would be a feast to see. Yet, at the time, I would have exchanged twice the sublimity of any one of them for a look into Stephen's basket.

But the chocolate slouched hat, everlastingly preceding in the distance, "rounded to" at last. Our long single file of stumblers stumbled into a group, and stood surveying, with expressions of strong interest, a tabular ridge of rock, situated (Stephen assured us) in "Washington Hall." For Washington and his Hall we should feel enthusiasm, perhaps, with something in our stomachs whereon to place it; but our gaze, for the moment, was on the basket being unstrapped from Stephen's shoulders, and on the wicker flask which looked defiance to the State of Maine, out of his trousers' pocket. The

rock we stood around looked historical. Champagne and ale bottles were piled here and there in stacks, eloquent of destinies fulfilled beyond the Styx—poets first uncorked when under ground. A small sprig of mint, of flavor truly delicious in that dry air, lay on a crag—evidence of some julep, doubtless provokingly reminiscent, which had been drank in presence of the spirits hereabouts. There were crusts of bread and bits of chickens; and of some of these last, still sweet, Stephen told us the posthumous age, proving that meats do not become corrupt in an atmosphere of that degree of dryness. Some of the gentlemen and ladies who had dined there, had left their cards sticking in cracks of the rock. I could have wished for a seat, and a soft one, near the table: but we were accommodated upon sharp corners of crags, at various distances, and, for every fresh bone to pick, we were obliged to walk up. It was an active performance, however.

If one could most describe what he most enjoys in travel, (alas! no!) I should enlarge upon this dinner eaten at eight miles from daylight. Sun or moon would scarcely have improved it. Our guide modestly remembered that he was a slave, and, after spreading the repast under the weight of which he had toiled so far, he seated himself at a distance; but, remembering his merits and all the geology and history he had given us on the way, we voted him to "the first table," by an immediate and general remonstrance. Our friend from New Orleans had provided claret which had an unexpected affinity with the climate under ground—(worth making a note of.) And all was brightened by the Professor's mingled fun and wisdom.

Having got you into the Cave, I must get you out of it, my dear Morris, but there are mummies and mammoths, and many a wonder yet to tell of, and this letter will scarcely give the room. You shall see daylight in my next.

LETTER No. 19.

SPLENDOR OF KENTUCKY'S BASEMENT STORY—WHAT AN EARTHQUAKE MIGHT DO FOR SOMEBODY—SUGGESTION OF A MAMMOTH CAVE BALL—EFFECT LIKE GETTING A FIRST VIEW OF A NEW PLANET—PROCESS OF DISFIGURING THE CAVE BY VULGAR VISITORS—"ROCKY MOUNTAINS" AND "DISMAL HOLLOW," AND THE CHARACTER OF THE LATTER PLACE—STEPHEN'S ALLEVIATORY MUSCLE—LAST HALL OF ALL AT THE EXTREMITY OF THE CAVE—GOLDEN FLEECE OVERHANGING THE ALTAR—SKETCH OF THE PARTY AND REVERIE AT THE END—MOTHER EVE, AND OUR FEELING ALIKE AS TO THE SUN AND MOON—SUGGESTED INSCRIPTION FROM MILTON FOR THE END OF THE CAVE—HESITATION AS TO CONFESSING TO THE ROMANTIC EFFECT OF THE LAST MILE—RETURN—EYELESS FISH, ETC., ETC.

Mammoth Cave, June.

Dear Morris:—

Under whose farm lies that ninth and inner mile of the Mammoth Cave, it would be interesting to know, for he grows his corn over a splendid possibility—a suit of halls of unsurpassable magnificence, requiring nothing but a moderate earthquake to open just before his door. Why, the state apartments of Versailles are not half so sumptuously ornamented as this portion of the basement story of Kentucky. The proportions of the successive rooms are imposing enough, but the wonder is in the walls and ceilings. They are studded with gems. Crystallization has lined and roofed those halls with every variety of brilliant spar, and the snow-white and calcareous glitter fairly dazzles the eye. Floor these mammoth grottoes—illuminate them—and give a ball there—a ball a mile long—and the world never will have seen a spectacle so splendid. Could it not be done, (tell us, Prentice!) to celebrate the completion of the railway from New York to New Orleans? Kentucky has the broad-handed hospitality becoming to the central State of our confederacy, and would play the host and entertain the world with a grace chivalric and characteristic. She might well celebrate an event that will open her lordly woodlands to the admiration of the vast tide of travel that now goes unappreciatingly past, on the Ohio.

Dinner had doubtlessly something to do with our appreciating the ninth mile better than the eighth and hungry one—but, if I remember rightly, it is

only at this far end of the Mammoth Cave, that the *snowy white halls* are found, built of stalactites, and every inch a study of brilliant crystallization. The prodigality of these delicate and dazzling wonders impresses the traveller. In museums and mineralogical cabinets, you see geodes and specimens of crystals, the largest of which can be taken into the hand. Here they form rotundas and palaces—and miles of them! There is something so new in finding oneself in such strangely magnificent apartments (and looking at them with a lamp,) that it seems like a visit to a just created and more brilliant planet, where God has not yet said, "Let there be light," but where the Adam and Eve for whom a sun is to shine on this darkness, are to find themselves lodged in ready-built palaces, gem-studded and crystal roofed—a dwelling house growing wild like an apple-tree. No offence to our friend Downing, that his beautiful art would be a superfluity on such an improved planet.

People like to leave word that they have been here. In one of these calcareous halls there is a stack of crystals, of about the height and shape of a female servant, and, upon this, every visiter seems to have thrust a card. Others more barbarous, or thoughtless, have hoisted candles upon sticks and smoked their names on the otherwise unblemished ceilings and walls, a disfiguration by which, in a very few years, the Mammoth Cave will have lost all its beauty—for those surfaces of delicate texture can never be cleansed. Stephen was eloquent upon this profanation, and doubtless puts in his protest, invariably; but a slave's remonstrance would not be much, with the kind of white man that would thus immortalize his own bad taste.

Before reaching the last hall of all, there are "Rocky Mountains" to climb, and a "Dismal Hollow" to traverse. The dreary immensity of this innermost cavern, save one, is thought worth the exhibiting, and it is part of Stephen's routine to bring Bengal lights and burn them here, to show the wilderness of darkness and desolation. We are not commonly aware how much a desert valley of broken rocks is relieved (above ground) by having a sky over it; and the effect of "Dismal Hollow" is probably owing to the fact that there is no chance for the eye to get away—just such another valley of broken rocks being heaped in a concave of horror to overhang it. It has its moral influence; for perhaps the visiter has never before got so good an idea of a place where Heaven was out of the question—a Hades roofed in with a Hades, and I must own that I was very glad to have Stephen to admire, as he knelt on one knee at the far side of the cavern, receiving on his romantic physiognomy the full glare of the tar and brimstone. His mustache had a pleasant look of a "continued state of probation."

We picked up our lamps and “got out of that”—a few minutes of scrambling bringing us to the sort of small chapel which is the farthest penetrable point of this underground pilgrimage. It is not a place very brilliant or spacious—but there are some stalactical formations on its walls which would be curious but for the greater wonders seen on the way, and at the far end there is something which might well be considered as dramatically in character with the spot. It is a kind of projection like an altar, over which the stalactical ooze has formed in a resemblance to a golden fleece, and thus seems to be hung as an irremovable veil over the entablature. In superstitious days some mystic word would have been believed to be written underneath this veiled extremity of the cave—some secret to which the long subterranean pilgrimage, with its many wonders, was the fitting approach. Long-robed priests and the swinging of censers, might make it, even now, a spot of reverential awe and visitation.

We were at the end of our journey—three P. M., and nine miles from daylight. The *facile descensus Averni* had occupied six hours. Stephen had concluded his nine-mile lecture on geology, and sat waiting our pleasure. The Professor was examining a stalagmite. Our French friend smoked his cigar in silent contemplation; and the Bostonian, having managed to get behind the Golden Fleece, was re-appearing at the other side of the altar with his enterprising lamp. I was almost too tired, myself, to realize where I was—much too tired to be as industrious as you would probably expect of so interesting a locality. The Dane and I had been talking of emigrants from monarchial countries to our land of independence. It was the only furniture I could summon for a reverie. I sat upon as comfortable a rock as I could find, and endeavored to remember, emigrant from Above-ground that I was, what an ocean of darkness divided me from my native daylight—how King Sun and Queen Moon, and the Princes of Little Stars, had become far-off nonentities—how the laws that regulate Dawn, Noon and Twilight, were dead letters to me, then and there—and, as to your tyrannical Time-day, how safely I was beyond its clocks and jurisdiction. The underground freedom of all this, while it occurred to me, did not greatly enliven my fatigued republicanism, however. I even felt neglected that the arbitrary Afternoon, that punctual officer of the Sun, was, at that moment assessing his lengthening-shadow-tax without thinking of mine. Was it possible that the sun could be going to set—all the same as if we five gentlemen (including Stephen) were above ground as usual? Mother Eve, if you recollect, expresses somewhat the same discontent—a jealous unwillingness that the heavenly bodies should shine when she was not looking at them. This she does on her wedding night, and Adam gently snubs her for it—our

indefinitely-great-grandmother having thus received her *first curtain lecture*, for the same unnatural uneasy feeling with which I sat down at the end of Mammoth Cave! Milton tells it in beautiful poetry. Let me quote it for you:—

> * * "Sweet the coming on
> Of grateful evening mild: then silent night
> With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
> And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:
> *But wherefore all night long shine these? For whom*
> *This glorious sight when sleep hath shut our eyes?*
> To whom our general ancestor replied:
> Daughter of God and Man, accomplished Eve,
> These have their course to finish round the earth
> By morrow evening, and from land to land
> In order, though to nations yet unborn,
> Ministering light prepared, they set and rise,
> Lest total darkness should by night regain
> Her old possession, and extinguish life
> In nature, and all things. * *
> *These, then, though upheld in deep of night,*
> *Shine not in vain*; NOR THINK, THOUGH MEN WERE NONE,
> THAT HEAVEN WOULD WANT SPECTATORS, *God want praise*,
> *Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth*
> *Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep:*
> *All these with ceaseless praise his works behold*
> *Both day and night.*"

Sooner or later—in the Mammoth Cave or some shallower underground sojourning—we are all to be thus omitted and easily done without, by the sun and moon; and perhaps our "general ancestor's" sweet little sermon on the subject is not inaptly quoted, to meet the discontent felt by the traveller, at the daylight's doing without him even for his short interment in the mammoth Cave. To engrave its rebuke to self-consequence, on that stalactical veil where the murmurer sets down his lamp, and is farthest away from sun and moon, might point that nine-mile pilgrimage with a moral, that would give meaning and value to its fatigues and splendors.

Up lamps, and start on our return—but I have not written what I at first intended, nor described what I *most* felt in traversing this last mile. You were less likely to laugh at what I *least* felt, and so I have given you *that*—as a writer feels it wise to do, alas, how often! The truth is that there is a

dramatic progress, in the day's experiences of the Mammoth Cave, which work up the imagination to a height not wholly to be trusted. I pencilled down, as usual, before going to bed that night, my notes of the day's events and feelings—(the notes of which my letters are but the more wordy transcript)—and I saw where the sympathy-car of the reading public would unhitch and let my too accelerated locomotive whiz off by itself. The circumstances and surroundings are more progressively exciting than the visiter is, at the time aware of. The slow procession of indistinct figures, each with his flickering lamp; the sombre strangeness of the objects pointed out; the half penetrated and mysterious darkness above and around: the intervals of profound silence when the stillness of the cave becomes oppressive; the sublime grandeur of the scenes themselves, and the wild indistinctness of the legends peopling the air with spirits—all this, easily resisted for an hour or so, becomes, with hunger and half a day, an atmosphere of reality: and the imagination gets the upper hand, by the last mile, as it does in the fifth act of a play. Describe this exactly? Oh no! Few visiters to the Mammoth Cave would "own up." The fear of ridicule is kept too constantly on the alert, in this age of sneering and unbelieving. And it is as well, perhaps—for there should be something to prevent *something or other* from being written about. Authors (I have long thought) make life a dreadfully second-hand business. Is it not possible that the world would be a happier place if there were more surprises in it—if there were something for the traveller to see, or for the lover to feel, which had not been anticipated by "inspired pens?" A man, at least, should find something *under ground*, that is not "the old story"—so I leave you, undescribed, that last mile and its emotions.

My companions started off so trippingly that I called Stephen aside and made interest to be looked back for occasionally. To be left behind without that oil-canister on his left hip, was a calamity which my weary legs warned me to guard against. As to keeping up with the pace at which they begun those nine retrograding miles, it was wholly improbable, and my lamp had not more than three miles' oil in it, even if I knew the way. This provision made, however, I took it very leisurely, and was consequently left behind at every turn of the labyrinth, and, indeed, for three-fourths of the time, quite out of sight and hearing. There was a chance luxury in this, which I had not anticipated. The wondrous rooms in which I found myself alone with my faint lamp, were more imposing and beautiful than when seen with more light, and with the company of friends; and, if I dared write of the spirits of the cave, I could tell you how much more thickly, than before, the sombre gloom seemed haunted. In darkness so many miles deep, one cannot but feel

that he is over the border-land, and in regions where, if anywhere, ghosts inhabit. The noise one makes with his own step does not break silence, (if you ever noticed,) and to get rid of the feet and voices of your companions, in such a place, is to be left with the spell in full power. I found the "influence," though melancholy, sweet and gentle. They are friendly spirits that walk there. I shall remember my weary linger through those halls so hushed and haunted, as among the pleasantest passages of that knowledge unconfessed which we all cherish, more or less, in these days of "spiritual manifestations."

Of the cave's eyeless fish, mummies, and other visible inhabitants, I have yet to tell you, and these must be reserved, I believe, for still another letter.

LETTER No. 20.

NINE MILES TO DAYLIGHT—FATIGUE OF WALKING WITH HORIZONTAL SPINE—FISH WITHOUT EYES—ORGANS DYING WITH DISUSE—CONSUMPTION CURED WITH DANGER TO NOSE—LESSON IN TAKING THINGS EASY—CAUTION TO LADIES FOND OF DARK ROOMS—QUOTED DESCRIPTIONS OF CHURCH AND TEMPLE—OAK POLE FOR SUSPENDING CORPSES—THE MUMMY LADY AND HER SARCOPHAGUS—DESCRIPTION OF HER DRESS, POSTURE, ORNAMENTS, ETC.—THE CUSTOM OF STOPPING TO MUSE AT THIS MUMMY TOMB—MAMMOTH RELICS—RETURN TO DAYLIGHT—DELIGHT OF ONCE MORE BREATHING AIR WITH THE PERFUMES OF VEGETATION—KENTUCKY'S ADVANTAGE IN AN ATTRACTION FOR THE INTELLIGENT OF ALL NATIONS, ETC., ETC.

Mammoth Cave, June, 1852.

Dear Morris:—

This letter will not be sprightly, if it express the weariness of back and brain with which I walked over the ground it is to describe. I had scrambled nine miles into the earth, you will remember, stumbling, poetizing, theorizing, dining, and being very much astonished, on the way. Astonishment is more fatiguing than pleasure, you know, as stumbling is more fatiguing than walking; and I should have been thoroughly exhausted if there had been any convenient opportunity. It was nine miles to the first daylight, however, and like the horse in the hack-cab, so tightly reigned up that he could never give out, the inducement to go on overcame the weakness. But that half mile under the rock, which the visiter traverses on the wheelbarrow principle—the load at right angles to the legs—really that *was* too much. Did you ever try to walk half a mile with your hips uppermost, my dear General?

We reached Lethe, with many stops and occasional drops of encouragement and water from Stephen's flask, and here we halted to catch one of the *eyeless fish* who swim in this river of forgetfulness. I held the lamp while the pole net was quietly slipped under the little victim of celebrity. He *saw* no danger, poor thing, and stirred never a fin to escape being taken out of his element and raised to a higher sphere. In size he was like the larger kind of what the boys call a "minim"—say an inch and a-half long—but very different in construction and color. His body was quite

white, translucent, and wholly without an intestinal canal. The stomach, (what there was of it,) was directly behind the brain, (if brain there was,) and all the organs of the system were *forward of the gills*—the head alone having blood or other discoloration. Under the chin he disposed of what was superfluous in his nourishment. He was curiously correspondent, indeed, to the poetized character of the place—like a fish in progress of becoming a fish in spirit-land, his dis-animalization having commenced radically at the tail and working upward. Nothing could be more purely beautiful and graceful than the pearly and spotless body which had heavenly-fied first, leaving the head to follow. I looked for some minutes at the others swimming in the stream. They idled about, with a purposeless and luxurious tranquility, and I observed that they ran their noses against the rocky sides of the dark river with no manner of precaution. Unhurt and unannoyed, they simply turned back from the opposing obstacle, and swam slowly away. It would be well to learn the trick of this easy withdrawal from opposition, and I am glad to have one of the little philosophers to set on a shelf—a bottled lesson from Lethe.

The scientific people tell us that these blind fish once had eyes, and that the microscope still shows the collapsed socket. The organ has died out in the darkness of the subterranean river—dwindled into annihilation with lack of using. If this be a law of nature, and true in graduated degrees, as of course it is, it should be a warning to the ladies of our day. What more universal than the passion for perpetual twilight in drawing-room and boudoir?—yet it appears that eyes dwindle and diminish in proportion to lack of light. Let the large eyed beauty take warning!

I spoke figuratively of *noses* just now. But I presume that these fish have no “pituitary membrane.” The same law of annihilation by disuse would exterminate noses in this Cave under ground—for with absence of vegetation and complete dryness, the air is utterly inodorent. It is a fact that should be remembered in the proposed occupancy of the Cave as a hospital for consumption. If organs lessen with disuse, the nose would dwindle into annihilation with nothing to smell, as the eye with nothing to see. The value which the pulmonary patient puts upon his nose should be conscientiously inquired into, (I venture to suggest,) before subjecting him to a cure which might endanger it. A case is highly possible, of a gentleman to whom convalescence without a nose would be no object.

As we go up stream, my dear Morris, (on the return voyage of Lethe which I trust we may some day make together,) I remember that there is much in this wondrous Cave which I may seem to have neglected, confining

my account mainly, as I do, to its impression on myself. If I have awakened an interest in the spot, and if the accounts of it are as little known and as unaccessible to you as they chanced to have been to me, it may be worth while to quote descriptions, by other pens, of one or two of the wonders of the Cave which I have omitted to mention. Here, for instance, is an account of "The Church," which I walked through without saying a word about it:—

> "The ceiling is sixty-three feet high, and the church itself, including the recess, is about one hundred feet in diameter. Eight or ten feet above the pulpit, and immediately behind it, is the organ-loft, which is sufficiently capacious for an organ and choir of the largest size. This church is large enough to contain thousands." (another account says it will accommodate five thousand); "a solid projection of the wall seems to have been designed as a pulpit, and a few feet back is a place well calculated for an organ and choir. In this great temple of nature, religious services has been frequently performed, and it requires but a slight effort on the part of the speaker to make himself heard by the largest congregation."

The same writer thus describes the Vestibule of the Cave:—

> "This is a hall of an oval shape, two hundred feet in length by one hundred and fifty wide, with a *roof as flat and level as if finished by the trowel*, and from fifty to sixty feet high. Two passages, each a hundred feet in width, open into it at the opposite extremities, but at right angles to each other; and as they run in a straight course for five or six hundred feet, with the same flat roof common to each, the appearance presented to the eye is that of a vast hall in the shape of the letter L, expanded at the angle, both branches being *five hundred feet long by one hundred wide*. The entire extent of this prodigious space is *covered by a single rock, in which the eye can detect no break or interruption*, save at its borders, which are surrounded by a broad sweeping cornice, traced in horizontal panel work, exceedingly noble and regular. *Not a single pier or pillar of any kind contributes to support it.* It needs no support: but is
>
> 'By its own weight made steadfast and immoveable.'

> At a very remote period this chamber seems to have been used as a cemetery; and there have been disinterred many skeletons of gigantic dimensions, belonging to a race of people long since vanished from the earth. Such is the vestible of the Mammoth Cave. The walls of this chamber are so dark that they reflect not one single ray of light from the dim torches. Around you is an impenetrable wall of darkness, which the eye vainly seeks to pierce, and a canopy of darkness, black and rayless, spreads above you. By the aid, however, of a fire or two which the guides kindle from the remains of some old wooden ruins, you begin to acquire a better conception of the scene around you. Far up, a hundred feet above your head, you catch a fitful glimpse of a dark gray ceiling, rolling dimly away like a cloud, and heavy buttresses, apparently bending under the superincumbent weight, project their enormous masses from the shadowy wall. The scene is vast, and solemn and awful. A profound silence, gloomy, still and breathless, reigns unbroken by even a sigh of air, or the echo of a drop of water falling from the roof. You can hear the throbbings of your heart, and the mind is oppressed with a sense of vastness, and solitude, and grandeur indescribable.”

In Lee’s account of his visit to the Cave there are two of its features well described:—

> “The Temple is an immense vault, covering an area of two acres, and covered by a single dome of solid rock, one hundred and twenty feet high. It excels in size the cave of Staffa, and rivals the celebrated vault in the Grotto of Antiparos, which is said to be the largest in the world. In passing through from one end to the other, the dome appears to follow like the sky in passing from place to place on the earth. In the middle of the dome there is a large mound of rocks rising on one side nearly to the top, very steep, and forming what is called the *mountain*. When first I ascended this mound from the cave below, I was struck with a feeling of awe, more deep and intense than anything I had ever before experienced. I could only observe the narrow circle which was illuminated immediately around me; above and beyond was apparently an unlimited space, in which the ear could not catch the slightest sound, nor the eye find an object to rest upon. It was filled with silence and darkness; and yet I knew that I was beneath the earth, and that this space, however large it might be, was

> actually bounded by solid walls. My curiosity was rather excited than gratified. In order that I might see the whole in one connected view, I built fires in many places with the pieces of cane which I found scattered among the rocks. Then taking my stand on the mountain, a scene was presented of surprising magnificence. On the opposite side, the strata of gray limestone breaking up by steps from the bottom, could scarcely be discerned in the distance by the glimmering. Above was the lofty dome, closed at the top by a smooth slab beautifully defined in the outline, from which the walls sloped away on the right and left, into thick darkness. Every one has heard of the dome of the mosque of St. Sophia, of St. Peter's and St Paul's; they are never spoken of but in terms of admiration, as the chief works of architecture, and among the noblest and most stupendous examples of what man can do when aided by science; and yet, when compared with the dome of this temple, they sink into comparative insignificance. Such is the surpassing grandeur of nature's works."
>
> "From the Bandit's Hall diverge two caves, one of which, the left, leads you to a multitude of domes; and the right to one which, par excellence, is called the *Mammoth Dome*. This dome is near four hundred feet high, and is justly considered one of the most sublime and wonderful spectacles of this most wonderful of caverns. From the summit of this dome there is a waterfall. Foreigners have been known to declare, on witnessing an illumination of the great dome and hall, that it alone would compensate for a voyage across the Atlantic."

For the description of the "*oak pole*" which, with the dry air of the Cave, had stood in the subterranean cemetery imperishable for ages, and which was so placed as to warrant the belief that it was used to *suspend a body in the air*, to dry off into nothingness, on its own hook—and for the mammoth-bones of animals, two of whose ribs would make an arch for a Gothic doorway—for these and other antiquities of the place, I refer you to the books on the subject; but there is no locality of the Cave which, with its tenant, has been described by a scientific visiter, and of this description, though long and elaborate, I must give you the whole. The gentleman who writes it visited the Cave in 1813. He says:—

> "In the digging of saltpetre earth in the short cave, a flat rock was met with by the workmen, a little below the surface of the

earth, in the cave; this stone was raised, and was about four feet wide and as many long; beneath it was a square excavation about three feet deep, and as many in length and width. *In this small nether subterranean chamber sat in solemn silence one of the human species, a female, with her wardrobe and ornaments placed at her side.* The body was in a state of perfect preservation, and sitting erect. The arms were folded up, and the hands were laid across the bosom; around the two wrists was wound a small cord, designed, probably, to keep them in the posture in which they were first placed; around the body and next thereto were wrapped two deer skins. These skins appeared to have been dressed in some mode different from what is now practised by any people of whom I have any knowledge. The hair of the skins were cut off very near the surface. The skins were ornamented with the imprints of vines and leaves, which were sketched with a substance perfectly white. Outside of these two skins was a large square sheet, which was either wove or knit. The fabric was the inner bark of a tree, which I judge from appearance to be that of the linn tree. In its texture and appearance, it resembled the south sea island cloth or matting; this sheet enveloped the whole body or head. The hair on the head was cut off within an eighth of an inch of the skin, except near the neck, where it was an inch long. The color of the hair was a dark red; the teeth were white and perfect. I discovered no blemish upon the body, except a wound between two ribs, near the back bone; and one of the eyes had also been injured. The finger and toe nails were perfect and quite long. The features were regular. I measured the length of one of the bones of the arm with a string, from the elbow to the wrist joint, and they equalled my own in length, viz.: ten and a-half inches. From the examination of the whole frame, I judged the figure to be that of a *very tall female*, say five feet ten inches in height. *The body, at the time it was discovered, weighed but fourteen pounds, and was perfectly dry; on exposure to the atmosphere, it gained in weight, by absorbing dampness, four pounds.* Many persons have expressed surprise that a human body of great size should weigh so little, as many human skeletons, of nothing but bone, exceed this weight. Recently some experiments have been made in Paris, which have demonstrated the fact of the human body being reduced to ten pounds, by being exposed to a heated atmosphere for a long period of time. The color of the skin was dark, not black; the flesh was hard and dry upon the bones. At the side of the body lay a pair of

moccassins, a knapsack, and an indispensible, or reticule. I will describe these in the order in which I have named them. The moccasins were made of wove or knit bark, like the wrapper I have described. Around the top was a border to add strength, and perhaps as an ornament. These were of middling size, denoting feet of a small size. The shape of the moccasins differs but little from the deer skin moccasins worn by the northern Indians. The knapsack was of wove or knit bark, with a deep strong border around the top, and was about the size of the knapsack used by soldiers. The workmanship of it was neat, and such as would do credit, as a fabric, to a manufacturer of the present day. The reticule was also made of knit or wove bark. The shape was much like a horseman's valise, opening its whole length on the top. On the side of the opening, and a few inches from it, were two rows of loops, one row on each side. Two cords were fastened to one end of the reticule at the top, which passed through the loop on one side, and then on the other, the whole length, by which it was laced up and secured. The edges of the top of the reticule were strengthened with deep fancy borders. The articles contained in the knapsack and reticule were quite numerous, and were as follows: one head-cap, made of wove or knit bark, without any border, and of the shape of the plainest night-cap; seven head-dresses, made of the quills of large birds, and put together somewhat in the way that feather fans are made, except that the pipes of the quills are not drawn to a point, but are spread out in straight lines with the top. This was done by perforating the pipe of the quill in two places, and running two cords through the holes, and then winding round the quills and the cord fine thread, to fasten each quill in the place designed for it. These cords extended some length beyond the quills on each side, so that on placing the feathers erect, the feathers could be tied together at the back of the head. This would enable the wearer to present a beautiful display of *feathers standing erect, and extending a distance above the head, and entirely surrounding it. These were most splendid head-dresses, and would be a magnificent ornament to the head of a female at the present day.* Several hundred strings of beads; these consisted of very hard, brown seed, smaller than hemp seed, in each of which a small hole had been made, and through the whole a small three-corded thread, similar in appearance and texture to seine twine; these were tied up in bunches, as a merchant ties up coral beads when he exposes them

for sale. *The red hoofs of fawns, on a string supposed to be worn around the neck as a necklace.* These hoofs were about twenty in number, and may have been *emblematic of innocence*. The claw of an eagle, with a hole in it, through which a cord was passed, so that it could be worn pendant from the neck. The jaw of a bear, designed to be worn in the same manner as the eagle's claw, and supplied with a cord to suspend it around the neck. Two rattle-snake skins; one of these had fourteen rattles; these skins were neatly folded up. Some vegetable colors done up in leaves. A small bunch of deer sinews, resembling cat-gut in appearance. Several bunches of thread and twine, two and three threaded, some which were nearly white. Seven needles some of which were of horn and some of bone; they were smooth, and appeared to have been much used. These needles had each a knob or whorl on the top, and at the other end were brought to a point like a large sail needle. They had no eyelets to receive a thread. The top of one of these needles was handsomely scalloped. A hand-piece made of deer skin, with a hole through it for the thumb, and designed probably to protect the hand in the use of the needle, the same as thimbles are now used. *Two whistles*, about eight inches long, made of cane, with a joint about one-third the length; over the joint is an opening, extending to each side of the tube of the whistle; these openings were about three-quarters of an inch long, and an inch wide, and had each a flat reed placed in the opening. These whistles were tied together with a cord wound around them.

"I have been thus minute in describing this mute witness from the days of other times, and the articles which were deposited within her earthen house. Of the race of people to whom she belonged when living, we know nothing; and as to conjecture, the reader who gathers from these pages this account, can judge of the matter as well as those who saw the remnant of mortality in the subterranean chambers in which she was entombed. The cause of the preservation of her body, dress and ornaments, is no mystery. The dry atmosphere of the cave, with the nitrate of lime, with which the earth that covers the bottom of these nether palaces is so highly impregnated, preserves animal flesh, and it will neither putrify nor decompose when confined to its unchanging action. Heat and moisture are both absent from the cave, and it is these two agents acting together which produce both animal and vegetable decomposition and putrefaction. In the ornaments, etc.,

> of this mute witness of ages gone, we have record of olden time, from which, in the absence of a written record, we may draw some conclusions. In the various articles which constituted her ornaments, *there were no metallic substances. In the make of her dress, there is no evidence of the use of any other machinery than the bone and horn needles. The beads are of a substance, of the use of which for such purposes we have no account among people of whom we have any written record.* She had no warlike arms. *By what process the hair on her head was cut short, or by what process the deer skins were shorn, we have no means of conjecture.* These articles afford us the same means of judging of the nation to which she belonged, and of their advances in the arts, that future generations will have in the exhumation of a tenant of one of our modern tombs, with the funeral shroud, etc., in a state of like preservation; with this difference, that with the present inhabitants of this section of the globe, but few articles of ornament are deposited with the body. The features of this ancient member of the human family much resembled those of a tall, handsome American woman. The forehead was high, and the head well formed."

The boudoir of this lady of uncertain age, is in one of the side avenues of the Cave, usually the object of a separate day's visit. It is not a very attractive-looking place in itself, though the imagination lights fire immediately, like a tinker with a good job, and sets to work there, with great industry. Stephen set down his lamp, after showing us the hollow niche in the rock against which the fair one was found sitting, as if, with his sixteen years' experience as guide, he had found this to be a spot where the traveller usually takes time for reverie. It cost me no coaxing to have mine. With the silence of the spot, and all the world shut out, it is impossible that the imagination should not do pretty fair justice to the single idea presented. There has been many a charming fancy portrait thus drawn of the departed Fawn-hoof, and of all the ladies of past ages, I doubt whether there is one who is the subject of a more perpetual series of unwritten poems. She is Kentucky's posthumous belle.

We emerged from the Cave somewhere about nine in the evening, having been twelve hours in the hands of darkness and Stephen. The stars were pleasant to see—the supper was pleasant to anticipate—but, to me, the strongest sensation of "rising again" was the luxury of once more being in the world of things to *smell*. The unearthly dryness and deathliness of the

dew-less air had been all day most oppressive to me. Confinement there would be my worst kind of *un-dew-ing*. As to fatigue, mine had become chronic; and, though probably several times used up, I walked to the hotel without thinking particularly of being tired, but enjoying the perfume of the pines, hemlocks and moist earth, with a zest worthy of the first breath at a thrown-up window in the morning. The olfactory sense has not been done justice to, in poetry. When Milton deplored his blindness as “wisdom at one entrance quite shut out,” he should have mentioned the consolation he still possessed in the neighboring entrance of his nose. There could have been no sweet-briar in his garden-walk, nor daughter’s hand to place bunches of flowers by his plate at breakfast. Give us a song to this neglected sense, my dear Morris! To honor what the world slights is the poet’s mission.

We supped and went to bed on our fill of that and the day’s astonishment, and I felt that I had seldom or never seen more since a morning. The Mammoth Cave is certainly a wonder of indescribable variety and beauty. It will increase in attraction as the world knows more of it, and, Kentucky, rich in so many specialities, will be rich in a viaduct of cosmopolitism—having that which the intelligent of all nations must needs come and see.

Adieu once more above ground.

LETTER No. 21.

NEW ARTICLE TO PACK IN A TRUNK—KILLING THE EYELESS FISH BY PUTTING HIM IN SPIRITS—TO MUMFORDSVILLE FROM MAMMOTH CAVE, BY PRIVATE VEHICLE, AND ADVENTURES BY THE WAY—PORTRAIT OF A BACKWOODSMAN—WESTERN COLLOQUIAL ATTITUDE—KENTUCKY HANDINESS AT EXPEDIENT—MENDING A BROKEN WHEEL WITH HICKORY WITHES—COMMENT ON BACKWOODS LIFE—CHEERFUL FIRE AT THE TAVERN IN A JUNE EVENING—HABIT OF WESTERN GENTLEMEN TO FREQUENT THE TAVERNS—CURIOSITY AS TO STRANGERS—ATTEMPT TO DODGE ENQUIRIES—LANDLORD, AND HIS MANNER OF CONVERSING AND WAITING ON TABLE—EDUCATION IN OPEN AIR, AND ITS RESULTS—WESTERN CHARACTER AND ITS FORMATION—HIGH STATION OF LANDLORDS AND STAGE-DRIVERS AT THE WEST—DISTINCTION BETWEEN WESTERN GENTLEMEN AND ROWDIES, ETC., ETC.

Harrodsburg Springs, June.

Dear Morris:—

You are enough of a traveller to know that the most dire inevitableness of human allotment, (after original sin,) is the perpetual packing of a trunk. To be one of that class of animals that requires baggage—or, rather, not to be accommodated, like the elephant, with a trunk that is taken care of by the stomach and general circulation—is a calamity for which we are doubtless pitied by kind angels. I was realizing this feature of my humanity, as usual, in preparing to leave the Hotel at the Mammoth Cave—groaning over the inexorable unwillingness of boots and shirts to go in where they had once come out—when I discovered a new embarrassment. Swimming vigorously around in my washbowl was the eyeless fish I was to kill, bottle, and take away. You that have laid hands upon poetical thoughts, swimming in your brain, lovely and happy in a state of nature, and have paralyzed the poor things with rhymes and corked them up in stanzas for immortality, can understand with what compassion I looked upon that involuntary victim of celebrity. I had brought him out of the cave in a pocket flask, and he seemed to have become rather lively than otherwise with the smack of artificial spirits which must have tinctured the water. His coming to light did not seem to affect him. He bumped his nose against the white sides of the washbowl as blindly and unconcernedly as against the rocks in the darkness of Lethe.

Happy he could scarcely have been in a strange place, and with nothing to eat—but a more active little creature I had never seen. The phial of immortality (some people call it gin) into which he was presently to be dropped, looked cruel and pokerish. I made all manners of delays to defer it. So beautiful a life to be brought suddenly to an end! If “Morris and Willis” had both been there, Morris should, as usual, have “done the business.”

I have thought it might be interesting to record that this little blind creature lived ten minutes in alcohol. It was evidently a most painful death. I had supposed it would be immediate, but he evidently lived longer than he would have done on air. The jumps, convulsions, and gaspings of his tiny mouth for some more congenial element, were prolonged, it seemed to me, interminably. Death came hard, though he was dying to be saved. Stiff grew his little translucent tail, at last, however, and he was wrapped in a winding sheet of the sighed over and packed—and here he floats before me, motionless, on the mantel-piece, and seen and thought of, while his brethren in darkness are forgotten.

In getting from the cave to a stage-route, I fell upon a bit of Kentucky experience which interested me. We had taken a return carriage—three of our subterranean party—to cross over, fifteen or twenty miles, to Mumfordsville. After bumping and stumping through the woods for an hour or two, we came to a dead halt. The tire of the fore-wheel had parted, and another revolution would have dropped the wood-work in pieces. Five miles back to the Mammoth Cave, ten miles to a blacksmith, six o’clock in the afternoon, and only a log-hut visible in the wilderness. Our negro driver was a smart lad, but he rubbed his wool in great perplexity. To borrow a wheel seemed to him the only chance of not passing the night in the woods, and so advanced a refinement as a wheel, anywhere in that neighborhood, was, at least, an improbability. The backwoodsman had come out to us, by this time —a social, friendly, athletic, ample young adult, whose growth, mental and bodily, had been as natural and untramelled as that of the trees visible from his door. No yearling steer could have been more frankly unceremonious, and no courtier more unembarrassed and agreeable in his politeness. He was barefooted and dressed in homespun. After exchanging civilities with us, he took a colloquial attitude very common in the West, but which I never had chanced to see east of the Alleghanies—sitting down plump upon his own heels, with his elbows between his knees. Thus made into a comfortable heap, with only the soles of his feet coming to the damp ground, he picked up gravel-stones and contemplated the posture of our affairs.

His father had a “four-wheel-fixin,” and lived a mile off. The negro was despatched to see if one of these wheels could be borrowed; and (by the way) his unhesitating and entire obedience to the white backwoodsman, combined with the most free and easy conversation between them, impressed me as a curious harmony of intercourse. The limbs and will were those of a slave, but the tongue was free. He was gone some three-quarters of an hour, and meantime, we listened to the most charmingly simple account of himself from our friend who sat looking up at us. We learned, among other things, that a man required no property, beyond a shirt, to “make a gal have him,” in that country; that the neighbors would “make a bee” to build his house, and he could get trusted for tools—so that it seems a happy climate where the native can begin life without capital. He himself has married at eighteen; had nothing to begin with, but three children *now*: lived off the land which he had paid for with half the crop, and was as “contented as he wanted to be.” Looking at the magnanimous, un-careworn, genial and unsuspicious countenance of the man as he talked, I let a small wonder creep through my mind, whether, after all, the mere enjoyment of life were not better attained in this way. Count D’Orsay and this backwoodsman—naturally men very much alike—might weigh happiness at the close of life, with a strong probability that the latter of the two had found the more.

The driver came, at last, sweating under the heavy fore-wheel of a lumber-waggon. It was no fit—but its owner had followed it, and then came the Kentucky handiness at expedient. “The old man,” a most merry counterpart of his big son, set the slave to cutting hickory withes and his boy to twisting them into ropes, and in a few minutes he had the broken wheel bound together so tightly that it was even more road-worthy than the other three. The job was done with jokes and good-humored zeal. They had given us two hours of their time and labor, and the old man had the odd wheel to carry home a mile on his back—but they would receive no compensation, and sent us off with the good wishes and cordial kindness of old friends. The well-mended did its work for the remaining fifteen miles, and we had a Kentucky experience, cordially and pleasantly to remember.

It was as late in the summer as June the eighth, but we found a roaring hickory fire in the bar-room at Mumfordsville, and the neighbours around it—talking politics, of course. The tavern, in Kentucky, is not only the resort, but the *respectable* resort, of the male inhabitants of the village, at all leisure hours. You seldom drive up to one without alighting amid a group—oftener amid a crowd—and the titles flying from mouth to mouth soon inform you that all the Judges, Generals, and Colonels, possible to the size of the

population, are among the company. The stranger is received with some show of courteous acknowledgment, a chair given him or remarks addressed to him, and if he will take anything to drink, or requires any information or other civility, it is abundantly ready for him. But they require something in return. Who and what he is, and where he is going and what for—if it does not all ooze out in his conversation, is specifically asked about in the course of the evening. At Springfield,[4] a populous little town where I passed the night on my way to Mammoth Cave, I tried hard to dodge this paying of autobiographic toll to curiosity. I had been asked whether I was "in the dry goods line," what I was "agent for," whether I carried my "business card about me," etc., to all of which I replied with a courteous monosyllable, changing the subject, by some immediate remark. But the landlord came up at last with a direct statement that "there were several gentlemen present who would be very happy to know my name. One side of every bar-room, at the time, was covered with the enormous placard of a travelling menagerie, and the name of a Mr. Willis, as the distinguished leader of the band, was printed in enormous capitals. There was a risk of my being taken for more of a celebrity than might be comfortable. Stepping to the tavern register, therefore, in reply to the landlord's application, I wrote my name in such a way as to slur the tops of the two i's very slightly—by which management I passed the remainder of the evening in comfortable unconspicuousness, as a Mr. Welles, and was not admiringly mistaken for the distinguished clarionet, Mr. Willis.

[4] It may interest you to read the printed card which I found nailed to my bed-room door at this same tavern of Springfield. It ran thus:—

RULES OF THIS HOUSE.

1. Regular boarders are expected to pay up weekly.

2. Gentlemen without baggage are expected to pay in advance.

3. Gaming of all kinds strictly prohibited.

4. All lights to be put out at 10 o'clock.

5. Strict attention paid to baggage, but no responsibility except for such as is left in charge of the bar-keeper.

6. Good order is expected to be kept by all persons when in this house.

Our landlord at Mumfordsville was quite a superior and intellectual-looking man, and when supper was ready he waited on table with his hat on, conversing with great ease as he handed round the hot cakes, and seating himself at the head of the table when all were helped, and (still with his hat on) discussing the religious topics which chanced to come up, very intelligently. I noticed, throughout the West, that, in all small villages, the

landlord is a person who is considered to honour the guest by his company. There is nothing doubtful in his position. That and the profession of stage driving, are too rich in opportunity for influence—give too much access to the minds and opinions of the community—not to have been gradually promoted to the class of occupations for the "leading citizens." A Judge drove the stage in which I crossed the country from Harrodsburg, and the women came out from the farm-houses and gave him sixpenny errands to do in the village, with unhesitating familiarity. The wealthy nabob of Elizabethtown was the "stage agent" who helped us in to the changed coach and arranged our baggage. Mr. Bell, you know, the father of Mrs. Senator Gwin, keeps the nearest tavern to Mammoth Cave, and he is one of the most influential and respected of Kentucky's "first men." The traveller is obliged to learn these distinctions; and with any lack of deference or any demand for more than the services ordinarily performed by these gentlemen, he gets a very peremptory reminder that he has all along been the obliged person of the two.

The wives of the West may not like the habits I have alluded to—husbands and brothers passing their leisure time at the taverns. But I am not sure that promptness and manliness are not thereby cultivated. The universal fluency of tongue and universal quickness and boldness of face-to-face action, which are marked and allowed characteristics of these people, at least get their training in this daily school. At the North we teach youth what human nature is by books—and books are but life at second hand. These frank Kentuckians learn it, by seeing and being perpetually familiar with just what they are afterwards to encounter. What they do on the Stump or in the Legislature, is what they have been doing every day in the bar-room, or practising while balanced on the two legs of a chair amid the crowd seated on the tavern sidewalk. They never insult without knowing it and being ready to answer for it, being well-practised in what is due from one gentlemen to another. They are habitually courteous and deferential, from the laws and usages which are the standards in these familiar crowds. They argue adroitly from constant habit. They can control the expressions of their faces, their muscles and nerves from the same habit. It is the old Areopagus school for men, and the result seems to show, that, though the citizen of the North is wiser in *books*, at twenty, the citizen of the West is wiser in *men* at thirty. Do not understand me as speaking of the rowdies of the West, of whose bowie-knives and revolvers you read so much. These are a class who are not seen by the stranger unless he seeks them in resorts for mere drinking and gambling. I refer to a higher and very different class, who still, however, are found assembled in every town at the taverns. As it is

interesting to see how our national character is forming, what I have here noted may be set down as one of its influencing causes.

I had thought to say something of Harrodsburg Springs in this letter, but I will defer it to my next, I think. And, for the present adieu.

Yours, etc.

LETTER No. 22.

CITIES AND PLACES APPROACHING US BY RAILROADS—THE OVER-TRUMPETING OF SOME WATERING-PLACES—AGREEABLE DISAPPOINTMENT ON ARRIVING AT HARRODSBURG SPRINGS—ENGLISH PARK AROUND THE HOTEL—NOTES DESCRIPTIVE OF THE MINERAL WATERS—FAVORITE HAUNT FOR WEALTHY WESTERN FAMILIES—DR. GRAHAM AND HIS CHARACTER—DEFICIENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE—THE DOCTOR'S HORSE AND HIS EMBARRASSING HABITS—THE DOCTOR'S MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS—HYDROPATHIC ADDITION TO THE HOTEL—DOCTOR HOUGHTON AND HIS EXCELLENT KNOWLEDGE AND CARE—TOWN OF HARRODSBURG—SALT RIVER, ETC., ETC.

Harrodsburg Springs, Kentucky, June.

DEAR MORRIS:—

Cincinnati has "sidled-up," as you know, to within forty-eight hours of New York, and by this same scarcely noticed but perpetual "sidling-up"—(on grease and smooth iron)—the place I write from is likely to become the *central Saratoga* of America. With next year's completion of a railroad now in progress, it will be a couple of hours south from Cincinnati; and then, between New York and New Orleans, Washington and St. Louis, Harrodsburg Springs will be the hub of the wheel of fashion—nearly equi-accessible from these four outside points, and a rallying spot for all the beauty and be-sociable-ness between. Its chief attraction, for Boston, will be, that the summer commences there *a month earlier*—for New Orleans, that it commences *a month later*—and in that *compromise month of June*, (shivering at Boston, sultry at New Orleans, but summery to Harrodsburg,) it is likely to attract, from North and South, all, at least, who are susceptible to climate. At present the crowded season is in July and August; and, during those months, it is the grand field of tournament for Western flirtation, and the gathering point for politicians out of harness, and for such wealthy Westerners and Southerners as like to spend their money on the side of the Alleghanies that slopes towards home.

People and places are so over-trumpeted, now a-days, that, when we meet with man, woman or watering-place to which common report has not done justice, we feel a kind of compensatory eagerness to make it up to

them. I went to Harrodsburg Springs as the best place I could hear of, for a fortnight's loitering—the Northern summer not being ready for my lungs, and Kentucky having some inviting features and qualities of which I wished to see more—but, in the establishment of "The Springs" I expected to find little except clap-boards and whitewash, solitude and sanguine expectations of company, a ball-room full of cobwebs, and a vehement negro to ring the bell for meals. I hoped it was such a place, for the loneliness I wanted, and the leisure it would give me to write up my notes of travel. There are hundreds of such places that are more puffed and talked of than is Harrodsburg, with all its real advantages.

After a most lovely drive of thirty miles from Lexington, I was landed at a massive gateway of granite, between a couple of bronze lions; and, through the gentle ascending grounds of a court-yard, laid out and shaded with exquisite taste, I saw a structure of unusual magnificence, looking every way solid and well-finished. Two long wings of cottage buildings enclosed the front court, but the well-laid walks seemed to lead off to grounds beyond; and, to enjoy the twilight, I gave my baggage to the servant and started for a stroll before going to my room. I found that the hotel was surrounded by what might well be a nobleman's park, the walks apparently endless and yet carefully and neatly kept, and the natural advantages of the undulating woodlands charmingly understood and improved. I rambled till the stars came out to light me back to supper, and returned, feeling that I had stumbled upon a most unexpected mixture of paradise and public house.

My private letters have told you with what pleasure, and with what profit to health, I passed two or three weeks at this lovely and luxurious sojourn. Some facts which should be more generally known, with regard to it, I will copy (in a note,[5]) from printed documents, on the subject—but, before turning to my more personal befallings, let me speak admiringly of the mere hotel. It is furnished and kept like the best establishments in cities. You could be nowhere more luxuriously comfortable. The wealthy Western families whose equipages daily throng and enliven the gateway, and who take rooms and reside here for months together, with a reference to the fashionable season, are the best evidence of the quality of the accommodations. A good table, and a good society, are two luxuries which I believe you may always make sure of, at Harrodsburg.

[5] "The Harrodsburg Springs, one of the most fashionable watering places in the State, have become deservedly celebrated for the medicinal virtue of the water, and as a delightful summer resort, both to the votaries of health and pleasure. Dr. Christopher Graham, the amiable, enterprising and intelligent proprietor, has spared no pains or expense in the preparation of accommodation for visiters, the improvements having already cost three hundred thousand dollars. The main hotel is one of the finest and most commodious buildings in the West, and the surrounding cottages are admirably arranged, alike to promote the convenience and comfort of the occupants. The grounds are elevated and extensive; adorned with every variety of shrubbery grown in America, interspersed with some of the most beautiful and rare exotics from Europe and Asia, and traversed by wide gravel walks, intersecting and crossing each other in every direction. A small and beautiful lake, three hundred yards long, one

hundred yards in width, and fifteen feet deep, lately excavated, is well stored with fish of the finest flavor, and its glassy surface enlivened by the presence of many wild and tame water-fowls."—*Collins's History of Kentucky.*

"I cannot relinquish the subject of diseases of the liver without mentioning in terms of almost unqualified approbation, my candid opinions of the waters of the Harrodsburg Springs, situated in the county of Mercer, and State of Kentucky. These waters are well-known to operate powerfully and beneficially on the liver; nor do I believe there have been many instances, if an absolute consumption, or an induration of the liver had taken place, in which those waters have not been efficient in removing diseases of the liver. Their almost certain efficacy is so well known that they are frequented by thousands of invalids, during the summer months, from every part of the United States. And I would advise all persons laboring under complaints of the liver, or under dyspepsy or indigestion, and who have become hopeless of the influence of medical prescriptions, never to omit, if it be possible for them to travel to those springs, to give those waters a fair trial. They are situated in a beautiful and healthful country, and the accommodations are always such as to insure the comfort and convenience of all invalids who approach them."—*Gunn's Domestic Medicine.*

"The town of Harrodsburg, one of the oldest in Kentucky, is situated ten miles south of the river which bears that name, and near the geographical centre of the State. The site is elevated, rocky and rolling, but not hilly; and the surface of the surrounding country has the same character. Neither the town, nor its immediate vicinity presents, in scenery, anything striking or picturesque; but within two or three hours' ride, in different directions, the perambulating invalid may see several objects not unworthy of notice:

1. Union Village, inhabited by Shakers, who exhibit a characteristic specimen of the social, economical and political relations of that singular people.

2. The spot denominated Knob Lick, fifteen miles south-east of Harrodsburg; five miles from the old and pleasant village of Danville, the site of Centre College; and two miles of the farm of the late venerable Governor Shelby. The knobs or hillocks, are from one to two hundred feet high, more or less conical, some of them insulated, others connected by crumbling isthmuses—the whole forming a group of barren, conoidal eminences, which are finally contrasted with the deep verdure of the surrounding plain. They consist of a marlaceous slate clay, strongly inclined to disintegration and reposing on shale.

3. The gray, mural cliffs of the Kentucky River, which flows in a narrow and winding ravine, nearly four hundred feet in depth. This great natural canal may be visited with facility by several roads; and offers, in the grandeur of its high and precipitous banks, embellished with evergreens, a great deal to interest all who have a taste for the sublime and beautiful. But we must return to that which is more important to the invalid.

The Springs.—These are six or eight in number. They burst out near the summit of the ridges on which the village of Harrodsburg is built. The mass of these ridges is composed of limestone, much, of which is of a fine grain, and impregnated with magnesia.

"The water from one of them has been examined, with some care, by Doctor Best and myself.

"The water contains the following salts:

1. Sulphate magnesia, in large quantities. This is the characteristic ingredient.

2. Carbonate magnesia, in a small quantity.

3. Sulphate of soda, do.

4. Sulphate of lime, do.

5. Carbonate of lime, in minute, do.

6. Iron, (probably in the state of a sulphate,) a trace.

7. A minute quantity of sulpherretted hydrogen, as I ascertained by experiments made at the spring itself.

"From this analysis, it appears that the waters of the Harrodsburg Springs are analagous, in the materials which they hold in solution, to the celebrated Seidlitz Fountain of Bohemia. Their predominant ingredient is sulphate of magnesia, or Epsom-salt: though the other matter which they contain, especially the sulphate of iron, small as is its quantity, may contribute to their beneficial effects.

"I am not in possession of the facts necessary to a full *expose* of their therapeutic powers, but that these are so great as justly to place them at the head of all the known mineral springs in the States bordering on the Ohio River, I have no doubt."

But I wish to introduce you to Dr. Graham, the proprietor of this vast establishment. The Doctor is not an individual. And, our language, by the way, is deficient in the phrase which should express what he is, more than an individual. We want something which should correspond to the distinctions we make, for instance, in speaking of land. We say "a lot," "a farm," "a tract," "a township," "a county,"—but, though Dr. Graham is at least a township, if not a county, as to extent of influence and amount of value in the neighbourhood, there is no way of denominating him as more than "a lot." To say he is an enterprising and gentlemanly man, does not express a quarter of an acre of the whole county he is. With the ten thousand words said to be in common use, it seems a pity that we should have no means of expressing the graduated magnitude of so varying a thing as a citizen where a single individual amounts to an *institution*, as Dr. Graham does—or is quite equal, as he is, to a *quorum*, or a *committee*, or a *majority*—we should be able to express it by something shorter than writing his biography. I hereby put in my plea for this amendment to our language.

You would be likely to draw an erroneous conclusion as to the Doctor's character, from the habits of his horse. Of all the gentlemen in the county he is probably the most prompt, expeditious and energetic man of business—yet his horse (which he lent me for a ride every day) walked me straight up to every carriage and horseman on the road, and, spite of whip and other remonstrance, came to a dead halt, *and stayed there*, till he had heard some conversation. It was occasionally a little embarrassing to me, for, where there were ladies in the carriage, the possible habits of the horse were not likely to occur to them; and, for a stranger to stop them in the middle of the road, and have nothing to say, looked like rather a thinly covered indulgence of curiosity. But the Doctor, though he has time and politeness for everybody, (as this confirmed habit of his tall bay horse undeniably betrays,) is still of a most omnipresent where-he's-wanted-ness. No guest comes or departs without the courteous host's welcome or farewell. No beau's boots

have had their chalked bottoms mis-read, and then left at the wrong door, without an instant meeting between the protruded head of inquiry and the rectifying master of the house. No invalid longs to tell how he has passed the night, without finding the kindest of listeners in the Doctor; and no young lady walks alone on the portico without the Doctor's large Spanish eyes ready at half a glance to come and unload her heart of its eloquent unexplainableness. The innumerable things attended to, for the guest's comfort, and the quantity of time, chat and personal presence to spare, on the part of the handsome man who does it all, was the miracle of my daily perplexity while at Harrodsburg. But you see, from this, what sort of house and host you may find, should you go that far southward to anticipate a June.

And the spirit of the age was not likely to be unwatched by the vigilant eye of Dr. Graham. With his experience as surgeon in the army and practising physician, he knows the value of health in a world of care and contention; and the general pursuit of it, in connection with pleasure, opened his eyes to the movements of the day—*the general siamese between hydropathy and watering-place*. Few belles have papas and mammas of undamaged constitutions. Few flaunt in lace in the evening, who would not be fairer as well as healthier for a "pack in a wet sheet" in the morning. Those who have made a fortune usually have sore need of renovating juices to enjoy it. The summer demand for health and pleasure will so combine the family inclinations as to bring old and young to the same place, if that place furnish facilities for both. A ball-room, a water-cure establishment, and a good table, are the three supplies to combine, for a world that employs its summer solstice to flirt, freshen and fatten.

The hydropathic establishment which has been added to the costly hotel at Harrodsburg, is probably as complete and well arranged as any one in the country. No pains and expense have been spared upon it. Dr. Graham came to New York, and after much inquiry, selected Dr. Houghton, (whose Lectures on Hydropathy are so well known,) as the best medical man who could best found the system of Hydropathy in the West. This gentleman has the present charge of the establishment at Harrodsburg. I was a fortnight under the treatment, while there, and may perhaps write of it, when my experience shall give me more authority to pronounce upon my present impressions. In Houghton's skill and knowledge of the subject I have unlimited confidence. To a thorough medical education he adds a characteristic carefulness and patience of analysis, and these advantages, with the manners and habits of a most refined gentleman, form desirable

hands for an invalid to fall into. I feel very grateful to him. All will, who come under his kind and intelligent care.

Of the town of Harrodsburg itself I have said nothing. It has about two thousand inhabitants, a neighbourhood of wealthy proprietors, lots of livery stables and “dry goods” stores, several Female Academies, and (a superfluity for you and me, my dear General, as we are not in politics) Salt River only one mile off! Yes, I rode “up Salt River” every day—and a charming stream with a green bank through the woodlands, that celebrated refuge of disappointment turns out to be. It rises near here and empties into the Ohio just below Louisville. In the quantities of mint that crush under the horse’s feet as he follows its windings, I could smell nothing prophetic of the party it is preparing to welcome from the coming campaign.

Things dull in themselves are sometimes valuable for what they suggest. My letter has been written with a brain somewhat out of condition, but if you know more of Harrodsburg Springs by reading it, its dulness may well be pardoned. Yours, etc.

LETTER No. 23.

AN OMNIBUS IN THE WOODS OF KENTUCKY—ITS USE AS A STAGE-COACH—FOUR MEN AND A FIGHTING COCK AS TRAVELLING COMPANIONS—IGNOMINIOUS TREATMENT OF THE WARRIOR—HIS DIET BEFORE FIGHTING—GENTLEMAN LENDING HIS POCKET-COMB TO THE COMPANY—DISLIKE OF LARGE LAND OWNERS—INDIAN CREEK, AND A CLIFF'S RESEMBLANCE TO A LADY'S FOOT—NAMING IT AFTER THE FOOT OF A KENTUCKY BELLE OF TWENTY YEARS AGO—WONDERFUL SCENERY OF KENTUCKY RIVER COMPARATIVELY UNKNOWN—THE FERRYMAN AT BROOKLYN—SHAKER VILLAGE AND A SIGHT OF ELDER BRYANT—DESCRIPTION OF THE FEATURES OF THEIR VILLAGE AND PROPERTY—SPECULATIONS AS TO COMMUNITY AND CELIBACY, ETC.

Harrodsburg Springs, Kentucky, June.

Dear Morris:—

It reminded me of you—for it was like falling in with one of the vertebræ of Broadway—to find an omnibus at the door of my Kentucky hotel. I had been reading of the fossil remains of Mammoth Cave, and my first thought was that of stumbling unexpectedly on an organic specimen of New York or "the General"—antiquities both, to me, so long seemed the four months since I had seen them. The omnibus was doing duty as a stage-coach, and was to take me thirty miles to Harrodsburg. How so city-fied a thing had followed the setting sun so far over the horizon, I could not conjecture; but with four horses, and the baggage on top it bowled merrily away, and worked as well, I thought, as if picking up ladies in Broadway. The sixpence-hole, by the way, was not in operation, and should have been stuffed with straw, for it let in the dust uncomfortably.

My traveling companions were five—four men and a game-cock. The latter was sewed up in a pocket handkerchief, and with only his head out, was treated ignominiously as a bundle. I inquired into his history as he rolled about on the floor, and on hearing that he had been the victor at the Lexington races, the day before, killing three successive antagonists, and winning considerable money for his master, I could not but philosophize on what may follow glory, in the experience of heroes. Here was a warrior, with the blood of battle still unwashed from his crest, and who, as Hoffman says of the men of Churubusco,

> “Was equal in the deeds he wrought,
> To any common five,”

tied up in the base retirement of a pocket-handkerchief, and trying in vain to find a support and hold his head up. The ingratitude of this world’s fought-for! I made some inquiries as to the education and diet of the brave bird—overcoming, meanwhile, considerable disgust at his master’s brutal way of kicking him about the floor of the omnibus; and as it may be useful to know how to get ready for glory, I will record the process. The Irishman who owned the game-cock, and made a business of it, gave me all the dietetics in a single sentence: “For three weeks afore the fight, feed the feller on egg, corn-meal, rock-candy and barly-water.” In case of an invasion from the Lobos Islands, my dear General, you may be called on to fight for glory and guano, and the recipe may be worth sticking under your belt.

My other omnibus companions were free and kindly. Conversation was unembarrassed. The best-dressed man of the three pulled a horn comb from his pocket, after a while, combed his own head and then passed around the utensil. All accepted and made use of it, till it came in turn to me, and (not to give offence) I apologized for declining it, on the ground of having a curly head that took care of itself. The comb-lender was a hater of the men who “owned such a bloody quantity of land, a poor man couldn’t get a place to call his own.” He pointed to a porter’s lodge on one of the beautiful woodland estates we were passing, (the road, for thirty miles, by the way, seeming to pass through a lordly English park,) and said he liked to see a shanty with a pig-trough at the door, and fences around small lots—not such a sign as that, of a man’s gobbling up more than his share. As to the old Kentucky that God made, belonging to a few of these cussed aristocrats, he didn’t believe it was good law. You might as well do without it. Why didn’t Cassius Clay take up that idea, and not be trying to make gentlemen out of niggers?

Thus discoursing and exchanging knowledge, we arrived at Kentucky River—and with my eyes wide open—for the descent to its banks, through the valley of what is called Indian Creek, was a perfect gem for the artist. The bed of this tributary stream is deep, through precipitous rocks; and the road follows one of the sides of the ravine, on a sort of corkscrew shelf, every inch revealing some new combination of cliff and foliage. There was one graceful point, more particularly, held forward like a lady’s foot to a shoemaker’s measure, of which I quite longed for a sketch to bring away. The prettiest known foot of the fashionable world having been born in the immediate neighbourhood, I ventured to name this projecting instep of the

lovely mountain above; and I beg some friendly artist to pencil and bring it along in his portfolio. Governor Adair's estate is within a mile or two, and "Florida's foot" should be the name of the loveliest reminder of his daughter's beauty. The shower of sonnets written to it at Saratoga, twenty years ago, might be still traced in the fertility of Parnassus.

And now, my dear Morris, consider KENTUCKY RIVER presented formally to your acquaintance and particular attention—a stranger you should see and know more of. Deepen Trenton Falls for one or two hundred feet, smooth its cascades into a river, and extend it for thirty miles—*thirty miles between perpendicular precipices from three to five hundred feet high, and only a biscuit-toss across at the top*—and you have a river of whose remarkable beauty the world is strangely ignorant. At the point where it is crossed by the route to Harrodsburg, the banks though sublime even here, are less lofty than elsewhere. Of another visit to it, at a bolder point, I have some pleasant memoranda, from which I may scribble, in this or another letter—but meantime I must record the loveliness of the crossing at Brooklyn Ferry. This Kentucky Brooklyn consists of one house under the rock, one fine-looking and herculean ferry-man, who is also postmaster and father of the family that constitutes the population of the place, and one broad-bottomed scow, into which the stage-coach is driven, and which is pulled across by one negro, on a rope pulley. In that ten minutes of gliding noiselessly from the base of one cliff to another, the traveller who loves scenery enjoys a feast. That postmaster ferry-man looks like a capitally good fellow, (let me chronicle,) and to go and lodge a week with him, and pull up and down stream in a "dug-out," would be a delightful thing for an artist to do—a thing I have put down among my own life's many little reluctant foregoneings. Some idler man will perhaps thank me for this turning down of a leaf of travel for his notice.

A village of Shakers lies a few miles beyond Kentucky River, and it is curious to see the effect of celibacy on barns and fences. Things look too virtuous for comfort. I never saw such excessive neatness. The stones of the walls looked as exemplary as if every one had been catechised and wiped clean with the corner of an apron. Nature had been permitted to retain no more beauty than the laws of fertility made inevitable. The rich apple-trees looked sorry they were such sinners as to be beautiful. The green grass seemed rebuked and overawed. A dozen large stone houses were severely well built, and the eight or ten women, whom we saw going to and fro, turned in their toes and elbows as if carefully taught to be ungraceful. I walked to an enclosed well for a drink of water, while the broad-brimmed postmaster overhauled the mails; and found I was within the fence of Elder

Bryant, the head man of the community. It was Saturday evening, and he was at the open window, shaving himself for Sunday—the morrow's law of rest to which the incorrigible beard pays no attention, being enforced upon the more manageable soap and razor. Though in his shirt-sleeves, and with a face half covered with lather, the Elder had a noble and commanding presence. How so intellectual and dignified a man could ever dance with the women, to worship God—and believe in it—was hard to realize. But he looks sincere and good.

One cannot but admire the operation of the tenets of this sect, as to business matters. Though, by their creed, babies are iniquitous and the world ought to come to an end, they raise better vegetables and breed better cattle for the support of the present offspring of sin than any other class of farmers. I am assured that every article of produce from the Shaker village brings a third more of price than any other in the markets of the surrounding towns. They prosper. They add yearly to their stock, and their land. What is the secret? Is it in the community principle as to property, and the abstinent principle as to person? Is it in employing the women in the raising of crops instead of the raising of children—reducing them to the level of the men, as labourers in the field as well as sharers of the profits? Is it that taste, grace and pleasure are impoverishing principles, and that thrift and beauty cannot, in this fallen world, dwell together? Or, has the awkward dancing or "trying celibacy" nothing to do with it, and is it merely that the world is too largely constructed for any "one-horse concern," and it is against the natural order of things for an individual to be sole proprietor of anything? Who will tell us how we can borrow Shaker prosperity and leave Shaker uglinesses behind? The hominy of human happiness is so hard to separate from the corn's cob and kernel-skin!

After such a sermon, this seems a good place for an Amen—so Yours, etc.,

LETTER No. 24.

REMEDY FOR ONE GREAT NUISANCE, IN SLAVERY—NORTHERN CITIES DISFIGURED BY THEIR SUBURBS—SUMMER'S EVENING IN KENTUCKY—LEXINGTON LIKE OLD NORTH-END IN BOSTON—FAMILIES PASSING THE EVENING ON THE DOOR-STEPS—REGRETS THAT HAD BEEN UNNECESSARY AS TO FALLING OFF IN WESTERN BEAUTY—ARISTOCRATIC MOULD OF REPUBLICAN BELLES—SUDDEN TERMINATION OF PRINCIPAL STREET IN OPEN COUNTRY—LOOK AT A CHILDREN'S PARTY, OVER A FENCE—A NEGRO AT MY SHOULDER ENJOYING THE SAME STOLEN PLEASURE—FIRST VISIT TO ASHLAND BY MOONLIGHT—MR. CLAY'S LOVEABLENESS—HIS RESIDENCE CLASSIC GROUND, EVEN BEFORE HIS DEATH—DESCRIPTION OF HOUSE AND GROUNDS—CRAZY WANDERER WHOM I MET IN THE GROVE—CURIOUS MONAMANIA OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY, ETC., ETC.

Lexington, Kentucky, June, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

Slavery has an advantage which I realized in a twilight stroll at Lexington. It ensures the absence of what is perhaps the greatest nuisance of the cities of Free states and particularly of New York. With all the splendour and luxury of your great metropolis, it is, as you know, *with its suburbs*, a jewel set in filth—a two-mile purgatory of shanties and pig-styes, horrible to see and smell, lying between it and the country, on every road that leads out of it. The labouring classes *live in the suburbs* of towns at the North. At the South they live, *each with his master*, and either in compulsory cleanliness or in dirt hidden from the public eye.

I dare say there are several features of a summer's evening in Kentucky which are more artistically picturesque than your Northern mind would be made up for, and I will try to give you a general idea of the scene in which I noticed more particularly what I speak of above. With the rest of the two hundred hats my well worn "Beebe" had been snatched up for the sudden after-tea efflux to the front of the Hotel; and, on chairs and in groups the promiscuous multitude (for court was in session) thronged the sidewalk on the street—lawyers listening and clients discoursing, and witnesses, Judges and jurymen all smoking uncompromisingly under the trees—myself the naturally inquisitive stranger for whom Western politeness provides that the

nearest citizen shall be the courteous entertainer. Henry Clay's "office" was "just around the corner," and this, and the names of the most distinguished-looking persons in the crowd on the sidewalk, I had learned from a gentleman at my elbow, when the light began to be rosy. I was up to the eyes in men and losing a sunset. The street to the right looked as if that way led to gardens. I started for a stroll.

Lexington has the air of being—as a part of old North-End in Boston used to be—aristocratically and conservatively primitive. The same sidewalk that once owed a man room for his front steps owes it still; and the public is bound to walk round them, and round his family if they are seated on them, enjoying the evening air. The parlour windows, on the whole of this principal thoroughfare of Lexington, are plump on the street.

The "first citizens" live here, as you may see by the style of the ladies on the door-steps. They sit out of doors after tea—mothers, daughters and children—and groups of more stylish mould, more native-ly thorough-bred, and more unconsciously and undeniably of the world's "porcelain undashed with crockery," you would not find by unroofing Belgrave Square in London, than by walking along the door-steps of this capital of Kentucky on a summer's evening. It was a succession of lovely pictures—the range and quality, of the beauty which I saw, giving me double pleasure from correcting an error in regrets. Such were the Western and Southern belles, who *used* to come to Saratoga. I had vowed such came no more—piously yielding to the inference, (when requested) that the "falling off" was in the scales of the eyes that looked for them. But here was Lexington as I should have thought to find it twenty years ago—a garden of most distinguished-looking girls, the plant indigenous and the qualities not running out with repetition. The several visits that I have chanced to make to this same town, in going and coming to the different points of interest in the State, have abundantly confirmed this impression. I saw dozens in every walk, any one of whom would be, (like an American belle whom I remember in London,) the "season's wonder at Almack's." How we come by this "blood look," (which is so much more common in our Democratic republic than in countries where it is more prized and guarded,) I could never satisfactorily explain—but physiologists, disposed to study the problem, might well begin in Kentucky.

Passing perhaps half a mile of family groups enjoying the sunset out of doors—(with a delicious bit of contrast to each one in the group of happy-faced slaves, of all ages, gathered at the alley-gate opening from the side of the house)—I came suddenly to the end of the sidewalk. The street stopped

abruptly in a grassy meadow. I looked around with a vague feeling of inquiry for something missing, but it was a minute or two before I saw what it was. There was no suburb. Where were the poor people? Where was the usual entrenchment of a city—the pig-styes and the poverty? The air of the fragrant open fields came to me as I stood at the end of the street. A country fence commenced where the paving-stones ended; and, at a short distance up the road stood a rural villa just visible through shrubbery and flowers. The merry black faces, with the numberless ebony babies, which I had seen in the group at the side entrance of every house as I came along, were instead of this nuisance I missed—*negro comfort well distributed instead of white wretchedness filthy in a heap.* The contrast—say between Lexington and New York in this respect—might as well be taken into the account by the precipitators of abolition.

I stepped off the sidewalk into the country, on the evening I refer to, and enjoyed a charming little bit of stolen pleasure—stolen by looking over a fence. I shared it with a negro, who I suddenly discovered, was looking over the fence at my shoulder, and who, with spade and basket, was returning from his work, not too tired to be made happy by a pretty sight. We stood ten minutes—we two uninvited inquisitives—watching a children's party in the grounds of a cottage; and a lovelier scene could scarcely have been arranged by a painter. The lamps in the drawing-room were just beginning to brighten through the shrubbery with the thickening twilight, and a party of grown-up people thronged the porticoes; but the extensive grounds outside were populous with the blue and pink sashes and the lively little jackets and trousers, and scores of eager voices went up in a general hum of happiness whose key-note was very contagious. I caught the happiness with hearing it. So did Cuffee at my elbow; though his heart made itself audible in a chuckle, which (or some other voicing) mine needed. In and out of the openings of the serpentine walks came and went the little couples—some only merry, some confidentially engaged in imparting a secret—arms over necks, heads uncovered in the warm air, grace all unconscious—a little Eden peopled for a night, and briefly innocent and beautiful. How little they knew how much pleasure they were sending out between the pickets of the fence that enclosed them—how far and how well, over mountain and lake, the chance sight of them had brought the images of three others to be unseen figures in the picture! My children were there! So sometimes, by the wayside, falls what little happiness the traveller gets—though I am not sure you will think such "airy nothings" worth reading of.

The moon was bright, and ASHLAND—Clay's residence was but a mile farther on. I was in the humor for communing with what was absent, and the

home of the "gentleman statesman" was vacant of its owner. The promise of his recovery was brighter when he had last been heard from, but he was ill and in danger—a patient whose sick bed a nation was watching. I was among the many who could not help loving as well as honouring Mr. Clay—and, indeed, that all who had ever seen him did not tenderly love him, must have been because,

> "He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
> Must look down on, the hate of those below."

He was wonderfully loveable, by that common yet mysterious law of magnetism which regulates that matter, and there are probably few on whom he had ever concentrated voice and eye, who would not have felt as I did under that Western moon—tearfully persuaded to make its light of that night sacred, by going to see his groves lit up by it. Ashland already—before the death of him who had planted its trees—was classic ground. The love he had inspired had overruled the niggard with-holding of the tribute to greatness—denied commonly till the ear is deaf to it. There was his home—honoured beyond all possible reversion, though its door might still open to him. Of whom was this ever more true than of Mr. Clay?

The summer dew just made the dust heavy, and the path along the wayside was like a carpet. I followed the road (which was but a continuation of the principal street of Lexington,) and inquiring the localities, of the only foot passenger whom I met soon came to the tall locust-trees which overhang the gate. Two square posts hewn roughly from the log, marked the entrance; the gate was ajar, and the fleckered moonlight, along the avenue curving to the left seemed paving it with plates of silver. I followed the path, somewhat grass-grown and neglected, and stood presently before a manorial-looking mansion of octagonal shape, with wings projecting upon the lawn. To the left the grove closed in upon it, but to the right, a cluster of small buildings, and lights and voices, seemed to indicate the residence of the "people" of the estate. The rear of the large mansion opening upon the green-house and garden, was apparently the part occupied by Mrs. Clay.

Not venturing to intrude farther I passed off by a path leading under the majestic trees to the left, and was musing on the Providence which leaves the perfected oak, such as I saw above me, to flourish through long and strong maturity, but removes, just when perfected to greatest usefulness, the man who planted it—the tree having a *continuity of ripeness* which is denied to man—when I was accosted by a gentlemen of a very large stature, who seemed to have been seeking solitude, and musing idly like myself. I

rejoiced at first in the apparent opportunity to learn something of Mr. Clay, as seen at home—but I soon found I was addressing a mind gone astray. The only reply to my questions was what professed to a history of the tall broad-shouldered gentleman himself. He said he was the celebrated Indian Doctor, James G. Hardin, of whom I must have heard—that he had cured one gentleman who had given him four thousand dollars—that he could give his daughters four millions apiece—that, in the course of his practice, he had made countless money, but that it was by "cutting deep into the rich, but letting the poor slide." I thought this last a good phrase, and tolerably sane as a rule of medical practice. The Doctor did not seem to be accustomed to good listeners. He broke off abruptly at a curve of the path, and, turning again toward the house round which he appeared to be habitually and innocently a wanderer, left me without even a good night. But he had broken the thread of my musings. His fragmented autobiography would not again give place to the first-conjured spirit of the spot. I remembered that I was fatigued, and slowly paced my way back to the hotel—visiting Ashland again, however, and by daylight; and of the visit and some more tangible memorabilia of Mr. Clay, another letter may perhaps discourse to you. For the present, Adieu.

LETTER No. 25.

ADVENTURES IN A CROSS-ROAD IN KENTUCKY—ACCOUNT OF THE "DEVIL'S PULPIT"—EARLY START—PHILOSOPHY OF DRIVING—REASONS WHY KENTUCKIANS CANNOT DRIVE, THOUGH GREAT HORSEMEN—MODE OF FEMALE CONVEYANCE WHEN GOING OUT TO TEA—DR. GRAHAM'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS BUT HIS MODE OF USING THE REINS—STUMPS AND EARTHQUAKES—SINGULAR LOCALITY OF KING'S MILLS—THE BRIDGE OVER DICK'S RIVER AND ITS INDIFFERENT TOLL KEEPER—ATTENTION TO TROUT AND TO STRANGERS—THE BLACKSMITH—MAJESTY OF PRIMITIVE WOODS AND THE LACK OF THIS CHARM ON THE HUDSON—LOG SCHOOL-HOUSE IN THE WILDERNESS, ETC., ETC.

Harrodsburg Springs, Kentucky, June, 1852.

DEAR MORRIS:—

I have had a day's experience of cross-road knowledge in the heart of Kentucky, and perhaps, though less imposing than turnpike knowledge, it may interest you to read of its humbler and more homely befallings. As we may have, here and there, a subscriber to the *Home Journal*, who wants but little to wonder at, at a time, an uneventful letter may be excusable, even to publish.

My hospitable host, Dr. Graham, had been the historian[6] of a curiosity which is almost inaccessible, on the Kentucky River; and a trip to this—twenty miles across the country from Harrodsburg—was the excursion of the day. With an active little horse in a buggy-waggon, we were on the road at the hour which the birds make so industrious and musical, our breakfast in its place, and our dinner waiting its turn in a basket. The Doctor was the driver.

[6] Collins, in his "History of Kentucky," thus gives it:

"We are indebted for the following account of a visit to this remarkable curiosity, to the pen of a well-known citizen of Kentucky, Dr. Graham, the enterprising and intelligent proprietor of the Harrodsburg Springs. He says:—After much vexation and annoyance occasioned by the difficulties of the road, we arrived near the object of our visit, and quitting our horses, proceeded on foot. Upon approaching the break of the precipice, under the direction of our guide, we suddenly found ourselves standing on the verge of a yawning chasm, and immediately beyond, bottomed in darkness, the Devil's Pulpit was seen rearing its black, gigantic form, from amid the obscurity of the deep and silent valley. The background to this gloomy object presented a scene of unrelieved desolation. Cliff rose on cliff, and craig surmounted craig, sweeping off on either hand in huge

semicircles, until the wearied eye became unable to follow the countless and billowy-like mazes of that strange and awful scene. The prevailing character of the whole was that of savage grandeur and gloom. A profound silence broods over the place, broken only by the muffled rushing of the stream far down in its narrow passage, cleaving its way to its home in the ocean. Descending by a zigzag path to the shore of the river, while our companions were making preparations to cross, I strayed through the valley. The air was cool, refreshing and fragrant, and vocal with the voices of many birds. The bending trees, the winding stream with its clear and crystal waters, the flowering shrubs, and clustering vines walled in by these adamantine ramparts—which seem to tower to the skies—make this a place of rare and picturesque beauty. The dew-drops still hung glittering on the leaves, the whispering winds played with soft music through the rustling foliage, and the sunbeams, struggling through the overhanging forest, kissed the opening flowers, and all combined made up a scene of rural loveliness and romance, which excited emotions of unmingled delight. The boat having arrived, the river was crossed without difficulty, and we commenced the ascent, and after measuring up two hundred and seventy feet, arrived at the base of the 'Pulpit.' Fifty paces from this point, and parallel with it, in the solid ledge of the cliff, is a cave of considerable extent. At its termination, there passes out, like the neck of a funnel, an opening, not larger than a hogshead. Upon pitching rocks into this cave, a rumbling was heard at an immense distance below the earth. Some are of opinion that this cave contains a bottomless pit. We now ascended the cliffs some fifty feet further, clambering up through a fissure in the rocks, having the Pulpit on our right, and a range of cliffs on our left. To look up here makes the head dizzy. Huge and dark masses roll up above you, upon whose giddy heights vast crags jut out and overhang the valley, threatening destruction to all below. The floating clouds give these crags the appearance of swimming in mid air. The ascent up these rocks, though somewhat laborious, is perfectly safe, being protected by natural walls on either side, and forming a perfect stairway with steps from eight to ten feet thick. At the head of this passage there is a hole through the river side of the wall, large enough to admit the body, and through which one may crawl, and look down on the rushing stream below. At the foot of the stairway stands the Pulpit, rising from the very brink of the main ledge, at more than two hundred feet of an elevation above the river, but separated from the portion which towers up to the extreme heights. The space is twelve feet at bottom, and as the cliff retreats slightly at this point, the gap is perhaps thirty feet at the top. The best idea that can be formed of this rock is to suppose it to be a single column standing in front of the continuous wall of some vast building or ruin, the shaft standing, as colonnades, are frequently built, upon an elevated platform. From the platform to the capital of the shaft, is not less than one hundred feet, making the whole elevation of the 'Devil's Pulpit' three hundred feet. It is called, by some, the inverted candle-stick, to which it has a striking resemblance. There are two swells, which form the base moulding, and occupy forty feet of the shaft. It then narrows to an oblong of about three feet by six, at which point there are fifteen distinct projections. This narrow neck continues with some irregularity for eight or ten feet, winding off at an angle of more than one degree from the line of gravity. Then commences the increased swell, and craggy off-sets, first overhanging one side, and then the other, till they reach the top or cap rock, which is not so wide as the one below it, but is still fifteen feet across."

And let me record here, by the way, a simple bit of observation which had never occurred to me before—that driving is an art not learned in one generation. If roads were introduced into the Deserts of the East, it would be the Arab's grand-child, not the Arab nor the Arab's son, who might learn to be "a whip." The sequence of wheels after hoofs, and the relative responsibilities of the ears that precede and the axle-tree that follows confidingly after are secrets no more learned in a day than the scent of game

by a race of quadrupeds. The Kentuckian, therefore, who might compete with the Arab sheikh, as the world's best horseman, is no driver. Roads are entirely too new to him. Even at this day, the commonest sight on turnpikes where wheels might be used, is a woman on horseback with three children—the baby in her lap and two urchins a-straddle behind. To go five or six miles to take tea, most Kentucky mothers, at the present moment, would prefer the saddle. By birth and education, it is consequently a *horseback State*—the animal at the end of a long pair of reins much too far off for Kentucky instincts of control and comfort.

Entering upon an Archipelago of stumps and rocks after the first mile, I very soon received the impression which I have just recorded. My friend the Doctor—famous when surgeon in the army for whipping off a leg with dexterity, and famous since, as the best rifle-shot in his neighbourhood, had no eye for the liabilities of wheels. He evidently thought a stump done with if the horse went clear of it. It was a wonder, to him, how the buggy came to a stand-still upon an obstacle he had thought comfortably left behind. An eloquent man and warm on history and scenery as he rode along, his arms were busy with gestures, and the reins loose about the horse's heels, no matter what the apparent impassibilities or impending antagonisms of the road. The books speak of earthquakes as formerly so frequent in Kentucky that every family had a key suspended over the Bible on the mantel-piece, to know by its vibrations when to fall on their knees and pray. The Doctor's driving seemed historically accordant with this—a series of earthquakes, every shock bringing us to our knees—though, as there will be progress with even the worst of iteration, we arrived thus at the precipice overhanging "Dick's River." And here was scenery worth some rough using to get a sight of.

Those who "go to mill" at "King's mills" must seem to have their grain ground on the earth's axle, for the bed of Dick's River, which turns the wheel, is three hundred feet down between almost perpendicular rocks no complete daylight known there I should suppose, except at high noon. We should properly have been let down by a string, but the breeching proved faithful, and we reached the bank of the river, horse first, without being precipitated over the head of the animal most of the way on end. At the small bridge spanning the stream sat a man in a picturesque red waistcoat, fishing; and I was struck with the fact, that, though strangers must be comparatively rare in so remote a spot, he never took his eyes from his line to look at us. We crossed the bridge, and, as we went crashing over the loose rocks on the other side, he called out, "They take toll here!" The Doctor pulled up. "Bill ain't home," he continued, still keeping his eyes dreamily on

the water, and speaking in a tone as low and unexcited as the murmur of the stream, "but I'll take it for him." "How much?" "Why, they ask a quarter, but I'll make twenty cents answer!" And with this kindly dialogue my friend walked to the contemplative angler and dropped the money into his hand without disturbing the possibility of a co-incident nibble. To one surfeited with the "*digito monstrari*" this might be a pleasant variety of human notice, though the chances were that the traveller, thus made second to a trout, might think himself indifferently treated.

The village, a few rods up the stream, consisted of the mill and a blacksmith's shop, and here we stopped to inquire our way to The Devil's Pulpit. "I've hearn a heap of talk about that place," said the brawny Vulcan, "but I never was thar. Do you know, Jem?" he asked turning to the man wielding the other hammer. But Jem had also lived close to the remarkable spot without going to it, and we took the road slanting up the opposite precipice of the ravine, trusting to the Doctor's reminiscences of a way he had once travelled before.

The trees, in a country that has never been "cut over," are wonderfully majestic, and even the dislocating roughness of the road did not prevent my continual amazement at the beauty of single trees, standing on the green floor of the forest, each one a monarch in mere glory of presence. On the Hudson, so perpetually felled and burned over, you never realize the splendour of the primitive wilderness; and, indeed, it takes all the majesty of the Highlands and Catskills, and all the artificial wonders of steamers and rail-trains, to compensate for this comparative nakedness of your beautiful river.

It was in the midst of one of these lofty "*mille colonnes*" of nature that we came to a log school-house built upon a knoll, and here the Doctor pulled up for another inquiry. The schoolmaster was likely to know where the Devil's Pulpit might stand, and I was interested to see the schoolmaster and his urchins. For my visit here, however, and the remainder of my excursion, I shall require the space of another letter I believe, and for the present, adieu. Yours, etc.

LETTER No. 26.

CROSS-ROAD EXPERIENCES IN KENTUCKY—THE LOG SCHOOL-HOUSE—APPARENT USELESSNESS OF WORLD WISDOM, SO FAR AWAY FROM THE WORLD—PICTURESQUE INTERIOR—OLDER AND YOUNGER GIRLS AND THEIR LOOKS AND ATTITUDES—PICTURE OF A LOVELY CHILD—EDEN STILL AROUND US IF WE KNEW ITS TIMES AND PLACES—THE BOYS AND THEIR EMPLOYMENTS—STRUCTURE OF A SCHOOL-HOUSE—THE MASTER AND HIS DIGNITY—THE BIGGEST BOY AND HIS POLITENESS AND MANLY CIVILITIES—WAY TO THE DEVIL'S PULPIT—A BACKWOODSMAN AND HIS FARM—CHARACTER OF NEW CLEARINGS—AMERICAN FACILITIES FOR GETTING ON, ETC., ETC.

Harrodsburg Springs, Kentucky, June.

Dear Morris:—

The log school-house (at the door of which I left you in my last letter) was so remote from the world, there in the heart of the wilderness, that the laborious acquiring of skill in such encounters as ciphering and oratory seemed like the harnessing of knights for a crusade far away. Considering the road we had come over, the arrival of any of these barefooted urchins at the world's battle-fields of humbug and cheating seemed too improbable for this trouble of preparing the weapons. To recognize the beauty of a tree, and listen to the "still small voices" of conscience and indigestion, would have seemed to me (had I been consulted at the door and had schools been a new invention) the learning for which the necessity was more immediate—though in thickly settled neighbourhoods, of course soft sodder and calculation obviously come first.

I wanted Darley at my elbow to sketch the interior of this school. Unconsciousness makes beautiful pictures—the rudeness and grotesqueness of real-life groupings rather adding than otherwise to their effect. While three or four of the larger girls, just entering upon awkward-hood, had their heads on the benches and sat with their chins on their knees, feeling of their toes, there were two or three of the younger ones with grace and beauty enough to equip angels—the heaven they were leaving behind them[7] still radiant in their delicious little faces. One I could have taken to my bosom with a hug, and stolen—(to adopt and add to the "Orion's belt of three" who

form my constellation at home)—a little fairy, laying flat on her stomach upon the top of a sloping desk, and with her heels in the air and her cheek on her hand, too busy with her spelling-book to notice our coming in. Her heaps of curls were masses of brown tanned lighter at the curves, and the russet red of her cheek was beaming with tranquil health—eyes large and steady, hands plump and dirty, shoulders and back bare, and frock ragged. There she lay, learning to spell; and meantime more beautiful than she will be when the lesson is learned; and better worth admiring and loving than when her heels are kept down and her rags changed to the petticoats of womanhood. How out of time and place come the things we most want, in this world! I am inclined to think Eden is still around us. Its loveliness and happiness are only mislaid, mis-labelled and unrecognised.

[7] Almost as often as I see young children, I quote Wordsworth's beautiful imagining:—

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar.
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God who is our home."

Of the troop on the board bench provided for the jacket-and-trouser department of the school, one-half at least were picking the clay from between the logs, and so getting a look at the open air outside; and they had so far succeeded that the four walls let in the light like a honey-comb. There was one window—a hole sawed through one of the logs, that is to say—but the main supply of daylight that had been calculated for, evidently came through the door. Near this stood the tall, erect, majestic form of the schoolmaster—certainly the largest supply of dignity for the money (twenty-five dollars a month) which I had yet seen in my travels. How so handsome a man could see himself in the glass once a day, and keep that school for the pay, I presume Providence knew and provided—but he seemed to me to have Nature's ticket on his brow for the government of older minds.

To our inquiries for the way to the Devil's Pulpit, the schoolmaster shook his head—but up spoke the biggest boy in the school. He knew where it was—some people called it "Candlestick Rock"—it was two miles off, and he would go and show us the way. And, of the prompt, manly, unservile and yet most genial kindness and cheerfulness, with which this young Kentuckian of sixteen gave us four hours of his time and attention, I should like to have a "seed for planting." Our way was through a wilderness

partially cleared, and every quarter of a mile brought us to a gate, or to heaps of just-felled timber, to be navigated with great care by horse and waggon; and with this bright lad for guide and gate-opener, we were "only passengers." He took us to the Devil's Pulpit, and brought us back, walking before or at the side of our waggon, and conversing as fearlessly and unsuspiciously as a nobleman taking his guests over his park. I liked the grace and self-confidence of the boy. The highest cultivation of courts and palaces would only take such manners round a circle, and bring them back to where they are.

Near the point of our journey we came to a settler's farm-house, and here we unhitched our active little locomotive, and left him to "wood up" for the passage back. Our own basket of provender was here remembered also, though, as we had arrived just at the dinner hour, the hospitable backwoodsman pressed us hard to go in and dine. We rather gave offence, I thought, by insisting on sitting down to our own sandwiches and liquids in the outer room—the ladies, whom we should have seen at table, not making their appearance at all—but our host was all kindness, and after looking to our horse, he offered to accompany us in our visit to the point of curiosity.

This Kentucky farm looked like a scene of vigorous industry, though the first beginnings of civilization are very unsightly. Woods are very beautiful, but half a wood cut down is like a half a house torn away—leaving a front most ruinously unarchitectural. Then trees prostrate in all directions, fences of logs and branches, stumps just high enough to look ugliest, and nature's rude rocks exposed and dug around by the plough, are dismal features to a landscape. Our friend was very communicative on the way, and gave us, in his own history, a curious type of the American facility for "getting on." When he first came into that part of the country, he had nothing but the protested five hundred dollar note of a broken merchant. On the possibility of its being eventually paid, he managed to buy four hundred acres of land, of which he now had one hundred and thirty under cultivation. It was a proviso in the purchase that he should give the land back after a certain number of years, if it was not paid for—his labour on the soil, of course, being rent as well as security to the original owner. He had married, owned three negroes, and, by the cattle in all direction, his farm was numerously stocked. He was a broad backed, cheerful, happy-looking man. Those who have seen the working population of Europe, know what there is to emigrate for, in such a contrast to their condition as is presented in this picture.

By no paths, but over chasms and rocks so wild, and so seldom visited that the hawks and eagles flew around and over without fear of us, we

arrived at the point, in the abysm called Kentucky River, where stands "Candlestick Rock." It is a column which the action of water has separated from the precipice, and left toppling and alone—in shape and form like a pile of muffins, but two hundred feet high. Dr. Graham's description (which I sent you with my last letter) gives you the detailed dimensions of it. It is a wonder, yet it is but part of a wilderness of wonders. This strangely deep-down river is here at its finest point of precipitous walling-in. A projected railroad is to cross it, at this place, I understand, and when that is completed, they will need a station-house on the river bank, for the traveller will not go by, without stopping to climb about and admire. It is a most beautiful and picturesque State, Kentucky! Give us but facilities for getting into it, and its scenery will be a constant attraction for visiters from the North.

I must abruptly close my letter, my dear Morris.

LETTER No. 27.
HAYTI, &c.

The mountain-tops of Hayti visible off the starboard bow—their bases and the main stretch of the isle of Negro-cratic dominion hidden by the cloud-mist of morning. The air off the shore is wonderfully fragrant—every white nose that comes up from the breakfast-table acknowledges it with a sniff of pleasure. Sweet, sweet weather! Smooth and sunny sea! But languor and loving good-for-nothingness taking the edge off from the sense of novelty, and making all seem like a dream.

I find that the surgeons of these steamers, and two or three other medical men with whom I have conversed, think it a mistake for delicate pulmonary patients to come to the West Indies for health. The greater softness of the air is counterbalanced, they say, by the greater debilitation; but, more than that, the sufferers from this complaint run great risk, from the inconveniences of tropical life, from exposure, and the complete lack of home comforts. Window-glass is unknown south of Bermuda, and delicate lungs find the night's last hours, even in the torrid zone, chilly and irritating. It is not the clime for prudence, either. Inhabitants and strangers alike indulge appetite and forget caution. In the teeming and prodigal life around the invalid, his individual poverty of health is forgotten. The air is an oblivious opiate, soothing, but full of danger.

My own experience corroborates this. Enjoying the luxuriousness of the clime in every nerve and pore, I have still felt that there was in it neither strength nor medicine. The *consciousness of revivification* that one feels in a bright day at the North, or in a breath of mountain air—nature's acknowledgment of aid—is not a part of the enjoyment. It seems to me only a climate in which death would be easier. The nerves are quieted out of reach. And it is wonderful what a different event death seems, with that part of the system sleeping or waking!

That many people go to the West Indies for their health, *and find it there*, is very certain. But it is less to be attributed to softer air than to entire change of scene and associations. There are more cases than we imagine of

persons supposed to be “in a decline,” where organic disease is but half the trouble. They require to be removed from what shall remind them that they are ill—to be got away from sympathy, away from doctors, away from contrast of their invalid habits with habits when they were stronger. Their attention to the subject of their health has become morbid—itself the disease which most requires medicine. To such, the entire novelty of climate and vegetation, and the close neighbourhood of so many varieties of government and manners—Danish, Spanish, French, English, and African islands, all within a summer day succession of visits—amount to a delightful and salutary self-forgetfulness. They are *amused out of themselves*, and return to find that the body has taken advantage of the mind’s absence to put the nerves to their proper work. Health has come, they scarce know how. Many a physician, probably, would recommend this “alternative course” of three months’ travel in the West Indies, if the ninety pills at five dollars apiece (the average day’s expense in these latitudes) were not too expensive.

The sword of Her Majesty’s veteran Lieutenant was laid on the cabin table, ready to be girded on, to carry the mail ashore at Jacmel—(this officer doing it in uniform, and having his own boat, and being as separate from the ship’s company as a diplomatic passenger) and great interest was being made to accompany him. Every body wanted to see the *negroes at home*. How their exodus had operated on their condition and manners, and whether they looked different, in this their Canaan, from what they used to look in the Egypt of New York, was a matter of some curiosity to me. We might be the greater part of a forenoon, disembarking freight, etc. etc., and a ramble in the most important town of the isle under the “coloured” administration of the Emperor Faustin the First, was a novelty worth shouldering for at a gangway. I put on my go-ashore clothes, and, mingling with the crowd of passengers on the freight-deck, watched with great interest the gradual nearing of the shore.

This going steadily westward, by the way, and arriving at island after island regularly at the hour expected, gives one a kind of almanac feeling—a painful sense of matter-of-course-ness—at which the spirit rebels, under the wild and careless influence of the Tropics. As we approached Jacmel and saw its stately mountains more and more distinctly, the scenery was so lovely—smooth sea, delicious air, soft sunshine and all—that I quite longed to be embarked upon some craft less prosaically “*due*” at the port we were nearing—under some unknown sail, with a capricious wind—a passenger with a Columbus, in short, rather than in a steamer from the docks of London. The approach to Hayti had been very beautiful from the distance. It was a soft April morning, and the clouds, which had lain low, and shown

only the mountain-tops, gradually lifted as we neared the harbour of Jacmel, and disclosed the town as if by the lifting of a stage curtain. With Irving's honey-dropping description of Columbus's first approach to this island, nearly four centuries ago, clinging to one's memory, it was droll to see the freight that was going ashore—(millinery from Paris taking up more room than anything else)—and it was difficult to anticipate, with the romantic sweetness of the air, and the beauty of the lofty mountain-sides around us, anything but the scenes of the savage Paradise as first discovered.[8] To facts, however:—

I had not been sufficiently on the alert to secure a passage in the barge of the epauletted mail officer, and my only chance of getting ashore was to jump in among the bales of freight in the larger boat, and be delivered at the custom-house after a slower pull. A fort of mud on the right, and a grove of cocoa-trees on the left, were the two embracing arms which received us as we approached, and a single wharf of rough planks supported on posts which had rotted and let it partly drop into the water, seemed to constitute its only pretensions as a port for commerce.

(The morning at Jacmel, next week.)

[8] It may serve as an effective *relievo* to my picture of Hayti, now passing from the white man to the black, to quote a passage or two descriptive of it when passing from the red man to the white, Irving says:—

"In the transparent atmosphere of the Tropics objects are descried at a great distance, and the purity of the air and serenity of the deep blue sky, give a magical charm to scenery. Under these advantages, the beautiful island of Hayti revealed itself to the eye as they approached. Its mountains were higher and more rocky than those of the other islands, but the rocks rose from among rich forests. The mountains swept down into luxuriant plains and green savannas, while the appearance of cultivated fields, with the numerous fires at night and the columns of smoke which rose in various parts by day, all showed it to be populous. It rose before them in all the splendour of tropical vegetation, one of the most beautiful islands in the world, and doomed to be one of the most unfortunate.

"On the evening of the 6th of December (1492,) Columbus entered a harbour at the Western end of the island. * * After various ineffectual attempts to obtain a communication with the natives, three sailors succeeded in overtaking a young and handsome female, who was flying from them, and brought their wild beauty in triumph to the ships. She was treated with the greatest kindness, and dismissed finely clothed, and loaded with presents of beads, hawk's bells and other baubles. Confident of the favourable impression her account of her treatment and the sight of her presents must produce, Columbus on the following day, sent nine men, well armed, to seek her village, accompanied by a native of Cuba as an interpreter. The village was situated in a fine valley, on the banks of a beautiful river, and contained about a thousand houses. The natives fled at first, but being reassured by the interpreter, they came back, to the number of two thousand, and approached the Spaniards with awe and trembling, often pausing and putting their hands upon their heads in token of reverence and submission.

"The female, also, who had been entertained on board of the ships, came borne in triumph on the shoulders of some of her countrymen, followed by a multitude, and preceded by her husband,

who was full of gratitude for the kindness with which she had been treated. Having recovered from their fears, the natives conducted the Spaniards to their houses, and set before them cassava bread, fish, roots, and fruits of various kinds; offering them freely whatever they possessed—for a frank hospitality reigned throughout the island, where, as yet, the passion of avarice was unknown. * *

“The natives believed that their island of Hayti was the earliest part of creation, and that the sun and moon issued out of one of its caverns to give light to the universe. They ascribe to another cavern the origin of the human race, believing that the large men issued forth from a great aperture, but the little men from a little cranny. For a long time they dared venture from the cavern only in the night, for the sight of the sun was fatal to them, producing wonderful transformations. One of their number, having lingered on a river’s bank, where he was fishing, until the sun had risen, was turned into a bird of melodious note, which, yearly, about the time of his transformation, is heard singing plaintively in the night, bewailing his misfortune.

“When the human race at length emerged from the cave, they, for some time, wandered about disconsolately without females, until, coming near a small lake, they beheld certain animals among the branches of the trees, which proved to be women. On attempting to catch them, however, they were found to be as slippery as eels; so that it was impossible to hold them until they employed certain men whose hands had been rendered rough by a kind of leprosy. These succeeded in securing four of them; and from these slippery females the world was peopled.” * * *

LETTER No. 28.
HAYTI AND THE CORONATION OF ITS EMPEROR.

The foremost inhabitant of Hayti to welcome our boat's approach was a negro clad in a suit of black—the suit he was born in—standing erect, shiny and unconscious, on the end of the pier. He seemed quite independent of our observation, and was taking his morning swim. The water side of the harbour was a beach, with the exception of the tumbling-down wooden wharf towards which we were heading; and a few stranded boats, some dead animals of various kinds, and prodigious heaps of rubbish, formed the seaboard line of the city of Jacmel. All I could see in the way of buildings, looked to me like the weather-beaten booths of some long-deserted fair. There was nothing that could elsewhere be called a house—nothing that had ever been clapboarded, painted or fenced in—little to indicate that this was the principal port and town of the "Queen of the Antilles," an island as large as Ireland, and whose Emperor, Soulouque, was to be crowned on the following Sunday. Our anticipations had been a little over-coloured, perhaps, from the description which one of the passengers had given of the coronation boots of His future Majesty. He had seen them in New York where they were made. The cost was three hundred dollars, and described them as sumptuously embroidered with gold and hung with jewels in the tassels.

We climbed up the broken timbers of the half fallen wharf, with some difficulty, and were immediately surrounded and addressed very volubly in French, by the most ragged rabble I had ever yet fallen among. I was inclined to think at first, that it was some pantomimic festival, and that the universal rags and strangely confused costumes were but the fun of the day. There was a sentinel on duty at the end of the pier, and a shanty near by, which seemed to serve as a guard-house, with a dozen soldiers around the door. These military negroes were even needlessly tattered and ragged.—No

two of them were armed or dressed alike. It looked as if it might be a frolic masquerade, got up with the discarded wardrobes of a company of itinerant players—an infantry cap, that might have been used for a fire-bucket, on one head; a hussar cap that may have served for years as an ash-pan, on another; one a full dress grenadier down to his chin, and the rest of him a complete ragamuffin; the fourth in a general's epaulettes, but barefooted; this one with only a bayonet stuck through his trousers' pocket, that one with a shabby old court sword, the next with a rusty musket—the whole apparelling and equipment a caricature of cast-off finery and uniform. I was prepared to laugh at them for civility's sake. It was scarcely possible that they did not expect it. But the savage fierceness with which they surveyed us from head to foot, fortunately kept me grave; and a mulatto, to whose politeness I was afterwards indebted, informed me that it would have been a dangerous blunder. The whites are only tolerated there, he earnestly assured me, and as my skin was of the objectionable colour, I inferred from his friendly caution that I had best know my place and be civil.

The access from the wharf to the main street of the town was between the rear corners of two buildings set askew—all the houses of the place, indeed, conveying the impression that they had been lifted by a flood and dropped again, pell mell, with confused fronts and angles—and, passing through this opening, we entered upon an irregular avenue of shabby shops. These were structures of rough boards, one-story high, the single window consisting of a wooden shutter hung on a hinge, and displaying the goods within by being raised and hooked to a sort of shed-roof in front. The shop-keeping seemed to be the employment of the women only, and a very full-dressed and self-possessed class they seemed to be. A pair of bare shoulders, a very gay-coloured turban, a necklace and ear-rings, and something like a full ball dress, waited for the customer at every door. She sat in a chair, with all her gay goods hanging around her, and two or more naked children played in the dirt at her feet—but there was none of the surly gravity of the male inhabitants in this other gender of citizens. Desirous of purchasing some memento of the place, in the way of an article manufactured there, I went into shop after shop, ransacking their various assortments of things for sale, and endeavoring in vain to find something *Haytian*. There were only the brighter coloured portions of London Oxford street, or of the New York Bowery. The showy dames were all smiles and accommodation, however, every one with manners which would be called frolicsome elsewhere, and whether because their answers were in French, I cannot say, but it seemed to me that they were all unusually witty and ready. After taxing for some time the patience of one of them, a plump dame of twenty or twenty-five, in a

green gauze dress and yellow turban, I asked, with some impatience, what on earth they *did* make in that island. Her reply was instant and expressed with a look of mischievous archness of which I should have well liked a daguerreotype, by way of the memento I was seeking:—"*Rien queles enfans, Monsieur! En voulez vous?*"

With my chance companion, (an English passenger who had come ashore with me in the freight-boat,) I strolled through all that we could find in the way of streets, the other principal one leading up rather a precipitous hill. Both had the traces of being ravaged at times by powerful torrents. Large and loose stones lay in the centre, and the lower street, which was more closely populated, seemed built on the two banks of a common sewer, so filthy as well as rough was its whole extent. We saw no marks of wheels. Probably there is no vehicle on the island. Ten or twelve black horsemen passed us—country gentlemen, we were told, who had come in for their letters by the steamer. Their shabby rags were partly covered by leather leggins, and they had long spurs and pistols in their belts and holsters. No man rides safely in the island, they say, unless armed to the teeth. Broad-brimmed straw hats and all, however, these horsemen were not unpicturesque objects.

The inhabitant with whom we had the most conversation, was a female hen merchant, whose importunity might have been partly curiosity, but it exceeded even that of a Yankee pedler. With her basket on her head, and her chickens trying apparently to talk her down, she followed us from shop to shop, giving us a torrent of French persuasion between every two doors, till she brought us to a regular parley. *Why* we wanted no chickens was to be distinctly stated. It was not reasonable that she should have nothing to sell us. "But what would you take for *yourself*?" asked my companion, rather impertinently. "*Pour combien de temps, Monsieur?*" was her ready and mischievous reply.

Having come on shore without my breakfast, and feeling the want of "summat," I selected the most amiable-faced coloured gentleman I could see in the street, and enquired my way to an eating-house. He was a young man very well dressed, and seemed promenading at his leisure. Taking his cigar from his mouth with very deliberate grace and self-possession, he said there was no hotel nor eating-house in the place—but if we would honor him so far, his breakfast should be nearly ready at his lodgings, at that hour, and we should be most welcome to share it. This prompt and frank invitation was given with a grave and courtly politeness that I thought quite a model of good taste, and nothing but our limited time prevented my accepting it, with

quite his own freedom from prejudice as to difference of colour. My two or three hours of conversance with the coloured-ocracy of the island had somehow insensibly given a sort of level to my notions on the subject of complexion. That I should have any hesitation in returning the compliment of the polite Haytian, and inviting him to breakfast in New York, were he to meet me there, seemed, at the time, a very improbable illiberality.

Our friend had directed us to a shop where he thought we might get a banana and a bottle of claret, on our way to the water side. We climbed up three or four crazy steps, and made our entrance into the dingy front apartment of the one-story house he had indicated—a shop lighted by the small swung-up window-shutter, and something like a narrow wine-closet in its accommodations. On the floor, however, were two very interesting objects—a baby quite white, and a baby quite black. I mention them for the sake of recording a new experience. Taking up the two children, I was immediately struck with the difference in the *feel* of their skins. It had never happened to me before to pass my hand over a live negro surface, and, to my surprise, the black child felt like quite a different fabric from the white one. It was like a warm bundle of uncut velvet, singularly rich and agreeable to the touch. Could it have been peculiar to that one tropical child, or is it the feel of the race, common to them in all climates? I ask it as a question in natural history.

A look into the back room of our wine-dealer's premises showed that there was French taste prevalent in the island as well as the French language. It was a large, roughly-boarded apartment, with rude rafters overhead, and no sign of any attempt beyond mere shelter from the weather; yet the three beds in three of the corners would have looked tempting even in a Parisian hotel—the sheets snowy white, the ample pillows edged with lace, and the coverlids of the best quality. The woman who officiated as vender of liquors was polite, but not talkative. She uncorked our bottle of claret, and pointed out a heap of pine-apples in a dark corner; but it was evidently against the custom of the house to have wine drank on the premises, and she obliged us reluctantly with tumblers and room to stand. While we were enjoying the delicious fruit, and the wine, (which seemed to me the best claret I had ever tasted) a mulatto came in who had been a slave and was brought up in Charleston, South Carolina. He spoke the first English we had heard on the island. By his account, the coronation of Soulouque, which was to have taken place on the following Sunday, was deferred by the disaffection of some of the more important personages of the capital, and the Governor of Jacmel particularly was opposed to the would-be Emperor, and had gone to Port au Prince to prevent the ceremony. The mulattoes were the opposing

party, and they were strongest hereabouts. In the other cities of the island, the undiluted black-blood was in the majority, and Soulouque had sworn the extinction or ultimate expulsion of every shade of white. To be the ebon Emperor of a realm all negro, is his ambition and resolve. With a circumference of a thousand miles, 850,000 inhabitants, scenery, soil and productions unsurpassed, an Eden of a climate, and ports that are on the world's most frequented highway, this coming Cuffeedom may yet be an important power.

While loitering, as we thought rather venturesomely over our fruit and wine, we hailed the cockswain of our boat, passing the door, and found we had still an hour of waiting for the mail. They take it leisurely, in these seas—I was everywhere happy to discover—Her Majesty's steamers seldom making more than five miles in the hour, and the stoppages at ports being more ruled by Southern luxuriousness than Northern expeditiousness. I did not complain, even of the five days, beyond her time, which this steamer had kept us waiting for her at St. Thomas. Hurry seems no more natural to that latitude than ice.

The one wharf was now crowded with the gentlemen of Jacmel, assembled to see the departure of the packet. Two very elegant young mulattoes were the only exceptions to the universal raggedness and shabbiness, and these two youths, I was told, were the sons of the wealthiest merchant in the place, and had been educated in Paris—just returned. They looked anything but amused or at home. I endeavored to stroll about, on the wharf, and look on, unobserved; but I found that every man whom I looked at without addressing, seemed to resent it as an impertinence, and my friend, the Carolina mulatto, came up and cautioned me against being too obviously observant. He said that there was an impatience of the eye of the white man, as it was generally supposed to be seeking something to ridicule or disparage. I spoke to several, however, and invariably received most kind and courteous answers.

As we were about climbing down the broken rafters into the boat, a jet-black, half-naked Hercules seized me by the arm, and pointed to a sack of pine-apples which I had stopped to look at on first landing. Glad to secure the delicious fruit, I offered him the money he had first asked, but he now wanted twice as much, for the time which he said I had kept him waiting. His affected fury and violent gestures at my turning quietly away, drew a crowd immediately around us, and, as there was some delay in bringing round the boat, he had me quite at his mercy. I really expected, part of the time, to be knocked head foremost into the water. In broken English he

swore he was “proud man, too,” and “big man,” and “wasn’t going to be kept waiting,” and “white rascal damn mean,” etc., etc. But persisting in laughing at his claim as a joke, I finally took the first step to embark, and then turned and offered him once more the original silver. The black faces of our audience expressed clearly a preference for my side in the dispute, and the naked-legged giant gave in. The tow-cloth bag, with its twenty pines, was tossed into the boat with a sulky look of defiance, his dirty fist took the money instead of fulfilling his threats of knocking me overboard, and so ended my intercourse with the inhabitants of the “Queen of the Antilles.”

We were soon under way, gliding smoothly over the loveliest of seas, with leaf-burthened mountains looking down temptingly upon us, and I stayed on deck till we lost the delicious fragrance from the shore, and could no longer distinguish the graceful curvings of bay and promontory. It is an Eden to see and inhale the breath of this fair isle—though the new Adam and Eve be of colour least prayed for in *our* “Paradise Regained.” I shall look to its coming history with no little interest.

LETTER No. 29.
HAVANA, &c.

The Military Mass calls people very early out of their beds, on Sunday mornings at Havana—early, that is to say, considering breakfast and the holiday toilette to be achieved before starting. So magnificently elaborate, indeed, are the full ball dresses which alight at the church door, and so ready for conquest look those unbonneted and bare-shouldered worshippers, that the service seems less the beginning of a day than a sort of doxology after a ball. There are no pews on the church floor; the ladies' heads are dressed with flowers and jewels, and the gentlemen are in white cravats and body coats; and the assembling of the audience with these rather festal costumes and surroundings, has no very devout aspect for a stranger.

I was abroad a little before the hour, on the first Sunday that I was in Havana, and, not knowing Spanish enough to inquire my way, I picked out a gentleman who had a segar stuck behind his ear like a clerk's pen, and who was quite too newly equipped in other respects not to be going *from* home and to the fashionable resort, and followed him as my best probable guide. The conjecture proved a true one. His pace, tropical and leisurely, brought us duly to the church door—giving me time, on the way, to look at him and his acquaintances, and to make an observation as to the build and style of Cuban gentlemen.

Owing, it is said, to early initiation, as children, into the unbridled license of plantation life, to excessive smoking and to intermarriage of the same race through many generations—to these causes more than to climate—the Cuban gentlemen are the most miniature aristocracy in the world. There seems hardly an exception. They are so universally small that a promenade in Havana is like taking a walk in Liliput—or so it strikes you if you come suddenly upon an Englishman or an American of the ordinary size, and are thus reminded of the contrast. At the same time there is a curious freedom from *pettiese* in the movements and manners of these little gentlemen—an apparently entire absence of any consciousness of being smaller than other people. They *feel* large; and they walk, sit, bow and

gesticulate, like large men seen through an inverted opera-glass. It would appear as if Spanish dignity and courtliness of mien could not die out, nor lessen with the other diminutions of the blood. I recollect being struck with it in Galway, on the west coast of Ireland—peopled centuries ago by a colony from Spain—where not only the architecture is still Spanish and very unlike the rest of Ireland, but where the dark eyes and hair, crossed with the red cheeks and large stature of another race, are even less expressive of their origin than this same deliberateness of movement and general dignity of style and demeanour. We are to see, probably, whether it will stand the infusion of the blood which, of all on earth is most unlike it—the restless, hurried, scrambling, undignified-ly successful Yankee, and I hope Cuba will not be *over*-fillibustered, but will remain so far Spanish, for the next fifty years, as to give a fair chance to the experiment.

As to the apparent character in the physiognomy of these pocket edition copies of the old quarto chivalry, there seems to be little or no variety. They all look torpidly indolent, passion-seated and cold, at the same time that their features are very finely cut, and the expression is that of mingled pride, courtesy and refinement. Superciliousness comes very easy to them, and I have noticed some marked instances of it whenever the turned-down shirt collar (considered to be the invariable indication of a Yankee) appeared on a public promenade. Whatever republican love there may be for us among the Creoles in other parts of the island, there is no trace of it to be found in the scornful sallow lip of the Havanese gentleman recognising an American. A coffee-house in the suburb, the walls of which are painted with fresco caricatures of us, gives a key to the feeling most prevalent in the metropolis.

But—to the military mass:—

I had followed my unconscious guide to an excellent standing place near the altar, and we observed, to great advantage, the coming-in of the gay dames who formed the centre of the audience. Each one was preceded by the postillion of her *volante*, who laid down her kneeling-carpet on the marble floor, and a black servant-maid followed with a low chair and a missal. Never were ladies more becomingly placed. Everything around contributed to the effect of those tranquil dark eyes and un-lustrous ivory of those plump shoulders—for plump is every woman in Cuba, I believe, as certainly as every gentleman is thin. The central floor of the church, thus occupied, formed altogether a beautiful picture. It was like a gorgeous design, by Turner’s delicious pencil. It was an artistic addition to the effect, by the way, though probably not to the pleasure of the dames of quality, that beggar women came in and knelt upon the bits of bare floor between the corners of

the rich carpets—a promiscuousness such as we are promised in Heaven, of course, but bringing praying rags and praying jewels into closer contact than I had ever before seen in this world of sinful assortment. I declare that a lump quite rose in my throat at the poetry there was in it. I gave the Catholic religion a white mark for worship in which it might occur. Beggars are *spoken* equalizing to, by other sects; but, as to their approaching where they touch elbows with richer sinners while they pray, there would probably be many a Protestant objection—*pew-door vetat*, to begin with, at least.

There was an introduction to the after music, by the way, which sounded curiously to my ear—the trailing over the marble floor of the enormous spurs of the negro postillions. Bringing in and unrolling their mistresses' carpets, they next made for the font of holy water on the other side of the church, dipped their fingers and re-crossed to the street door—a double traverse to which their shovel-and-tongs-sized persuaders made a most clamorous accompaniment. So, perhaps, sounded the spurs of knights on the floors of castles of old—though I doubt if ever knight wore so much metal in sword, buckler and dagger, all complete, as forms the spur of one of these Jehus. The jack-boot to which it is affixed is proportionately monstrous, reaching to the hips, and serving a secondary purpose in this drowsy climate—the negro, as he sits on the door-step waiting for his master, resting his head on the stiff boot-fronts high before him, and sleeping as comfortably as on the front of a pew. The dress throughout is equally clumsy and ostentatious. The jacket is one mass of silver lace, the waistcoat elaborately embroidered, and the hat bound with silver. And I was told, that, to have a *volante*, with a postillion thus equipped, was considered in Havana, indispensable to any respectable condition of life, the barber's wife and the shoemaker's as certain to have one as the millionaire. A city so full of dashing equipages, I am quite sure, is not to be found in the world. It gives a wonderful gayety to Havana. At the promenade hour, every common day, in that comparatively small capital, seems like a festa in some grand metropolis.

I will extend this digression to explain that a "volante" is a far more ostentatious vehicle than the private carriage of any other country. The lady riding in it is as much seen as in her easy-chair at home—always bare-headed, usually bare-shouldered, and with her jewels upon her neck and wrists, her fan spread, and her face undisguisedly made up to be admired. The body of the volante is that of the old-fashioned chaise, with one seat, carrying properly but two persons. The shafts are so long, and the horse with the postillion astride of him is so far ahead, that it is commonly explained as a precaution against a man's losing both horse and carriage by the same

earthquake. It is made to look less graceful, as to outline, by a law of Havana, which forbids any horse to be abroad without his tail tied to the saddle; the most showy animal, therefore, having this flowing appendage braided and tightly drawn around and fastened to his side. (The object of the law, I believe, is to secure the passenger, in those narrow streets, from being spattered by the whisking of the numerous tails in muddy weather; but it is cruel in fly-time, besides giving the spirited creature a most amputated and inelegant appearance.) Ill-contrived as this enormously long vehicle would seem, however, for mechanical economy of draught, it is the easiest and most luxurious conveyance in the world, as well as the best fitted for display in a public promenade. The Cuban ladies will be slow to give up the *volante* for any carriage that may be introduced by the invading Yankee.

I should add a curious fact to this mention of the *volante*. It and its horse do not keep the same society. At the end of the drive, the horse goes to the stable—but the vehicle to the front parlour! It is literally an article of drawing-room furniture. With a neat stand to hold up the shafts, it occupies one side of the reception-room in which sits the lady of the house, and its presence there is evidently thought creditable to the pride and style of the family. It is partly owing, perhaps, to the fact that the houses in this climate are built with a large court, the centre of which is open to the sky; but the family portraits hang on the walls around this half-roofed apartment, and it is the inhabited portion of the house—the place where company is received, and where stands the work-table and piano, cradle and flower-stand. And this blending of parlour and carriage-house seems the more surprising to the stranger, when he looks in from the street, (every house being open to the observation of the passer-by,) and sees the pompous ceremony with which the white-gloved and body-coat-ed visiter is received by the lady sitting alongside of her vehicle. In point of fact it is a sort of coat-of-arms upon wheels—an escutcheon to which a horse may be harnessed for the owner to take a drive!

Yours, &c.

LETTER No. 30.
CONTINUATION OF DESCRIPTION OF MILITARY MASS, &c.

The close crowded congregation of beauties and female beggars, in the centre of the church, were on their knees with their prayer-books,—(the men lounging about the side aisles as if their sins were included in those of the women, and one sex did the praying for both,)—when the military band was heard approaching, and, with a lively quick-step, they presently made their entrance over the threshold. The sound of the time-keeping feet, and the sonorous reverberation of the drums from the lofty roof, were startling interruptions to the silent service that had been for some time going on, and it was more like an invasion than an act of reverence to see six tall pioneers draw their axe-falchions, surround a priest in a long white robe, and march him to the front of the altar. They were to officiate as his body-guard apparently. The pioneer cap is a particularly irreverent looking one, however; and, as they wore it cocked jauntily on one side, while the shaven skull of the priest was bare in their midst, the "god of war" seemed to have rather the upper hand.

The troops were arranged along the sides of the church, with the officers standing behind the kneeling congregation of dames in the centre, when at a sudden tap of the drum, the soldiers dropped on one knee, and the band commenced playing an air from the fashionable Opera of "La Favorita." Between the bars of the profane but sweet music, the voice of the priest, reciting the mass at the altar, could be heard; and with his open book before him he alternately read and knelt, and the little boys in white robes swung the smoking censers, and the tall candles burned, and the worship went visibly on. But the music of the band seemed an entirely separate affair. It was theatre and church contesting the occupancy of the place. Airs from different Operas followed each other, the drum alone recognising the religious service by a loud tap from the kneeling drummer whenever the

priest knelt or rose. The soldiers in the ranks accompanied him in his droppings and risings, and I noticed that their lips moved in apparently devout prayer when prostrate; but the officers preserved the erect position, and their handsome moustaches made no stir for *oremus* or *paternoster*. These officers were small but very distinguished looking men, by the way. The orders upon the breasts of their uniforms showed them to be noblemen; and this corps, the Artillery, is the most distinguished one in the Cuban army. In their regular and decided features, and graceful military postures, there was a completeness of the soldierlike air, and something unequivocally chivalric over all. Of the resolute peppering from the cannon of these *caballeros*, the Filibusters may make sure.

In the wickedest of Operas, "Lucrezia Borgia," occurs the most delicious passage (I have sometimes thought) in all music, Orsini's story told to his unknown mother; and I could wish this transferred to sacred words and use, with a law against its ever serving in profane amusement again. Its pathos and appealing tenderness are, it seems to me, the articulate embodiment of a confession and a prayer. Heard in that dim church, with lights upon the altar and a congregation kneeling around, it stirred one's tears spite of the surroundings otherwise undevout. Benedette, whose moving and refined voice used to breathe it so touchingly at our opera, was educated, they say, for a monk, and I would go far to hear him sing it, apparelled in cord and sacred stole.

But never in theatre or ball-room was heard livelier music than followed close upon this—the "divine service" of the morning proceeding with a rapid succession of redowas and polkas, waltzes and mazurkas, while the audience still knelt and the priest still prayed! The vaulted dome and dim old arches answered back to these dancing jigs with all the alacrity of upper tiers and ball-room ceilings, however, though I must confess to an instinctive impulse to escape before the roof should fall in—sinners that we were even to listen to such music in such a place! It was really too profane, too contrary to the proper spirit of the spot if it were for artistic effect and propriety alone, leaving higher standards out of the question, and its formal repetition every Sunday, and the fashionable attendance, show the established religion of the island to be reduced to a level with its gayeties. And this I have since heard more than accounted for, in the characters given to the Cuban priesthood by intelligent residents. They describe them as most licentiously and openly corrupt, and entirely without respect or consideration as a class in the community.

To "see the people come out of church," is, anywhere, something of a show, but the pouring out and dispersion of the audience at the close of the "Military Mass" at Havana is a lively spectacle indeed. Just before the drum struck up the quick step for the exit of the troops, (by the way,) I had been startled by a novelty of sound, in the deliberate striking of the church clock *in-doors*—the rafted roof being open up to the belfry, and the nine thundering strokes pealing down upon the aisles and area below with plunges of reverberating echoes that were like a cataract of time departing. There is a waltz, by Wallace, which stops suddenly for the clock to strike twelve; but I think a vesper voluntary might be composed, to be played in this dim old Spanish church, in the departing twilight, where the interruption of the belfry clock's ponderous and solemn iteration might come in very effectively.

American ladies have a new experience in Havana, an instance of which I saw giving some annoyance as the gay congregation were preparing to disperse. A very lovely group of the invalid pilgrims who come with every winter to this latitude, stood in the front line of the side aisle, waiting for the crowd to pass, when two or three of the little elegantly-dressed duodecimo Spaniards walked around, and, planting themselves in front, looked deliberately into their bonnets, as you would look into the open pane of a post-office window. The ladies at first raised their hands to their faces, or turned an inquiring look to their companions, evidently thinking the gentleman may have seen a wasp or tarantula—lip or cheek in danger, to call for such close investigation—but, as the stare continued, they turned their backs with evident surprise and displeasure. They were not aware, that, by the custom of the country, they were receiving a polite tribute of admiration. The Spanish lady goes home very discontented, from promenade or public resort, if she was not *walked up to and looked at*. The windows of their houses are like halves of bird cages thrust out from the wall, and, as they sit out in the street, with only an iron grating between them and the passer-by, they feel slighted if he does not slacken his pace and gaze deliberately into the dark eyes open to him. It is an innocent admission of what beauty is supposed to be made for, and why jewels are worn and hair braided—*to be seen*. And this custom, I think, partly gives the key to what strikes the stranger as a peculiarity in the physiognomy of this people. There is *no dodge* in the Spanish eye. In man or woman, it comes round to you as fair and square as the side of a decanter—fearless and unwinking as an open inkstand. It has nothing to conceal or avoid. It can receive no offence from another's look—it can give none by its own. This seems to me a very great beauty. I am sorry for the twenty reasons why it cannot be a peculiarity of a

“fast” country like ours, with its exciting rivalries, and highly civilized improvements upon Nature. The rarest thing in New York is a calm, trusting, open and unsuspicious eye.

But the after-church scene! A dashing regiment, with bright feathers and glittering arms marching with lively military music out of one sacred door—and scores of brilliant equipages, with prancing horses half-buried in gold and silver, and footmen and jockeys bedizened all over with gaudy colours, glittering lace and bright metal, drawn up at the threshold of another—the ladies, as they emerged from the dim light of the interior, coming bare-shouldered, bare-headed, and full-dressed into the sunshine like the guests from a ball that had been danced into the morning—the costly fans spreading their pearls and diamonds between the bright light and the multitudes of large dark trusting eyes, loving and lambent—beggars looking happy in their warm dirt and tatters, and romantic-mannered Spaniards stepping so indolently and gesturing so carelessly and gracefully, that the scene seemed all natural and of course, and nothing forced or unnecessarily extravagant—this scene, I say, in the atmosphere of calm and conscious intoxication which belongs to the climate, seemed, somehow, strangely preferable (for once in a way) to a New England April morning of the same date, with its East wind and more exemplary observances. The whole ceremony was an abominable profanation of the Sabbath—it were impossible not to own—but I record it and my enjoyment of it, as one of those incidents and influences which, in these latitudes, be-chloroform the soul of the traveller.

One should ask pardon, perhaps, for so lengthy a description of a single before-breakfast experience—but the prodigal vegetation of the clime works upon one’s pronouns and adjectives as it does upon pine-apples and pomegranates. I will be briefer as I get North.

LETTER No. 31.
DEPARTURE FROM HAVANA—FLORIDA, &c.

[The re-publication here of the following explanation, from the Home Journal, may, perhaps, be explanatory of my invalid interruptions, for the reader of this book also.]

Hudson Highlands, February, 1853.

Dear Friend:—

The bird with whose feather I write, (a goose, but with an opinion of his own,) seems to object to coming North while the weather is so cold. In a sketch half written, of my starting homeward on the Mississippi in the latter part of May, I am stopped by a memorandum of a fire in the cabin-stove, the first I had seen for months—a sign of latitudes less genial, at which my quill grows manifestly reluctant. Shall we humour the bird and turn South again, dear reader—leaving Kentucky and Ohio till the reading about them will be more seasonable? I have a wilderness of more sunny memories, in pencil waiting for ink—Martinique, *to which the unwilling farewell is unrecorded; the return voyage to* St. Thomas *by Guadaloupe and St. Vincent; the lake-like glide Westward along the Antilles;* Porto Rico *and* Jamaica; *and* Havana, *a bouquet of delicious seeings and enjoyings, from which, as yet, I have plucked but one pencilled leaf to ink over. Shall we forget the snow and the cold winds around us, and go back to these warm memories of* the Tropics? *Or—I have pencillings of scenes nearer home, the return by* Florida *and* Savannah *to* Charleston, *and the traverse across to* Mobile *and* New Orleans, *through* Georgia *and* Alabama. *What say? Shall this last track of my memoranda be first re-written? It may breathe less fragrantly of the voluptuous air of the Tropics, but it will describe a healing clime more within reach, and some invalid may sooner profit by my experience. You agree? A nib to this summer-loving quill, then, and with an Adieu-sniff of the sultry April of Havana, let us turn prow across the Gulf towards the Everglades of Florida.*

Delighted, if I can show you anything to give you pleasure, through this words-glass of mine, dear reader,

Yours, N. P. W.

Except for some special and over-ruling reason, probably no traveller comes away willingly from Havana. I wondered why, (as I leaned over the side of the "Isabel," while she was weighing her anchor) and I came to the conclusion, that half the charm, at least, of this fascinating place, lies in the fact that, gay as it is, *life here is not too fast*. They not only have just luxuries enough, but they take just time enough to enjoy them. In the other gay metropolises of the world life, (in this our day,) is so exhaustingly intellectualized, so painfully intensified, so unnaturally accumulated and accelerated, that the "another and better world" one sometimes longs for, would be instinctively defined as one of *blessed and merciful just-enoughness*. It amounts to a wretchedness in London that you can only be in one place at a time. The bewildered youth comes from Paris with a census of the women he might have loved, without having stopped to love one. In the morning paper which a man devours over his breakfast in New York, there are three or four Lectures reported—new stuff enough for a month's thinking, besides news in avalanches. And—what with primas donnas to hear, lions to see, artists to appreciate, public dinners to eat, parties to go to, fortunes to make, new books to read, politics to watch, "progress" to keep the run of, society to be "in," and total insignificance to desperately contend with—the *powers of attention* of a common individual, are blunted to the stump—antennæ, feelers and fingers, stunned and paralyzed. Materialists tell us that human faculties have sprung into existence, one after another, as there was a necessity for them. Is it not time to look out for a fresh phenomenon in New York—a man with two brains to do one soul's headwork—two hearts to do his loving—two stomachs to do his digesting—two galls to do his envying and hating, and two pair of hands to do his spending and money-making? From exhaustion by inward over-tasking, which has really become the most common disease of our time, Havana is a hospital of recuperation—having (as I said before) that heavenly *just enough* of life and excitement, which the soul yearns for while it rejects the solitude and inanition of places more quiet and secluded. Most travellers have a touch of this complaint. And it is with a delicious memory of the restored tone given to the system in this way, that the last regretful look is usually taken of the blue and red houses of Havana.

We glided out from under the guns of Castle Moro at seven o'clock of a June-like morning of April, and, at three o'clock of that same day, were off the coast of Florida, making for our first landing at Key West. It was a smooth run across the Gulf—no one sea-sick, apparently, and the deck, with its crowd of lady passengers, having very much the air of a day-boat to Albany. A Spanish family, (of some distinction, by the moustaches that came to see them off, and handkerchiefs waved after them at parting) had taken a private cabin, probably in expectation of the usual tribute to Neptune; but the plump Senora, who had eaten her breakfast under Queen Isabella, carried it safely into tranquil digestion under our filibustering republic, remaining bravely on deck while the boat passed (with no perceptible jar) over the Tropic of Cancer.

The first view of "our free country," on approaching it from the South, is certainly unfavourable. The islands off the point of Florida are sand banks only. KEY WEST looks like a place where nature "has been and gone"—a few utterly blasted trees, (killed and stripped almost of bark by a hurricane four years ago,) being the only sign I saw of indigenous vegetation—an appearance that is made more strange by the delicious air which one breaths while observing it. We are so accustomed to associate bleakness with *cold*, that, in the soft warmth of tropical air, it seems unnatural. Remembering how even bare rocks will find room and nourishment for some growing thing in the ungenial atmosphere of the North, it feels (in the lungs) as if roses and lilies would grow in the air only.

We were soon moored to a frame-work of very long-legged timbers—looking like a wharf with its trousers rolled up, wading out to sea—and part of the structure being a "look-out," (an arrangement something like a scaffolding built round a steeple,) I mounted to take a general view of this capital of wrecker-dom. It seemed to consist pretty much of one long street of wooden and unpainted houses stretching across an island of intensely white sand, everything in the way of a building looking cheap and temporary. The sea all around was made dismal by being part of such a landscape; and, to look down upon such a town, as a *vis-a-vis* to the flowery and luxurious one we had just left on the other side of that Southern horizon, was indeed a contrast. A stroll up to what was apparently the centre of resort—a grocery and boarding house with a bar-room—did not much mend my impressions of things. Half a dozen particularly ill-favoured looking chaps sat smoking upon a shanty portico, with their feet up in chairs, half occupied with the steamboat passengers and half with the lashing of a stout fellow to a cart. He was a "wrecker" who had just had a stroke of the sun, and for the tremendous strength with which he dashed himself about in his frantic fury,

the four men who were trying to confine him, seemed, altogether, hardly a match. The scene was watched by the spectators with evidently much more amusement than sympathy.

The population hereabouts, who are supported entirely by wrecks, number seventeen thousand. They are complaining just now of “a very dull season”—but few disasters having happened lately along the coast. Business is brightened up a little, in such cases, by the art of persuasion, the wreckers boarding vessels that are in safe water, and convincing the captain that he is within reefs, and lost unless he avails himself of their better knowledge at a very high price. It is an open trade of villainy—as wicked a beginning for a new community as was ever made, probably, by seventeen thousand people in the previous history of the world. *Apropos* to my need of statistics on the subject, yesterday’s *Tribune* (Jan. 29,) contained a letter from “Key West,” an extract from which will perhaps refresh the reader’s knowledge of this badly-booted leg of our country:—

> “Since the date of my last letter, there have been three additional wrecks upon the Florida Reefs, making the whole number of wrecks, since the advent of the present year, *eight*—the number, size of the vessels, and value of the cargoes, being unprecedented upon this coast, within any previous period of twenty days.
>
> The salvage upon these eight vessels will exceed $50,000, and the expenses a still larger sum, giving an unprecedented impetus to the business of this Island City, and impressing upon the faces of its mixed population, expressions of joy and gladness.
>
> “We naturally associate with *wrecks*, high winds, protracted storms and terrific thunder gusts, and one would naturally infer that these wreckers could say, with peculiar significancy, ‘It’s an ill wind that blows no one any good;’ but the wrecks upon this coast more frequently occur in fair weather, the oceanic current and eddies imperceptibly drifting the vessels off their course, and upon the shoals and reefs, which extend from Cape Florida to the Tortugas Keys, a distance of one hundred and sixty miles. And another reason why these wrecks happen more frequently in fair weather is, that many of them are premeditated and intentional, and there is little danger to life and property in drifting upon shoals or reefs in fair weather; of course a dishonest captain would designedly wreck his vessel only when the cargo could be saved,

and he could obtain his share of the *spoils* by arrangements with the wreckers and commission merchants for a division of the salvage and commissions.

"Last year there were but twenty-two wrecks upon this coast, and the total amount of salvage and expenses, $162,700. In 1849, they were $219,160; and during the eight years previous to the present, the aggregate amount was $1,434,584. You will thus see that the prospects of the present year, to the wreckers, are unusually flattering—eight wrecks in twenty days, and the salvages and expenses at least $100,000.

"This is known to be a dangerous coast, not especially on account of its shoals and reefs, but particularly on account of the oceanic currents—the Gulf-stream. The immensely valuable exports from, and imports to, the States of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri, Texas and others, pass within a few miles of these shoals and reefs, and the Government has built light-houses, and erected a series of signals upon the most dangerous reefs, for the protection of this commerce. Additional light-houses are building, and the signals and beacons increasing, although Captain Rollins, of the steamer Isabel, has passed along these reefs four times monthly during the last four years, without accident.

"I stated in my last letter that a large portion of the wrecks upon this coast was premeditated and intentional; that, although the wrecking business was popularly regarded as *quasi* piracy, yet, that a fractional portion, only, of the odium was justly chargeable to the *wreckers*; that the captains of the wrecked vessels, and the wrecking merchants or consignees, individually and collectively, were generally the guilty parties. Every captain has the selection of the consignee of the wrecked cargo; and every captain, who frequents this coast knows that he can *sell* the consignment for from $500 to $5,000, according to its value. The consignee makes from $5,000 to $10,000 upon a cargo worth $100,000, giving him a large margin for negotiating with the captain for the consignment.

"A wrecking merchant is one who has a dock warehouse, and often a large and general assortment of marine goods, for repairing, furnishing and supplying vessels and their crews; and some of these merchants are owners, in whole or in part, of nearly

all the wrecking-vessels of the port. They select the captains, and supply the vessels with provisions, etc., and the captains are generally furnished with ample means and full power to negotiate with, and buy from, the captain of every wrecked vessel he boards, the consignment of the cargo, so that the merchant is, generally, the largest interested in the salvage, as owner of the wrecking-vessels,—interested in obtaining the largest award of salvage possible—and is, at the same time, the consignee of the owners of the cargo, receiving large commissions, upon the *supposition* that he labours for their benefit, and protects their interest from unjust and exorbitant salvage and expenses. Thus you perceive how multiplied are the ramifications connected with this wrecking business—all tending, more or less, to cause fraudulent, collusive and intentional wrecks—to seduce men from the strict observance of honesty and fair dealing in their business relations, and resulting in making this wrecking business *quasi* piracy, and its collateral branches dishonest and fraudulent.

"For several days past the auctioneer's bell has called the people together to attend the sales of the damaged goods of the wrecked cargoes—dry goods and groceries, drugs and medicines, boots and shoes, hardware, cotton-gins, turning-lathes, planing-machines, books, furniture, piano-fortes, etc. The sales were well-attended, and very many articles sold for more than the original cost, while others at great bargains—six cotton-gins sold for $80 each, worth about $250, I suppose; and two piano-fortes sold for $117 and $201, worth from $200 to $250, originally—they were but slightly damaged. In a few days we shall have a large sale of damaged cotton."

LETTER No. 32.

TROPICAL MAY MORNING—FLORIDA'S GOOD FORTUNE IN NAMES OF PLACES—RETURN OF INVALID PILGRIMS WITH SPRING, AND THE LOVELIEST RETURNING TOO SOON—SAVANNAH RIVER AND ITS RICE-FIELDS—PULASKI HOUSE, AND THE REPUBLICAN SYSTEM AS SEEN IN OUR HOTEL SYSTEM—TALL STATURE OF SOUTHERNERS, ETC. ETC.

The first of May, and a morning air by which a new born child would be sufficiently clad! What a contrast to New England's May morning! As I sat on the deck, fanned to luxury by the speed of our swift steamer—the sea breathless and the fragrance from the Florida shore full of the undefinable sweetness of the plants of the tropical wilderness—I recalled vividly, by contrast, those "Firsts of May" which I was called upon to believe in, in my boyhood—the rousings before daylight to go to Dorchester Heights, and the shivering search after never-found green leaves and flowers. The buttoning up of boy-jacket to keep out the cold wind, and pulling out of penknife to cut open the bare stem of the sweet-brier in search of the hidden odour of the belated bud, formed my youthful experience of that much sung festival—contrasted now with the same-named anniversary in a more Southern clime. Oh, this almanac-ing for all latitudes alike!

It is common enough to say "What's in a name," but, as we sped along in sight of the shore of Florida, I could not but wonder whether it might not be reasonably more stimulative to the imagination—likelier to inspire patriotic poetry, for instance—that the names of towns, lakes and rivers, along that vague horizon were so musically beautiful. The Spanish and Indian taste are alike charming in nomenclature, and Florida has a poetical inheritance from both. Tallahassee and Withlacoochee, Alachua and Suwanee—Florida and Fernandina, Santa-Rosa, and Santa-Fe—were names as easily given as Smith-ville and Jones-ville, Cape Cod and New York; and, at least, euphoniously and poetically preferable. It has probably occurred to most persons of taste that the giving of names for the use of the public has been done much too carelessly and irresponsibly in our country—an irremediable evil that may as well be spoken of while there are towns still unborn to be baptized.

With the absolutely delicious air and lake-like smoothness of the sea, the deck of the Isabel looked more like a drawing-room reception than a voyage, that first day of May. Yet it was mostly a troop of returning invalids—some better, some worse for the wintering in the Tropics, but all happy in the atmosphere of Eden which enveloped us, and hope, probably, sleeping in every bosom unalarmed. The centre of attraction and interest, and certainly the most brilliantly gay and cheerful in the conversation of the day—as lovely a woman, I think, as it has ever been my lot to see—died at Charleston a few days after, struck down by the first breath from the Northern clime to which she was prematurely hastening. She had been with us throughout our voyage among the islands, manifestly gaining, and, at Havana, had made purchases and preparations for the summer with confident expectation of recovery. Her fate is probably that of many who are beguiled into starting homeward too early from the West Indies with the Tropical Spring. It is so hard to remember, under such soft and unchanging skies, how tardily and reluctantly comes the summer of the north.

We arrived off the mouth of Savannah River at noon of the second day of May. My companion and I were bound to the city of Shade and Silence. The steamer, with its delightful load of our tropical fellow-travellers, was bound to Charleston. A small towboat was in waiting for the Savannah passengers, and we were soon speeding up the broad entrance of the river, looking with strangers' curiosity, of course, upon the islands and new shores around us, but watching alternately, and with far more interest, the lessening track of the receding vessel we had left. Few fellow travellers are endeared to each other like the invalids who have been idlers together, waiting for health in the sense-entrancing climate of the tropics. If a heart were never genial before it would be genial there. All around—people as well as trees and flowers—seem bound up in the same spell of enchantment, common as air, and which it has taken no trouble to conjure or compel, but they are also made near and dear to each other, (the pilgrims for health at least,) by the suffering they have together forgotten, and the golden leaf added, unexpectedly, to life's varied book by a season looked forward to with pain.

Savannah River is a stream of some dignity, from the office it holds as a line between the two States of Georgia and South Carolina; but, with its marshy banks and coffee-coloured complexion, it was rather an unattractive new acquaintance. Our impressions were, perhaps, less agreeable from the sudden change of the temperature with the land breeze that met us—a drop of some eight degrees of the thermometer in the course of an hour—and I really shivered over my first view of rice fields, though, with their green surfaces, embanked round for irrigation, they were remarkable likenesses of

the gooseberry pies, which formed part of my early education, at Andover, and which are among the warmest of my recollections, of that classic academy. The price of land on which this best quality of rice is cultivated, was mentioned to us so high as to be scarcely credible. Of the Zodiac of remarkable Hotels strung along the ecliptic of our country's travel, the "Pulaski House" at Savannah is the Aries, or first "sign" after passing the equator. The traveller, on arriving here from the West Indies, (as we did on the evening of the second of May,) immediately discovers that he is no longer to be indebted for accommodation to the indefinite "milky way" of ordinary public houses. "Mine host" and his establishment amount to a constellation.

And, really, nothing is more new and noteworthy, among the stranger's first experiences of sojourn upon American ground, than the beginning of this *Astral* belt, of which the *Astor*-house of New York was, perhaps the (properly named) first recognised beginning. Seriously, however, the great gregarious principle of the republic is more exemplified, and more successfully carried out, in this, than in any other of our institutions. The individual is made comfortable in other lands—but to accommodate the supreme *Many* more luxuriously than the isolated and subordinate *Individual*, was a truly American sign of progress. Its operation extends to that moveable Hotel—a steamboat. The "captains of steamboats" and the "keepers of crack Hotels" are representatives of the popular will in this country, to whose influence and position there is no counterpart abroad. It is in fact, an industrial oligarchy. For real power and influence, who would compare a Member of Congress with one of them? They must be superior men to retain the "custom" and (so called) "patronage" which is in their constituency. They are so. For tact, manliness, force of purpose, good judgement, and regulating influence upon each day's turnings up, they have not their betters, as a class.

Beginning with mine host of the Pulaski, who would cut up into quite a committee of the largest men in Cuba, I was immediately struck with the contrast between Havana and Savannah in the *stature of the men*. A few minutes after our arrival the gong sounded and the crowd poured from all quarters of the house to the Sunday evening "tea," and the sudden change in the average level of hands around me, affected my comparative consciousness, in a way which, for a moment, I was at a loss to understand. I felt suddenly pulled under like a cork with "a bite." It is curious how soon the general angle with which one looks at people becomes a habit. Most of the faces I had met for a couple of months had been seen down a declivity of forty-five degrees. I now felt strange at being obliged to look off at my own

horizontal and above it—almost every man in the house standing six feet and over, in his stockings. The Georgians are doubtless a tall race—walking rifles to the little pistols of Cuba—and, with so slight a difference of latitude and longitude in the respective soils that produce them, it would, by the way, be a pretty study of physiology to inquire into the reasons of the contrast.

LETTER No. 33.

CAUTION TO INVALIDS—CLIMATE OF SAVANNAH—FIRST VIEW OF SAVANNAH BY MOONLIGHT—CURIOUS EFFECT OF CITY WHOLLY BURIED IN TREES—REMARKABLE STILLNESS OF SAVANNAH—CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS CITY'S HABITS AND THOSE OF HAVANA—NO POOR PEOPLE'S RESIDENCES—EFFECTS OF BEAUTIES OF NATURE ON CHARACTER, ETC. ETC.

I must record, for invalids, that it was cool at Savannah—cool enough for an invalid's great coat—on the evening of May the second. I had hoped better things of it. An old gentleman, to whom I sat next at the tea-table, said it was too cool for his daughter to leave her room. He was on his way with her to some more thermal resort in Florida, of which I have forgotten the name. A pale lady in blanket shawl sat opposite me. A summery and healing association comes up usually with the mention of Savannah, the name being descriptive of a perennial feature of Southern scenery; and doubtless the general average of its temperature deserves it. Its caprices should be guarded against, however. It has long been the first refuge of the alarmed consumptive, and its history, truly written, would probably be that of a "Bridge of Sighs," by which many had returned to health, and as many had passed on to remediless confirmation of disease.

The bed-room candle, offered me by Prudence after tea, was outvoted by a brilliant moon out of doors—(a "tie-vote," of course, on the republican principle, but the individual moon, to my thinking, being a majority over the individual candle)—and I started to get a first view of Savannah while she was probably looking her best. It was indeed a glorious night. And a more singular scene, than that city first seen by moonlight, is not likely to fall often in the traveller's way. It is laid out curiously, as the Guide-book tells—its plan a chequer-board, and every other square a park—but the streets, besides, being lined with trees, and avenues being planted through the centre of the principal ones, the leaves form a complete ceiling overhead, and no two stars are visible at a time, I should say, from any sidewalk or thoroughfare in the entire municipality. I have sometimes felt, in the woods, a desire to climb up some tall tree and *see out*—and the same feeling comes over one, after a while, in walking along miles of a closely-chequered carpet

of light and shade, with a roof as closely-chequered and interminable above. It occurred to me whether we might not *leave* out the sky a little too much, occasionally, in our improvements and beautifyings.

Whether these overshadowing trees act on the city like the outspread hand with which a mother says "hush" to her children, is open to supposition; but, that some peculiarly quietizing influence is exercised on the habits and character of the inhabitants, must be the stranger's invariable impression,—though he might balance between this explanation of it, and the town's growing considerate, even in the shutting of doors, from its long use as a Mecca of invalids. So still a place, it seemed to me, I had never been in before. Constantinople, with no wheels in its streets, and Venice, with its silent-gliding gondolas, are noisy to Savannah. It is true that the deep sand of every thoroughfare makes carts and carriages unheard, and the profusion of leaves may so thicken the air as to deaden the common reverberations—but there is a stillness more deep and universal than can thus obviously be accounted for. I was there three Sundays—(week-days behaving themselves like Sundays, that is to say)—and the hush of this first evening, which I was inclined to attribute partly to strict observance of the Sabbath, was, I afterwards found, the perpetual habit of the people. In my two hours' ramble, I passed through whole streets without meeting a soul. I scarce saw ten persons altogether, in the two hours. Thinking the homes should be livelier, for the life not stirring abroad, I looked for open windows and lighted rooms—but a sign, even of a single lamp in the front apartments of houses, was strangely rare. There was everywhere the shut-up look of families absent. For long distances I saw nothing to disturb the idea forcibly suggested by the excessive foliage and the loneliness and stillness—that it was a silent city, deserted but undecayed, which the growth of a luxuriant wilderness had overtaken and buried.

It is curious that it should be but "across a ferry," as it were, from Havana, the most *out*-doors-y city in the world, to Savannah, the most *in*-doors-y. It cannot be altogether a matter of principle, though Savannah is said to be the most religious of towns, and Havana—(where I heard the military band play polkas as part of the Sabbath service)—is perhaps as peculiarly irreligious. Nor can it be altogether a peculiarity of race—though the Havanese would seem to play the sun-fish as naturally as the Savannese play the oyster. There is a *fashion*—which is a part of the character of a town differing in different places to a degree which is not easily explainable —in the *amount of appearing abroad*, ("gadding" as the strait-laced call it,) which is respectable and proper. The subject might profitably be lectured upon. Inestimable as the fireside virtues are, domestic bliss requires a certain

amount of airing, “in the best regulated families,” and the natural desire “to see and be seen,” has its use in the composition of human society.

With twenty thousand inhabitants, Savannah appears to have no poor people. In various rambles, during the few days of my stay there, I could find no quarter of the city where there were any but comfortable dwellings —more than comfortable, indeed, for the poorest inhabitant has an avenue of shade-trees before his door, and must see an open square from his window. The luxuries of park culture, which the noblemen of England spend fortunes in maintaining around their dwellings, are here at the humblest man’s threshold, free of cost. No child can grow up in Savannah without Nature for a nurse—beautiful trees for the infant waking-dream to build its nest in—velvet grass, clover and buttercups, to make the world seem like a playground, and the commonest highway a path of flowers. Does any one think that character is not affected by such influence—that hope and imagination, confidence and cheerful habit of temper, (to say nothing of health,) are not nurtured by such surroundings in childhood? They make impressions too vivid and too universal not to have been intended by an all-wise Providence as a blessing to improve. Schools should be where there are trees, streams, mountains—teachers for the play hours as well. If I may strengthen my remark by recalling what made an impression on myself, I have forgotten every circumstance of a year or two that I was at school at Concord, New Hampshire, when a boy, except the natural scenery of the place. The faces of my teacher and my playmates have long ago faded from my memory, while I remember the rocks and eddies of the Merrimac, the forms of the trees on the meadow opposite the town, and every bend of the river’s current. Whether Governor Oglethorpe, in laying out the city of Savannah, thought of more than the health and luxury in parks and shade-trees, it is too late, perhaps, to inquire—but, to his beautifully rural plan, and energy of forecast in the completion of it, the inhabitants are indebted, I believe, for a perpetual teaching of moral beauty, no less than for a sanitary luxury.

LETTER No. 34.

WANT OF BROADWAY IN SAVANNAH—QUERY AS TO SHOPPING AND ITS ATTENDANT USES—THE UNFURNISHED APARTMENTS OF THIS WORLD—CURIOUS SECOND-HAND MACHINERY ON ROOF OF PUBLIC BUILDING—SEEING TWELVE O'CLOCK STRUCK—SAVANNAH CEMETERY STRANGELY PECULIAR AND BEAUTIFUL, ETC., ETC.

Savannah has the peculiarity of being remarkably "retired" all over. It has no one thoroughfare that is particularly frequented—no "dress" street, so to speak, devoted to shopping, driving and lounging—no avenue which should perform for it the vertebral function of a Broadway. At every second corner—walk which way you will—you come to an open square; and it was probably from this peculiarity of the city plan that no one length of street was, at first, devoted to shops—a peculiarity that would have been corrected in the subsequent growth of the city, perhaps, but for the tortoise-like repugnance to putting the head out of doors which seems to be universal to its inhabitants. There are very handsome shops scattered here and there, but, for the three or four days that I was rambling about, at all hours, I saw no one "shopping," no sign of anybody lounging or walking for pleasure, no preference shown by any two people for the same promenade. This seemed to me singular. In every other large city that I have seen, there is a popular shopping-street, which is not altogether a matter of "dry goods." It appears to be a common want—to common minds at least—all over the world except at Savannah—to go out and be promiscuous once a day; and indeed, so often do superior minds find it relaxing to take the air where they can unobservedly dilute the individual, that a fashionable promenade may be set down as one of the general human necessities. How the commercial capital of genial warm-hearted Georgia comes to be an exception—by what local influence the great principle of love for shopping and its accompaniments has been overruled and subdued in almost the same climate which makes it rampant at Havana—it would be interesting to know.

With a friend who was showing us the wharf portion of the city, stores, warehouses, etc., my companion and I mounted to the top of the Exchange, to get a look over the river into South Carolina. It was too cold (May 4) to stand out upon the roof long at a time; but, from the broken-windowed

cupola, we got a far glimpse of fields under flood for irrigation, and a flat country diligently cultivated. The horizon looked dispiritingly low. It must be one of the advantages of the town's roof of leaves, that it prevents the inhabitant from being reminded that there are no mountains visible—a lack of an apparent ladder to the sky which the fancy feels, even if the faith of the believer works just as well without it. Mountains are privileges, refuges, blessings, Ararats whereon the dove of thought may alight when weary of the deluge around. An horizon without one is an unfurnished apartment of the planet we live in.

While my companions were studying the commercial physiognomy of Savannah, from the more exposed outside of the roof, I had taken refuge among the whittled autobiographies on the inside of the wooden cupola—a well jack-knifed list of fellow citizens impatient to be read of—and by such reading and admiring as lay in my power, was duly paying my share for republican equality of reputation, thus laid before the public, when my eye fell upon an apparatus curiously composed. Pointing towards the city bell which hung outside, was what seemed to be the battered half of an old scythe, punctured at one end to receive a wire which descended and passed through the roof, and, at the other end, sustaining a rough lump of lead. Half wondering how the owner of that building (our Glorious Country) could come by a second-hand tool, and at the economy of the arrangement, altogether, for furniture ordered by the metropolis; and half musing whether (poetry at its present discount) it were not, on the whole, a truthful representation of the decline of respect for any such flummery as "the scythe of Father Time," I was startled by a slight rattle at one end of the rusty object of my contemplation. The wire quivered, and the scythe-blade began slowly to arise. Up it went, gradually and silently, to the height of a schoolmaster's forefinger—my slow wits not anticipating what was to come of its admonitory attitude—when, suddenly, crushingly, astoundingly, down went the uplifted lead-weight upon the bell! I stayed in my boots—neither pumped out nor left in a precipitate at the bottom—but the air which started at that sound to carry "the time of day" to twenty thousand people's ears in a second, seemed unwilling to first stop and be breathed. I fairly gasped—but the old scythe was, by this time, on its way up again;—another thunderbolt! —and another—and another—twelve merciless iterations! And this only a common-place noon! What a difference propinquity makes, in the appreciation of things! To listen while the clock strikes twelve scarce quickens a pulse, ordinarily—but to be close by twelve when the clock strikes it, is quite another experience. I felt as if I had taken a common instant, and gone where the article was manufactured. The strokes of a clock

seem to follow rapidly, as we hear them while reading a book—yet, to watch the hammer as it rises and descends, and be yourself a quivering part of the first and nearest vibration, is to feel that there may be eternities in seconds. We measure rays of light across the thread, when we measure life by minutes or years.

The strange cemetery at Savannah, with the trees hung in mourning, is described in every traveller's journal. My companion and I drove to it, (four or five miles out of the city,) with the feeling of familiarity with which one makes a first visit to Pere-la-chaise. But, often as I had read descriptions of this remarkable spot, its peculiar character took me entirely by surprise. It is the perfection of that to which England and our country have, of late, become fully awakened, as a feature of national taste—*places of repose for the dead*. Yet it owes little to Art. Nature has outdone even the builders of the famous cemetery at Pisa, with their costly enclosure of cloisters for reverie, and their fifty ship-loads of earth brought from Jerusalem. The Savannah cemetery, as the reader knows, is a wood of majestic trees clad with a plant peculiar to the moist and warm savannas of this latitude—a pendant moss, or tree-fern, dropping from every branch in long and graceful folds, and of a sad-colored grey. The silk, in common use for half-mourning, is about of the same tint. With the luxuriant green of the foliage on every tree tenderly subdued by the profuse folds of this sombre drapery, and even the ordinarily softened light of a thick wood darkened to perpetual twilight by the same curtaining, there is an atmosphere of irresistible pensiveness and melancholy throughout its wilderness of majestic columns, which no architecture could imitate—or contrive.

A day in such a place is one of those poems for one's own heart only, with which the world is not willing to be troubled—but, of one leading impression, made on my own mind while there, I will venture to make a record.

The graves, (which seemed few, perhaps, from their being no apparent limit to the long aisles of tree-trunks which retreated away in shadowy vistas on every side) were so *secondary to the overpowering spirit of the spot*, that I scarce looked at a name or read an epitaph. I remember but one—that of a father and his daughter—and my attention was drawn to this, probably, by the chain which fenced in the tomb, and which was overgrown by the same mourning drapery of moss which enveloped the trees. I had no friend buried there—or, of course, affection would have led me to look for the sod that covered him. But there was no object conspicuous enough to arrest the curiosity of the stranger—nothing to call aside the footstep, or call off the

mind of the visiter from the influence of gentle sadness pressed upon his own memories of the dead. The spell of the place—less powerful only than the grief which should come there to find what itself had lost—was of hallowed power and predominance. Are there not those who, with me, will see a beauty in this?

Of any privacy in the memory of the dead, our fashionable cemeteries seem to give no sign. The beloved one, who was, in life, so guarded about with delicacy and protection—her home shut in from the footfall of common approach, and the door of her chamber of nightly rest kept high and far out of profaning sight, by triple locks and life-blood ready to come between it and intrusion—this beloved one is laid and left in a thronged avenue of resort, her last home marked by a fancy monument which asks the vulgar to stand over her and admire it, and her sweet maiden name written in glaring letters on the door, for every ruffian's lips to spell out with his coarse utterance, and desecrate with his scrawl or comment. For a world where Hell and Heaven walk at large together, and where the instincts of common safety have combined in usages to guard somewhat the paths of the angels among us while they live, it seems as if there should be some privacy, as well, for the ashes and memory of the departed.

Monuments to great men may reasonably be conspicuous to every eye. They are needed for example, and public gratitude raises them. But privacy is more blest, even in life; and the *luxury of the grave* (and the spirit of this might well be remembered in private monuments) *is to be forgotten but by those who loved us*. This home of the dead at Savannah, so more sublime and sadly beautiful in itself, seems to offer the repose thus wanted. Hate and Indifference would here walk by, unreminded of even the name. Malice and Coarseness would see no call for idle criticism, and, in the spirit of the spot, would feel a restraint, unaware. Affection would find the corner where one's ashes slumber in peace, and to the tears or sweet memories which alone should visit them, the very air would seem to give a sigh of welcome. So fitting and sweet a place to be buried in, it seems to me I never elsewhere saw.

LETTER No. 35.
SAVANNAH, &c.

The sensation of driving, through the streets of Savannah, ordinarily, is not very pleasant. One hates to throw away so much ploughing. The action of a beautiful horse is quite destroyed by the dead pull of the sinking wheels and the effort of wading fetlock-deep through the sand. But it is wonderful what a difference in the get-about-ableness is made by a heavy shower. The city seems suddenly paved with marble. Packed with the rain, the sand is so hard as scarce to take an impression of a wheel, and, for half-a-day at a time, a carriage at Savannah may thus become a luxury—dried into a mere necessity, again, of course, by the second day of *fair* weather. Nature has supplied a convenience for travelling over sand—the camel's foot, elastic and flattening out with pressure. If I were a resident of Savannah, I think I should either import a small dromedary, "to drive in a buggy," or offer a premium for the invention of an India-rubber horse-shoe, on the camel's foot principle. The article would be saleable in New Jersey and other sandy neighbourhoods as well.

Savannah is a place to go to and be good in. I saw but one sinful circumstance while there—a small shop open on Sunday evening, for the sale of segars and umbrellas—everything else looking unexceptionably exemplary. The world has not been sufficiently praised for the variety in the character of its cities. It will be appreciated when railroads have dissolved the charm by abolishing the distance that secured to each its separate atmosphere. There are states of mind very varied which require changes of scene quite as varied. Of the winter pilgrims to the South, it is happier that there is a Savannah for some and a New Orleans for others. As a Vallombrosa of retreat for the intermittent student—for one who would like to stop living and being heard of, long enough to write a book or perfect a theory—Savannah is the one best place, ready-cloistered and hushed.

With a presentiment (afterwards confirmed,) that, by going too early north, I was leaving what little convalescence I had picked up in a warmer clime, I embarked for Charleston on the evening of the 5th of May—

arriving the next morning, after a rough, cold and thoroughly uncomfortable passage. Quite prostrated by sea-sickness and influenza, and having more desired to see Charleston than any other one point of my winter's travel, I had never found illness more untimely. We rejoined, here, some of our fellow-voyagers in the Tropics, but the most admired and beloved of that happy company lay dying under the same roof with us, and a melancholy sadness weighed upon all who had known her. Altogether, I obtained but an imperfect and clouded view of the great metropolis of the South. My best remembrances of it were such as do not come within a traveller's chronicle—the meeting with valued friends and acquaintances. It must pass for the broken page of my journal—to be re-written, if possible, with better knowledge hereafter.

In what little I saw of Charleston, in my mopings about, I was impressed with the air it wears of a town built for gentlemen. It is a little behind-hand with paint and repairs, but, in the contrivance and character of its private residences, there is the original imprint, still legible, of first owners who built exclusively, each one, for taste and comfort of his own. There is none of the amputated look given to city buildings by the more utilitarian taste of the North. Even in houses of very moderate pretensions, it was quite evident that the plan had *not* been sent back to the architect, shaved of all its superfluities of elegance merely. In the bay windows, verandahs, odd angles, porticoes and gardens, and in the unstereotyped variety with which the caprices of ornament had been combined, the look of refinement quite at its ease, and apprehensive of neither eclipse nor criticism, is very manifest. Every house looks as if the same family had always lived in it. Without strict architectural taste, this atmosphere of household gods may be made to envelope a home with an individuality more attaching to children, and more inspiring of respect; and I must own that, to my eye, it is an innovation upon art worth studying.

In the days when North and South were more intimate—the gay society of the two latitudes holding an equally divided empire over Ballston and Saratoga—Charleston was the unquestionable Corinth, from which came the best models of gentlemen and ladies. With the plantation conservatism of family—custom of sending sons to Europe for education—general habit of yearly travel, and prevailing tone of courtesy and chivalry handed down from a superior class of first inhabitants—this may easily be accounted for. The mark of it would still impress a stranger in walking the streets of Charleston, or looking in upon its society. Shouldered aside as the city is, somewhat, perhaps, by the current of "Progress," and becalmed in the still water of such respectability and dignity as this "fast" age *will* leave behind,

its gayeties probably assemble, at the present time, a higher-bred class of men and women than any other capital of our country. The epidemic rage, for action and contact with the world, which is setting the noblemen of England to lecturing, will soon reach here, doubtless, and lively-fy Charleston up to the dreg-stirring activity of New York; but, meantime, its streets are walked by gentlemen who look tranquilly noble, and its drives are graced by ladies who sit in their carriages with the air of princesses at leisure.

There is a childish disappointment, (which I do not find that I outgrow,) in the first visit to most large capitals. Until one *sees* a famous place, its *great men* form a conspicuous part of the ideal picture of it. A boy, in going for the first time to Boston, for instance, would feel an unexplainable disappointment not to see Webster with at least a dome and cupola; Prescott with a Gothic arch to him; Emerson with a steeple, and Everett with a colonnade all round—or some equally tangible, visible and imposingly architectural proof that this is the Boston of which, as seen from a distance, those men compose so large a part. I had always thought of Charleston, South Carolina, as a city built not so much of brick as of Calhoun—not so beautiful for its public walks as for its Washington Allston. To arrive there, and walk through it, and drive round it, without seeing anything of them—no sign of the statesman and painter who would still show for Charleston, though the city were sunk by an earthquake—was to find it "less of a place" than I had expected—to take out the glory and put in brick. It is to this feeling (among others,) that cities *owe* monuments for its great men. Willing to pay for gas, they should be willing to pay also for the "nebulous aurora" of genius which, shining from there, lights them up so that they are seen the world over.

The Dutch have an invention for helping a vessel when she is aground—placing buoyant floats on each side of her, sinking them till they can run a timber through, and then removing the weight so that all rises together. *Corroborative quotation* is sometimes necessary to do a similar service, and bring a writer safely into port. In the present state of low water in the river of poetry, I have probably run aground in the passage just written—and will, therefore, make sure of a buoyant conclusion, by applying a float or two in the way of confirmatory remarks by greater authors, on the same subject:—

"FONTENELLE was never more gratified than when a Swede, arriving at the gates of Paris, inquired of the custom-house officer where Fontenelle resided, and expressed his indignation that not one of them had ever heard of his name."

“A distinguished man, in a eulogy on Liebnitz, said, ‘The Elector of Hanover united under his dominion an Electorate, the three kingdoms of Great Britain, and LIEBNITZ and NEWTON.’ ”

“SPINOSA, when he gained a humble livelihood by grinding optical glasses, was visited by the first General in Europe, who, for the sake of this philosophical conference, suspended the march of the army.”

“A solemn funeral honoured the remains of the poet KLOPSTOCK, led by the Senate of Hamburg, with fifty thousand votaries, so penetrated by one universal sentiment, that this multitude preserved a mournful silence, and the interference of the police ceased to be necessary through the city, at the solemn burial of the man of genius.”

“In Ferrara, the small house which ARIOSTO built was purchased, to be preserved, by the municipality, and there they still show the poet’s study; and, under his bust, a simple but affecting tribute to genius records that *Ludivoco Ariosto in this apartment wrote*.”

“Travellers never fail to mention ERASMUS when the city of Basle occupies their recollection—so that, as Bayle remarks, ‘he rendered the place of his death as celebrated as that of his birth.’ ”

“The Grand Duke of Tuscany became jealous of the attention paid to MAGLIABECCHI, as strangers usually went to visit Magliabecchi before the Grand Duke.”

“We cannot bury the fame of our English worthies—that exists before us, independent of ourselves; but we bury the influence of their inspiring presence in those immortal memorials of genius easy to be read by all men—their statues and their busts, *consigning them to spots seldom visited, and often too obscure to be viewed*.”

LETTER No. 36.

BLOOD-HORSES IN CHARLESTON—RESPECTFUL MANNERS OF NEGROES—SLOW PACE OF INHABITANTS—PINE-PLANK DRIVE—RAIL-ROAD ACROSS PINE-BARRENS—PRAIRIE OF POND-LILIES—SOUTH CAROLINA MARKED CHARACTER—SAVANNAH RIVER AND ARRIVAL IN GEORGIA—AUGUSTA AND ITS GENERAL PHYSIOGNOMY—NORTHERN AIR—CURIOUS SPECIMEN OF MASTER IN SHIRT-SLEEVES AND NEGRO CARRYING HIS COAT—UNAPPROPRIATED MAGNIFICENCE—THE GEORGIA "CRACKER."

There is an air of style given to Charleston by the prevalence of blood-horses—almost every vehicle I saw, public and private, telling thus of the universality to which had prevailed the sporting tastes of the gentlemen of Carolina. The particularly respectful and at the same time half-affectionate manners of all the blacks who came in my way, told also a story of the past character of the city, confirming the impression of old family conservatism for which it is famous. I am inclined to read a third historic chronicle in the average speed of promenade on the sidewalk here, which is considerably slower than on the *pave* of any other American city. I was quite impressed with this last phenomenon. A passage to Charleston from New York to see the let-alone magnolias, the looks of leisure, and a few things taking their time as if eternity were really still on hand, might be rationally established, I think, among the pilgrimages of refined curiosity, on our very fast side of the water.

The inhabitants have a luxury here, cheap in a pine-timber country, but the enjoyment of which is very far beyond any cost, with so sandy a soil and so warm a climate—a plank road, forming a drive of some miles out of the city. An excursion upon it, under very lovely guidance, was one of the bright lines in my companion's and my own chronicle of Southern travel. We saw, here and there, upon the road-side, one of those moss-draped trees which form so beautiful a feature of the cemetery at Savannah—though, without the associations which there give a melancholy character to this pendant drapery, it has a perversely different expression. So raggedly apparelled and standing in the dust by the side of a common road, the "monarch of the woods" looks ludicrously Don-Cæsar-de-Bazan-ish.

We left Charleston on the morning of May 8th, and travelled across a couple of States, with fewer "experiences," it seemed to me, than I ever before found in the same amount of longitude. It was partly the mode of travel, no doubt. Railroads seem only to *erase* distance—stage-coaches used to punctuate, emphasize and make it intelligible. But some part of the monotony of our traverse of South Carolina was due to its pine-barrens, no doubt—a class of landscape where Nature does not seem to be turning the elements to ordinary account. One sees neither vegetation nor inhabitants. At a cross-road, I remember, we saw a quadruple waggon-team almost becalmed amid the sand, with a sleepy looking negro on the nigh wheel horse; and at a desert station, from which several sand-tracks branched away, there was a private carriage waiting for one of our fellow passengers; but, of the remainder of the great State that has such a will of its own, I remember nothing but one prairie of pond lilies and meals with wildernesses between. Perhaps the influence this kind of native soil might have on a mind that would thrive by being turned in upon itself, may account for the marked character of which this State seems to be a natural cradle. There are those who require to "*see* life," and there are those who can stay at home and *live* it—the domestic manufacture making the latter class better acquainted with the warp and woof of the article.

We were eight hours crossing South Carolina—a disrespectfully brief traverse of which I felt quite ashamed, on a first visit—and, crossing the Savannah River, we ascended a bank into the State of Georgia. This seemed the beginning of a higher platform of land, a different soil, and surface more uneven and picturesque. Augusta, the town we landed at, looked very New-England-ish, to my eye. There was a lively air about the people in the streets, plenty of fresh paint on the houses, new signs, bright-coloured bricks, broad streets with no grass in them, and an unequivocal accustomed-ness to "enterprise" in the paces of the cart horses. The ladies whom we saw shopping, looked very fashionably dressed, and metropolitan. I saw but one novelty which told of climate and usages different from the North—a very common looking man strolling along leisurely in his shirt-sleeves and gazing into the shop windows, but with a negro behind, *carrying his coat*! This was the nearest approach I had seen, out of London, to the mounted "tiger" riding behind the dandy "swell," with the waterproof overall fastened to his crupper. The darkey footman was dressed in tow cloth jacket and trousers, and wore a white felt hat with ragged rim—his black skin underneath looking fat, shiny and comfortable. The curious part of it was to see the quality of man that could afford to be his master. He was, himself, hardly as clean and tidy as would be necessary to pass for "respectable" in a

working-man at the North. Most likely, he was an eccentric specimen, but there was no misgiving of his authority in the air of his faithful Juba.

There must either be a generally diffused taste for park-scenery, in Georgia, or there is some local advantage in thinning out woods and clearing them of underbrush, which appeals to the common policy of every inhabitant. Woodlands of majestic trees, with open pasture-range beneath, were never out of sight, from one side of the State to the other. It was only odd—after seeing these in England as appurtenances of ancient family estates, every aisle of tree-trunks serving mainly as a note of admiration to some famous name—to see them here doing honour to nobody in particular. Passing through what might be manorial estates of great magnificence, I inquired in vain for the name of a proprietor. Nobody knew *whose* grandeur and dignity was there waving in the wind and making the hill-sides imposing. It was like glorification going to waste.

I was disappointed, (travelling as one does, in a rail-car, like a mailed letter in an envelope) not to have had the opportunity to see a specific and undoubted specimen of the Georgia "cracker." This is said to be the only customer with whom the Yankee has no chance—a sharper of the South that can out-wooden-nutmeg even a Connecticut pedler. They inhabit the sand tracts, waste lands, and border settlements, and are usually described as white-headed, yellow-skinned, lean and depraved out of missionary reach. How they come by the sagacity with which they "squat," swindle, evade the law, and enjoy an Arab freedom of range, and what is their constituent genealogy, I wish some Audubon would ornithologize.

LETTER No. 37
NEW ORLEANS, &c.

New Orleans, Middle of May, 1852.

Cities are apt to have some lesser peculiarities by which they are as much remembered as by that of which they are prouder. Venice is famous for her gondolas, Constantinople for her ways of bathing and smoking. The traveller thinks once of the picture-galleries of Dresden, where he thinks twice of their women harnessed into market-carts—once of St. Peter's at Rome, and twice of what is there recognized, as good morals. The Louvre that one sees at Paris is little to the dinner that one eats there. New York looms up, to the common eye, as a vision of Broadway and broiled oysters. Boston's granite respectability is a less ready thought than its east wind and codfish. Washington is less remembered for its Capitol and Congress than for the easy, every-body-dom of its society. And so New Orleans has its lesser and yet more prominent peculiarity. I should like to describe it before naming it—for the same thing, or what goes elsewhere by the same name, is nowhere else so respectable. A description of New Orleans would be little without it, and, indeed, the traveller would not be just to this gay Venice of the West, without showing what is included in its little custom of doubtful repute. Perhaps I should better prepare the reader for what I have to say of it, by giving a recipe for compounding the same mixture out of ingredients existing in New York:—

Take three-fourths of the purposes and pleasures of fashionable society; one-third of the sidewalk uses of Broadway; several first class oyster-cellars with the rowdies carefully extracted; a moderate portion of Wall street, stirred till it effervesces; a pinch of gossip and Fine Arts, hilarity at discretion, and a sprig or two of such "going-it-strong" as gives no annoyance to others. Shake these ingredients well together, label the whole "highly respectable," serve it to the public in splendid saloons opening from the level of the most frequented promenades—and you have very nearly what is proposed to you at New Orleans in the phrase "come-take-a-drink." The ingredients which New York could not furnish are, of course, understood—difference of climate, a dash of the manners which mark the

French origin of the city, and the good behaviour fully insured by the Western promptness in dealing with bullies and blackguards.

Thus prefacing, I may perhaps venture, without offence to the temperance of the day, to record a stranger's observations of this lesser peculiarity of our South-Western Metropolis.

The Hotel St. Louis, (the principal one after the burning down of the St. Charles,) is an immense structure on the scale of the Astor House of New York, but built around a lofty rotunda, that was once, I believe, the City Exchange. The towering dome of this imposing architectural centre reaches to the roof, and is surrounded with corridors and a gallery; and the hotel (an excellently kept and highly luxurious one,) seems quite secondary to it, in its magnificent use as a "bar-room." It is paved with marble, a marble counter extends around one-half of its circular area, and so vast is the interior, that the half-moon of busy bar-keepers, seen from the opposite gallery, as they stand and manipulate behind their twinkling wilderness of decanters, looks like a julep-orama, performed by dwarfs—the murmur of the gliding ice and the aroma of fragrant mint betraying their occupation, but their features quite undistinguishable in the distance.

New Orleans is studded all over with these temples of drink—none quite as architecturally imposing as the St. Louis dome, but all sumptuously splendid and costly. The walls are hung with costly paintings, and all that damask and velvet can do for comfort, and gilding and mahogany for splendour, is lavishly done. Of the amount of frequentation of these resorts, some idea may be formed by what a friend mentioned to me as the history of one of them, which he had chanced to learn in the way of his profession. This one ("The Gem,") cleared its rent of $3,000, paid for its decorations and furniture, and made a nett profit besides, of $20,000, in the first year of its operation. The average receipts of any one of the fashionable drinking saloons may be set down at two hundred dollars a day. A gentleman's expenses, for the inevitable drinks with friends and acquaintances, average from two to three dollars per diem. A sumptuous lunch of turtle-soup, &c., is furnished, gratis, at noon, to attract customers—a man getting more than the worth of his money, of course, who lunches and drinks for sixpence; but, the proprietor, finding his profit in the few, who eat, in comparison with the many who drink, at that hour, and in the policy of any thing which will add to the repute of the place, and draw a crowd. The rivalry of these drinking palaces makes a yearly increase of magnificence in their luxuries and appointments, which seems to promise that the Arts shall be tributary, and the city be largely indebted to them for its splendour.

Too much of an invalid, while at New Orleans, for any except very leisurely sight-seeing, and the easy-chairs of these gorgeous saloons looking very tempting from the street, I made a daily halt at some one or other of them, in my strolls to and fro—calling for something cooler than the weather, and enjoying most luxuriantly, as a solitary and unknown idler, my tumbler of privilege to look on. I do not know that I can persuade into a description what it was that interested me. I had seen drinking of most kinds before, but there was, somehow, a daily novelty in the scene. With the little I have to tell, it will be set down, perhaps, to the debilitated state of my curiosity.

In the first place, I had seen no such *bar-keeping* elsewhere. It amounts to a profession, I observe—for the principal bar-isters are gentlemen of leisure, at all except the crowded periods of the day, the decantering, at the less frequented hours, being done less expertly and less formally, and by another class of apparent students in the art. But, the giving a gentleman a julep, from twelve to two, P. M.! It is not so much the skill at mixing, though that is a considerable science, and the principal decanter receives a sort of flourish in the air which must require some practice to do safely and gracefully, and which probably originated in an affected carelessness as to the quantity. The *manner* of waiting on the customer at that hour, is the thing. Its philosophy lies deep. It is based on the probability that every man has a second thirst in his bosom which may as well be ministered to at the same time—his vanity. Never were deference and eagerness to serve, more promptly and blandly thrown into manner, than by the New Orleans bar-keeper on giving his ever-sudden attention to each fresh customer. Whatever the thirsty man thought of himself as he came up, he drinks as a superior man unexpectedly recognised. It is a court trick harnessed into business, and working to a charm. The lump of sugar in the tumbler is of no sweetness compared to the one dropped into the self-esteem. It is an electrified sixpence that is paid for it—so small a coin quite ashamed to be called upon to express so great an obligation. The slight leaning over of the well-dressed dispenser of liquors—the admiring lift of his eyes—the respectfully timid half-smile of pleasure at the opportunity to wait on the gentleman—the uplifted hand with its undecided fingers eager to select the privileged decanter—the swift and dexterous obedience to the command—and the overflowing and freshet-like Mississippi-politeness with which it is handed across the counter—all for sixpence! It is a study of human nature, to sit in one of those saloons for an hour, and see not only how the most cherished Art of high life can be learned and used in the way of business, but how flattery operates, on those unused to take it in their brandy and water.

LETTER No. 38
DRINKING SALOONS AT NEW ORLEANS, &c.

New Orleans, Middle of May, 1852.

In the five hundred or more whom you may see walking up to "take a drink" at any one of the fashionable "bars" of New Orleans, on a warm morning towards noon, there is, of course, a difference of class and great variety of character. Of the large proportion of French inhabitants of the city, you scarce see one, however. They stick to their claret and coffee—drinking no water, it is said, and being, with habits of generous diet in other respects, the most healthy portion of the inhabitants of New Orleans. Difference of language may be part of what renders the bar room distasteful to the Louisiana Frenchman; but it is in other respects also, an "institution" not suited to French nature. The julep and sherry-cobbler are fairly naturalized in London, but we see no sign in Paris, of these bubbles on the counter-current from the New World. Monsieur makes his drink secondary to his eating. Then he is not so prodigal of pocket, nor of stomach, nor of intimacy —and the bar-room frequenter is a spendthrift of all three. Last, (perhaps not least,) the Frenchman would never devote so large an apparatus of happiness —time, feeling, and furniture—to one sex alone.

New Orleans is thickly sprinkled with transient visiters from the North—junior partners, business agents, travellers for pleasure, actors, artists, and adventurers—this being the Rialto of the great valley, the turning-round place of tourists, the Paris of Western gayeties, the golden apple held between the thumb of the Gulf of Mexico and the finger of the Mississippi. As it is understood to be a "gay place," where a man is less watched and more excused than any where else, the restraints of previous good habits are here somewhat let up; and sober men, who have not had the opportunity of going abroad, take the opportunity of a business visit to New Orleans, to vaccinate their ignorance with a little precautionary "knowledge of the world." It is thus to its population in transit that the city mostly owes its somewhat light reputation. A London *Times*, which I have taken up while

writing, speaks of it as "the profligate city of New Orleans." But, that the residents are not the chief incurrers of this odium, any one can see who will observe these public resorts for a day or two, with the aid of a friendly cicerone.

The planter "*takes* a drink" a dozen times in the forenoon—but he does not *drink* it. He seldom calls for it when alone. It is with him a matter of etiquette. Wherever he meets friend or acquaintance, there is a drinking saloon near by—and he would feel as much at a loss to exchange the compliments of the day without stepping in to do it over a glass, as to bow to a lady without his hat, or manage an interview without mention of health or weather. In the way he walks up, signifies his wish to the bar-keeper, sees that his friend is properly attended to, and disposes of his own glass—in the *manner* of all this—there is a certain absolute ease, and a sort of cotton-bale solidity of suavity, that form a type of politeness which borrows nothing from intoxication. It is the Westerner at home—perfectly self-trustful, and ever ready for emergency, but boundlessly hospitable and courteous, and, withal, careful in his drink. The arrangements for the convenience of tobacco chewers receive the greater part of what he takes into his mouth for courtesy, and he modifies the mixture of his own glass with such adroitness as not to make it a comment on the stronger drink of his companions. I was amused at the clever manner in which this was done, and the many instances of it that came under my observation. So many are the strangers, that they are part of almost every coterie in a bar-room; but, whatever or whoever they were, the planter was the man of mark among them. He is a gentleman by every influence of education and climate. With a slight touch of the tetrarch in his manner, perhaps, the constant habit of authority has made it sit gracefully upon him, and it impregnates his whole bearing with that indescribable air of conscious superiority which never can be assumed, but which is prized above all other traits by the high-born in Europe. We shall be proud yet of our planter school of gentlemen. The early-learnt self-possession as master, the climate's lavishness of generosity, the habituation to personal risk and chivalric promptness, and the large amounts and elegant intermediary leisure with which plantation business is transacted, are the training for a peculiar as well as a very high-spirited class of men. By the members of the professions, and by those who have long resided at the West, the manners of this class are very much adopted. It is the secret of that gracefully cavalier tone pervading the upper classes of the Valley and the Southern Tier—the more valuable because the same thing is fast dying out in the lands where it has been historical.

The other drinking, at the bar of one of these fashionable saloons, is miscellaneous without being riotous or rude. The newly arrived Northern man is the most conspicuous from being quite the earliest in the day to get "happy." He is used to having the worth of his money, and drinks all his liquor. The bar-keeper's flattering manner has made him feel appreciated for the first time in his life—and, with his hat on the back of his head, he shakes hands right and left with great vehemence, and is otherwise inconvenient with his cordialities. The next most eager customer is the exhausted business man, who is new to the climate, and who rushes in from the hot streets for an iced drink, as if cholera and yellow fever were behind him. Then there are brokers negociating gravely over a julep, and groups around the popular actors chancing to be in town, and half a dozen of those blandly-resolute and keen-eyed looking men, whom you know at once to be steamboat captains, and a traveller or two exceedingly entertained with the novelty of the scene. And, what with the costliness of the pictures and drapery, the splendour of the appointments, the prevailing courtesy and certainty of good manners and behaviour, it is unquestionably a more orderly and higher-toned resort than one of the drinking saloons of other cities, and would deserve to be named, perhaps, in the same breath with some of the clubs, or other *permitted* shapes of gentlemen's convivialities.

Directly opposite to the St. Louis Hotel, and within scent, of course, of the fragrant atmosphere of the largest "bar-room" in America, stands a French cafe, Parisian in all its appointments, and forming the corner of a long alley of French shops for wine-drinking, billiards, &c. I went over, at the after-dinner hour, and found it thronged with the French mechanics most of them in their shirt-sleeves, but with wonderfully smooth hats and boots brilliantly lustrous. It was a singularly fat and happy assemblage. The higher class, I believe, do not frequent the cafes, here, as in France. The quality of the coffee might tempt them. It was truly delicious. Whether there was any thing unmetropolitan in the accent of the merry chatter around, my ear was not sufficiently practised to decide—but it sounded to me, as the coffee tasted and the surroundings looked—French-y enough to have been in France. To have such marked exponents of the two countries as a bar-room and a cafe, on opposite sides of a street, each the best of its kind and each in full national operation, and noisy exclusively with its own language, seemed to me a racy and novel contiguity. So strong and close a contrast of nationalities could be found nowhere else, I fancy. You set down your Yankee julep on the counter, and cross the street into France.

Of the shops in the French quarter, the glovers, hosiers and apothecaries, as in Paris, array their windows very invitingly—quite outdoing New York

in the display of these particular merchandises. The apothecaries, as elsewhere, deal also in perfumeries; but they add still another outrider to their drugs and medicines—a most brilliant assortment of daggers and revolvers. Their show-cases present a curious juxta-position of means for keeping life in a man, and for letting it out of him—salves and dirks, pills and pistols—possibly a prudent hedging against the inroads of homœpathy; for, however the trade in drugs and medicines may languish before the progress of new lights, the demand for deadly weapons is likely to be lively in the West for some time to come. It is generally supposed that every man has his "persuader," of some sort, in his pocket. The ten thousand river-boys and other lawless frequenters of New Orleans are reminded of it by the numerous shop windows which advertise the supply of the demand. And it is doubtless owing to the knowledge of this universal equipment and readiness, that insolences and acts of violence are so comparatively rare in this community. In New York, where the peaceable man is very sure to be unarmed, rowdyism is ten times as rampant.

LETTER No. 39.
NEW ORLEANS, &c.

New Orleans has three classes peculiar to itself—migratory males, Creoles and Quadroons—and while, to the respective habits of each is attributed the peculiar character of the other two, the three together form the piquant physiognomy of the city, and the difference of its manners and morals from those of all the other capitals of the Union. The Creoles being mostly of Spanish and French descent, and the Quadroons being the various feminine dilutions of the negro—the cotton and sugar atmosphere of the climate, apparently, giving a voluptuous elegance to both classes which is not produced by the same crosses of blood in other places—it is to New Orleans that the traveller must come to see these varieties of the human family. They are indeed, among the city's prominent objects of interest, and the stranger would probably be an exception, who should not inquire the whereabouts of these wonders of the adorable gender before visiting the churches and courthouses.

To begin with the least interesting class. The "migratory males," (or the portion of the population known by this phrase, and so designated by Norman, in his Historical and Geographical Guide-Book,) number about twenty thousand. These constitute one-half or more of the business men of the place. The commerce of the city being a matter of "season," or occupying but the cooler months, the merchant is not necessarily a resident citizen. With this excuse, indeed, (and carefully renewed traditions of the yellow fever, cholera and alligators,) the Northern man who is "so unfortunate as to have business at New Orleans," is justified by public opinion in encountering its perils singly. He leaves wife and family at home. Married man or bachelor, therefore, he is one of that class who live at hotels and boarding-houses, and whose large number furnishes the patronage that has made these establishments the most luxurious in the world. Nowhere is the single man better fed and lodged than at New Orleans. Nowhere is the problem of nourishment, or the effect of generous diet on the spirits, and general juvenescence—more satisfactorily carried out. Judging by the different manners and looks of the same men domesticated elsewhere, the

fount for the renewal of youth, in search of which Ponce de Leon voyaged to the mouth of the Mississippi, is here sucked through a straw.

The migratory male, though usually a man of means is so seldom a candidate for matrimony as never to be valued for that probability. If summer and a wife do not come round to him together, the mere fact that he is a bachelor at New Orleans pronounces him unlikely to wed. This, and the rareness of any comfortable proficiency in the French language, combine to isolate the aristocratic Creole society from the approach of these men about town. Polite hospitality is a dull lottery without prizes; and love made in broken French, or vicariously through the mamma, as French usage requires, is not very tempting bait to hearts that can otherwise spice their leisure. By this exclusion, however, the gentleman with money and domestic capabilities to spare is deprived of the restraint which society imposes. It is only those who belong to society who feel the eye of its good opinion on their morals. And the consciousness of this Saturnalian freedom exercised by twenty thousand of the more youthful male inhabitants, is perhaps part of the secret of the singularly gay and irresponsible demeanour for which New Orleans is proverbial. It is confessedly the secret also, (and the Creole exclusiveness is openly pleaded as the excuse,) of the intermittent matrimony of the Quadroons, valid only during the business season, and conducted with much of the decency and (it is said) more than the good faith of ordinary society. In confirmation of these views, I will quote a passage from the admirable Guide Book to which I have been indebted for the statistics I have given. The author, B. M. Norman, Esq. remarks:

> "Of the one hundred and thirty thousand souls who now occupy this capital, (in 1845,) about twenty thousand may be estimated as migratory. These are principally males, engaged in the various departments of business. Some of them have families at the North, where they pass the summer. Many are bachelors, who have no home for one-half the year, and, if the poets are to be believed, less than half a home for the remainder. As these two classes of migratory citizens, who live at the hotels and boarding-houses, embrace nearly, if not quite, one-half the business men of the city, it may serve to some extent to account for the seemingly severe restrictions by which the avenues to good native society are protected. Unquestionable character, certified beyond mistake, is the only passport to the domestic circle of the Creole. * * The restrictions thus thrown around society, and the great difficulty which the new comer experiences in securing a share in those

> social enjoyments to which he has been accustomed in other places, have had an unfavourable effect upon the morals of the place. Having no other resource for pastime, when the hours of business are over, he flies——," etc. etc.

Of the lovely disdainers of these birds of passage—the exclusive and thorough-bred CREOLES—the stranger who is in New Orleans but for a few days, gets, of course, a very casual and unreliable impression. His curiosity, if he be an American, is scarce more stimulated than his ideas of precedence are embarrassed, by that which is an excessive novelty in his own country, though common enough on the Continent of Europe—*the foreigners are the upper class*. Here are two halves of a city, as distinct, up to the very dividing edge, as the half of a pine-apple fitted to the half of a pine-apple cheese—one as thoroughly Yankee as granite-fronted and big-windowed new book-stores, and slender-necked, sharp-eyed-looking shopkeepers can make it, while the other is as old-fashioned and conservatively French—but, while the enterprise and business prosperity seems all on the side where his own language is exclusively spoken, the patrician society wherein move the dames he is most curious to see, is on the side where he hears nothing but French! Willing enough to recognise the precedence, if he had time—(an Atlantic between, to make up his mind to it)—the suddenness with which he is called upon to reverse his habit of uppermostage, and place the speakers of a foreign language above his Yankee-speaking countrymen, here, on their own soil, confuses and perplexes him. He lacks the accommodating facility with which the municipality have arranged the street signs—"RUE DES GRANDS HOMMES" on one corner, and "GREAT MEN STREET" on the corner opposite; or the still more pat and plump putting of the French uppermost, in the conspicuous sign of one of their respectable vermin-killers—"MORT AUX RATS" above, and "DEATH ON RATS" immediately below.

My own most satisfactory glimpse at the Creole ladies was an accidental one—caught from a friend's carriage as he stopped under balconied windows, and called out the inmates for a moment's gossip in passing—but it does not take long to see (what is the very beau ideal of fashionable culture, and what one thinks perfectly adorable wherever one sees it) the loveliness of a French lady in demi-toilette. It was a summer's afternoon, and we were driving around among the avenues of charming suburban residences—my friend kindly playing the cicerone, but, himself a Creole, and taking advantage of passing the residences of intimates, by exchanging here and there a greeting where a window showed sign of fair inhabitant—and, with those picturesque balconies suddenly enlivened by a fair form,

exquisitely dressed, though in *neglige*, and with the lively familiarity of gossip in the only language that can express gossip in perfection, and, withal, with the complete simplicity which only seemed to be there because Art had found and left it there—I thought I had never seen glimpses of life more delightful. The Creole manners are those of French life (I am led to believe) before Napoleon sold Louisiana to us, when, for an age, it had been the world's model of polite culture. Both here and at Martinique, I fancy, the Frenchman might find, shelved and flourishing, at high-water mark, that old-time courtliness which has found a drift-wood destiny on the ebbing tide of aristocracy at home.

I had a fuller view of the Creole fashion at the opera—a crowded house, and apparently none but the ladies of this particular class present. Sir William Don was playing at one of the other theatres, and the city was most showily placarded on every corner with the bills of "A Bloomer Ball"—this last being the evening's most likely attraction for the "migratory males." The opera drew its audience, apparently, by mere force of fashion. Madam Wiedemann was the prima donna, and her intellectual ugliness, unredeemed by her voice, left us plenty of spare attention for other things. It would have been like a dress opera at Paris or Dresden but for the singular delicacy of the female physiognomies, and (I could not help thinking) a far greater amount of beauty than ever is seen assembled in those capitals. The house was not very large, but it was crammed to every corner with absolute good taste in toilettes. I had a favourable seat in the box of a French acquaintance, and, with a complete view of the assemblage, I tried in vain to find an un-stylish dame or demoiselle. There was a languidly self-possessed air curiously universal; and not practised upon one attitude, either, for, so sociable an audience, with so lively a circulation of beaux, I had seldom seen. It was evidently used as much for a conversazione as for an opera. Of the Creole beauty, as there seen, the stranger would bring away a charmed remembrance, I am very sure. The magnolia-like indolence of their pale but still passionate-looking sweetness, shows a perfecting touch, (for love, at least,) given the blood of a race, by the climate.

LETTER No. 40.
NEW ORLEANS, &c.

The Quadroon's humble table, on Sunday, is graced by the presence of her lord and master—or, in this way, at least, we may plausibly account for the fact, that, only on this morning of the week, the bandanna beauty is sure to be seen at the market with her basket. The stranger who expresses a curiosity with regard to the class, is reminded by any citizen not to lose this opportunity, as the Quadroon is seen regularly abroad at no other place and time. She is a wife that day, table and all—and must herself pick the delicacies that are to assist her tenderness in making a domestic meal more agreeable than the luxurious dinner at a hotel.

It was a brilliant and balmy sunrise that called me out of bed for this market-scene, and, ("two birds with one stone,") for the matins in the cathedral near by. May is a sort of Quadroon month, famous for making a day of uncertain weather *begin* as if it were summer sure to last—May mornings having thus passed into a phrase; and being proverbially and sweetly bright, however cold the noons or cloudy the evenings. The climate of New Orleans, (let me here record my pulmonary warnings to invalids,) is not to be tropically believed in; but the air in the streets, on the Sabbath morning I speak of, was of a quality for which it was worth while to have had lungs made delicate, even by illness. There was a caress in it, to which a well man, (with his finer nature out of reach under his animal health,) might have been almost culpably indifferent.

My way lay through the French quarter of the town, where the shops were all being opened as on a week day—the shop-shutting Sunday, as in Paris, not commencing till noon. As the traveller knows, it is part of the French distribution of employments to the sexes, that the persuading across the counter shall be done by attractive women; and as these fair clerks, though they take down the window-shutters, and sweep, and sprinkle, are never ungracefully dressed, the busy sidewalk of shop-openers is not an unattractive promenade for early risers. If one wants a contrast, however, it is near by. Missing my way, I passed through a street entirely inhabited by

German emigrants—homely clothing needlessly ungraceful, and filth needlessly aggravated and lived-in like a natural element, from one end to the other. The Germans seem to me to have been unmistakeably assorted before birth. If “low-born,” it is not, as in other countries, an accident that may be remedied by removal to the atmosphere of the “free and equal.” They are natural plebeians—if plebeians at all—their inferiority of blood affidavited by every look and movement, and perpetuated by instincts hopelessly quadruped-esque. And while *they* thus “live like pigs,” in New Orleans, there are streets of French people just as poor, all around them, and from every window juts out a box of flower-pots, with roses in bloom, and no woman, child, door-step or poodle-dog, looks otherwise than picturesque and cleanly. The “Microscopic World”, not long since, gave us an account of insects whose eggs are eaten and digested by two different birds before being first found winged and lively in guano; and, that German emigrants may thus be the guano-cracy of our country, ready to brighten into American citizens after an age or two of filth and omitted intellect, may be an analogous fact in natural history.

The market was audible before it was visible, and the turning of the corner which brought it into view was quite like the lifted curtain of a play. The building was but a light roof supported upon columns, and being thus open on all sides to the surrounding streets, its whole busy scene was embraced in a dramatic *coup d’œil*. But the action and vociferation with which every huckster drew attention to his stall, were still more dramatic. A practised player would hardly have outdone any one of them. Over one shelf rather meagrely furnished with vegetables, the sales*man* was industriously blowing a trumpet—perhaps by way of balancing the attraction, as most of the venders were women. Flowers in sumptuous bouquets seemed an article in great demand. The potatoes and turnips were sold by small earthen-pots’-full—the pots of a shape somewhat promoted by their present occupation. Hot coffee was smilingly pressed upon the passer-by, from almost every corner, and, indeed, it seemed the custom to take a cup in the course of the morning’s marketing. Flowers, coffee and all, it was a gay *matinee*.

I made the round of the alleys, jostled here and there a fair and unscrupulous elbow, and shoved right and left by the neat French baskets carried on vigorous petticoated hips; but I needed a cicerone. The class I had particularly come to see were doubtless around me, in any number; but there seemed various shades of complexion, and I looked in vain for those differences of demeanour which might indicate the nearer or remoter approaches to the matrimony forbidden in its full extent to persons of their colour.[9] Frailty by the day is usually recognisable in a crowd, all over the

world; but the fidelity by the quarter, or by the season, for which the "Quadroon" is remarkable, seems to allow her to walk, dress, and buy vegetables, so much like a wife, as not to be distinguished by a stranger. Some of the basketed marketers were so white, that, but for the bandanna on the head and the barbaresque gold ear-ring, I should not have supposed them "persons of colour." The tan-stripe down the vertebræ of the back—which is said to betray any shade of negro taint in the blood, was, of course, beyond my promenading observation.

[9] It may explain my embarrassment in this particular, to quote the account of the varieties of mixed complexion given in the Encyclopedia:—

> "The offspring of a white and a mulatto is called a quadroon, or one-quarter black; of a white and quadroon, a 'muster,' or one-eighth black; of a white and muster, a 'mustafina,' or one-sixteenth black—after which they are said to be 'whitewashed,' and are considered as Europeans."

I must confess to have had my sympathies somewhat excited for this class, by conversation with Southern gentlemen, who spoke of their condition, of course, with no Northern prejudice. One or two Quadroon families were mentioned, who, with freedom, had acquired means to give their children education, and who had sent them to France, that they might marry, and enter into business where there was no reproach upon their blood. But it is a curious peculiarity of the race, that homesickness seems to be the weakness of their nature. These who were incidentally mentioned in the conversations I speak of had returned, leaving what might be thought excellent opportunities in a land where they were not stigmatized, and were now living in New Orleans in complete seclusion, their inevitable melancholy deepened and embittered by education. One family was instanced, more particularly, who possessed beauty and talents to a very unusual degree.

My anticipations were not exactly realized by the female Quadroons whom I saw in the market. Those whose white parent had been of light complexion—a sort of freckled mulatto, with reddish hair, were frightfully ugly. The brunette complexion of the Frenchman or Spaniard mixes best with the negro blood. Some who had a slight down of dark silk on the lip, and the sort of hushed-eye of day-slumbering night-awaking passion—the clear brown iris large, liquid and indolent—looked capable of being thought beautiful, at least by one person at a time. A beauty which they all had, however, was the perfectly flat and straight back, with the head and neck springing from it with admirable pose and proportion. Between ankles and chin, they are said to be the best-formed race of women in the world—the foot inheriting with fatal certainty the trace of toil, and the face the far-

descending imprint of conscious servitude. This last is slight, though I think universal. I could make no other generalizing remark upon the character of the faces I saw, except that there was a kind of deferential modesty in them all, and (what I very much admire, for it is elsewhere found only at the other extreme, of high breeding,) complete unconsciousness of observation. Every Quadroon I saw walked through the crowd as if she felt herself to be invisible.

From the market I made my way to the Cathedral—matins over, apparently, but doors open, and dimness and stillness within for all who needed them. The Catholic worship is the religious luxury of the traveller. Away from home and its set times and places, the heart needs to know that it may enter a house of God whenever world-weary or willing to be alone with better thoughts. We may not always pray there. To go in may be rather a luxury than a duty performed. But the accustomed influences are soothing; and, if one has a home and has been long away, it is the place to go and be alone with tender memories of it. I sat down in the dim light, and an old gray-headed negro said his prayers near by—we two, as far as I could see, the only profiters by the open door, for that hour—and I felt myself somehow, magnetised by his neighbourhood and his apparent devotion. Perhaps his praying, also, for the sick-looking stranger, may be part of the history of the morning whose mingled experience I have thus endeavored to chronicle.

LETTER No. 41
CLASSES AT NEW ORLEANS, &c.

The “Alligators”—the boatmen of the Mississippi—were a part of the transient population of New Orleans, about whom I had long felt a curiosity. In story and in common parlance, they occupy somewhat the position as to the West, that the Bedouin Arabs do to the East—though, with a home three thousand miles long, and with a life which compels them to “combine the accomplishments of the sailor, the whaleman, the backwoodsman and the Yankee,” they are vastly superior to those mere mounted loafers of the desert. Probably no vocation in the world so taxes every kind of bodily dexterity, so disciplines the courage, so calls upon the sharpness of the wits. Their constitutions are not only subjected to the changes of all climates, but their intercourse is with the inhabitants of all latitudes. They vibrate between the icicle and the sugar-cane, familiarized on the way with every variety of produce, of soil, of merchandise and of character. They eat anything, toil anyhow, sleep anywhere. The particular neighbourhood to which any one of them is responsible for character—the spot in the wilderness where his chimney smokes and his wife waits for him—are trifles lost in the vastness of his range. His credit is the length of his visible purse, his reputation the length of his visible shadow. From the overlapping reciprocities and influences that sustain other men he is completely isolated. His strength is in what he can show, what he can do, what he has got, and what he is—for the moment. He depends wholly and habitually on himself.

With the level of the human family to which this class belongs, as with the opposite extreme of the most refined and cultivated, I must confess to be more interested than with the classes intermediate—as one admires the tree in the untrimmed wilderness of the woods, or when made into something useful or ornamental, without wishing to give much time to it, as lumber. The school of character in which these amphibious Westerners are educated, for example, is more interesting than much that is called “society.” It is a school without books—taught by nature and contact only—and must be full

of curious phenomena of development, mental and moral. I regretted exceedingly that I had not the health and leisure to make a careful study of the five-mile extent of “alligators” along the Levee of New Orleans. Among the occupants of the two thousand flat-boats, (estimated to be moored along the shore at one time,) there must be many a monotype of a man who would never have been so genuinely himself, though he might have more largely developed with education and opportunity—many a poet whose soul is all there, though not bound also in morocco; many a hero whose heart swells without straining gilt buttons; many a statesman whose power sleeps, like the statue in the block of marble, waiting for the chisel of his country’s need. Judging by the graphic and pungent phrases which we are continually adopting from the vocabulary of the “alligator,” he is, at least, a talker of most entertaining originality; and, as one of the most important features of our national character is forming in his western growth and progress, he might be an instructive study as well as an interesting and amusing one.

My walks to the river, at New Orleans, were not taken, of course, without remembering to what that span of muddy water is the wondrous gate. Including the tributaries of the Mississippi, it is the outlet of *seventeen thousand miles* of internal navigation. The Valley of the great river alone, (says Norman,) contains nearly as many square miles and more tillable ground than all continental Europe; and, if peopled as densely as England, would sustain a population of five hundred millions—more than half of the present inhabitants of the earth. It is almost impossible to anticipate the future magnitude of New Orleans as the commercial emporium of this vast tract. The productions of many climates are tributary to its progress. The Mississippi abounds in coal, lead, iron and copper ore, all found in veins of wonderful richness. The Missouri stretches thirty-nine hundred miles to the Great Falls, among the Flat Foot Indians, and five thousand from New Orleans. The Yellow Stone River, navigable for eleven hundred miles, the Platte for sixteen hundred, and the Kanzas for twelve hundred, are only tributaries to the latter river. The Ohio is two thousand miles to Pittsburg, receiving into her bosom from numerous streams, the products of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, Western Virginia, Tennessee, Indiana and Illinois. The Arkansas, Big Black, Yazoo, Red River and many others, all pouring their wealth into the main artery, the Mississippi, upon whose mighty current it floats down to the grand reservoir, New Orleans. The population of the Mississippi valley was *ten millions* in 1845, and in that same year there were *five hundred steamboats*—most of them of monstrous size and capacity—plying upon its waters. Let me simply quote Mr. Norman’s concluding remarks after giving these statistics:—

“Such statements as these, large as they seem, convey to the reader but a partial idea of the great Valley, and of the wide extent of country to which New Orleans is the key, and which guaranties her present and future prosperity. To form a full estimate, he must, beside all this, see her mountains of iron, and her inexhaustible veins of lead and copper ore, and almost boundless regions of coal. The first article mentioned (and the phrase in which it is expressed is no figure of speech) has been pronounced by the most scientific assayer of France, to be superior to the best Swedish iron. These, and a thousand unenumerated products, beside the well-known staples, constitute its wealth; all of which, by a necessity of nature, must flow through our Crescent City, to find an outlet into the greater world of commerce. With such resources, nothing short of some dreadful convulsion of nature, or the more dreadful calamity of war, can prevent New Orleans from becoming, if not the first, next in commercial importance to the first city in the United States—perhaps, in the world. The flourishing towns upon the Mississippi and her tributaries, are merely the depositories for this great mart. In twenty years she must, according to her present increase, contain a population of three hundred thousand, with a trade proportionably extended.

“With such views, it may be deemed folly to attempt to look forward to the end of the nineteenth century, when this metropolis will, in all probability, extend back to Lake Pontchartrain, and to Carrolton on the course of the river. The swamps, that now only echo to the hoarse bellowing of the alligator, will then be densely built upon, and rendered cheerful by the gay voices of its inhabitants, numbering at least a *million of human beings*. If, like Rip Van Winkle, we may be permitted to come back, after the lapse of half a century, with what surprise and astonishment shall we witness the change which the enterprise of man will have wrought. But let us not waste a moment in dreaming about it. Let us be up and doing, to fulfil our part of the mighty achievement. It would not be strange, however, if the present map, which is given to show the rapid growth of the city, by comparison with one drawn in 1728, should then be republished, with a similar design, to exhibit the insignificance of New Orleans in 1845! We ask the kindness of the critics of that period, should they deign to turn over these pages, begging them to consider that our humble work was produced as far back as the benighted age of steam!”

The stranger starts from his hotel, at New Orleans, with the idea that he will go *down* to the river, and see the "alligators." He follows the sidewalk, as directed, but, to the confusion of his habitual notion of where tide-water should be, he finds presently that it is *up hill* to the river! As he sees the shipping from a distance, the harbour seems to be on the second story—the city in the basement and the Mississippi on the parlour-floor! He approaches the Levee, a pier of almost prairie extent, and it is a vast slope *ascending* gradually to the water's edge. The drays are tugging up hill to the vessel-sides. The wildernesses of cotton-bales and sugar-hogsheads look as if, with a slight push, they would all roll back into the stores to be sold, of their own accord. The gutter's vocation seems reversed—to bring clean water *in* to the town, not to take dirty water *out* of it. And—as one looks up from a street where children are playing and thousands of men and women thronging hither and thither in unsuspicious security, and sees the slight embankment that keeps the most powerful of rivers from rushing down upon the scene with terrific destruction—a mud wall holding a deluge *up above* a crowded metropolis, and the floods and freshets of seventeen thousand miles of mountain and valley thus precariously guarded against and held in check—one cannot but have a very mingled feeling, scarce definable, half glad to belong to a more reliable high-and-dry-dom oneself, but half sad for the horrible calamity that may gather any hour in the clouds, for those to whom this is a home. The "Guide-Book" gives us what little can be hopefully said upon the matter:—

> "The fear is often entertained that the levees of the Mississippi are not sufficient to resist the great body of water that is continually bearing and wearing upon them; and these fears have, in several cases, been realized, though never to any very great extent. In May, 1816, the river broke through, about nine miles above New Orleans, destroyed several plantations, and inundated the back part of the city to the depth of three or four feet. The crevasse was finally closed by sinking a vessel in the breach, for the suggestion and accomplishment of which the public was chiefly indebted to Governor Claiborne.
>
> "In June, 1844, the river rose higher than it had done for many years, *marking its whole course, for more than two thousand miles, with wide-spread destruction to property and life*. It crept over the levee in some places near New Orleans, but caused no actual breach in that vicinity. At Bonnet Carre it forced a crevasse, doing considerable damage, and causing great alarm in the

neighbourhood; but the mischief was not so serious as might have been anticipated, and the embankment has been so increased and strengthened, as to leave but little apprehension for the future."

It is a curious fact that the Mississippi is at work like ten thousand wheelbarrows, dumping dirt upon a ridge—its own bottom—which may be a terraced site for the city hereafter. Most rivers will dig and carry away dirt from their own channels—few will bring and dump it there. Instead of deepening every year, the channel is constantly rising with the deposit of mud, and the embankments of the Levee are correspondingly raised. In the progress of time, of course, it will be so much above the city that it may be necessary to turn off the stream upon the lowlands on the opposite side, and then the present gradually elevating bottom of the "Father of Waters" will become the Broadway of New Orleans, its highest ridged thoroughfare and gayest promenade. This naturally slow accretion is increased by the embankments which are more and more confining the river throughout its lower length, and the changes that it may bring about, in the path of its navigable waters at the Mouth, seems to be already occasioning serious apprehension. The New Orleans *Bulletin*, in a recent article, thus speaks of the assistance necessary to be given by steamers, to vessels entering the Mouth of the Mississippi:

"But towing large and heavy draughts up and down stream is only a comparatively small part of the business of towboats, as we have before observed. After their work proper is done, there is another extra labour to be performed, in the execution of which the strength and power of steam, iron, wood, hawsers, springs and cordage of every kind, are tested to their utmost capacity of endurance. At the mouths of the river there are barriers to the ingress and egress of vessels propelled by wind and sails alone, as impassible as if constructed of solid rock, instead of plastic mud. Through, not over, these mud flats, in water twelve and fourteen feet deep, ships from eighteen to twenty feet draught, are dragged by these boats. Sometimes they stick and hold fast, with an adhesiveness which it seems no power can overcome, requiring the work of hours, often days, and even weeks, to remove them from their tenacious moorings.

"The mouths of the Mississippi (and there are now only two that are used at all for the passage of vessels of even tolerable size) are so choked up with the alluvion that is brought down by the

current, and deposited at the debouche of the river, that they are impassable, without the application of steam power, and no vessel of any size worth speaking of, ever attempts to cross the bar, inward or outward bound, without the aid of a towboat, oftener two, and frequently four, pulling and dragging her through the mud with all their concentrated power, at a snail's pace. This, as it may well be supposed, is hard and tedious work, involving often great risk of property, sometimes jeoparding life, requiring consummate skill and prudence, and always attended with serious responsibility. The boarding of a large ship at sea, with a fresh breeze and a heavy swell, (and these boats sometimes go out fifty and sixty miles,) and arranging all the necessary preliminaries for towing her into a harbour, is a nice and hazardous undertaking."

LETTER No. 42.

The Levee, (or grand single quay of New Orleans,) is made to look somewhat Oriental by the numerous *tableaux vivants* presented by the overseers and their negro labourers. Under a moveable awning, stretched upon four poles, and stuck any where among bales of merchandise, reclines a gentleman in broad-brimmed straw hat, loose cravat, and white jacket, never without a cigar and a newspaper, and forming a centre to the Ethiop group around him, which an artist would very much admire. The shining negroes, with quite as little clothing as a sculptor would accord to his model, are almost never out of attitude favourable for sketch or daguerreotype—and, indeed, it seemed to me, that the Levee, from one end to the other, was but a series of capital subjects for the "Pictorials." They would only *not* do as illustrations to "Uncle Tom," for you would scarce find in the world a class of labourers who are as habitually cheerful as these blacks; and no white working men, I am very sure, anywhere in Europe, who take their daily task half as easy. For a *lean* or discontented one, I looked in vain. And this, I confess, somewhat surprised me—for, in New Orleans, if anywhere, with the rush of business in the mercantile season, and the city's renown for recklessness, I had expected to see the slave hard driven. The opportunity to observe them here is large. You may form some idea of the number employed on this one pier, from another statistic given by Norman. In 1845 there were three thousand drays in constant employ upon the Levee—and there are probably three negroes to one dray, lading, unlading, and driving.

The Alligator crafts, as well as the other shipping, have a curiously inquisitive and mere morning-call look, from having only nose-room at the water's edge, and from the slope of the Levee outward, like a natural beach. There are no projecting wharves, and no perpendicular abutment against which a vessel could be moored. If she draw too much water to come close, a long plank runs off from the sloping descent of the shore to the prow or stern; and this gives, as I said before, a most momentary and accidental look to the whole vast multitude of boats and shipping. The flat-boats are unsightly structures enough. They are built only to come *down* stream—and are, of course, of the cheapest construction that will hold together. The cabins are made to serve as groceries, bar-rooms, dry-goods stores, music

saloons, etc. etc., on the voyage—and, though of rough boards innocent of paint, have such splendid names as "The Alhambra," "Great Men's Retreat," "Planters' Exchange," "Rotunda," etc.—the walls, meantime, drying into higher-priced lumber, while fulfilling this intermediate destiny.

The "Alligators" are themselves too sharp-eyed to be easy under observation. It is hard to find one of them indifferent to your eye, or so carelessly off his guard as not to know when he is looked at. The only kind of man they seem not to notice at all is a loud talker; and so common and vulgarized a gift does oratory seem to be, and so readily does drink run into it in the West, that I fancy the surest way to observe, and be yourself unobserved, (at least in the most crowded part of the Levee,) would be to mount upon a hogshead, and appear anxious for an audience. I saw many scenes, or parts of scenes, scarcely describable, where there was a most curious indifference to that which excites attention or moves a crowd elsewhere—giving one the impression that it was a class of people so familiarized to threat and violence, that nothing in that line, short of a bowie knife or a revolver, would make one of them lift an eyelid. Yet, to the movements of a quiet and silent stranger—one who would wholly escape notice ordinarily—they seemed, on the contrary, unaccountably attentive. They think it no offence, or, at least, one for the consequences of which they are quite ready, to sidle up and listen when two persons are talking quietly, or walk round a man and survey him like a wax figure in the museum. Three times out of four, when I stopped to take a more leisurely gaze at something, I found myself thus walked round and scanned—partly because I proved myself a stranger by my curiosity, probably—but evidently from a habit of neglecting no indication of what was going on. And this manifestation of mingled cuteness and simplicity is made more characteristic by a peculiar look never seen in a lower class in Europe, a savage unconsciousness of owing you any respect whatever. Personal presence, as felt in a man more than in a tree, is utterly unacknowledged by the alligator. He shows you this in his face—in a sort of negative insolence of expression, quite at your service, if you like to take offence at it, and best explainable, perhaps, as Yankee independence in the fungus state, run rank with over-luxuriance.

I fancy that it is from there being no interchange of respect between him and any other man, that the alligator is so reckless of his personal appearance. He evidently never gives it a thought. The contrast is curious, in this respect, between him and the French labouring man or mechanic who stands shirt-sleeved beside him on the Levee—the latter being invariably in high physical condition, with beard all grown, form erect, and enough care in his dress to show his proportions to the best advantage. As to worldly

condition they are about equals—yet the alligator, with twice the energy, twice the enterprise, twice the pride of the other man, and ten times his capability under emergencies, looks a beggar in comparison. He buys articles of dress at hap-hazard, lets the law of gravitation fit and arrange them, and is slovenly, unwashed, and half buttoned—but it is more particularly in his *way of moving and bearing himself* that he shows the absence of the common human starch of remembered visibility. He sits down like a wet rag, simply collapsing into a heap. He walks with a stoop, his knees bent forward and his hat carelessly on the back of his head, but still with the lithe ease with which a cat draws one leg after the other. Though probably the most deadly and formidable combatant that could possibly be enlisted, particularly to fight "on his own hook," he is the most unsoldierlike *looking* man in the world. I noticed that they were generally oval-faced, with a slighter jaw bone and a less animal construction than any other laboring class I had ever seen, and remarkably slight-limbed hollow-chested and sallow—all of which could be easily accounted for by the malaria to which they are exposed and their peculiar occupations; though how the mind has quickened and the character formed into new and strong features under this physical deterioration, is more of a mystery.

LETTER No. 43
NEW ORLEANS PIQUANCES.

There is a common nuisance in New Orleans, the mention of which to a London beggar would make his mouth water, viz: that a gentleman brings home upon his boots, after a walk on the Levee, a *sugar-mud*, the scrapings of which would about keep a small family in molasses. The spillings, from the innumerable boxes and hogsheads of this, their great staple of merchandise, are prodigally careless and perpetual; and the sprinkle of the water-carts converts it into a saccharine cement, which is most inconveniently adhesive. From the difficulty I found in removing my own sweetness of *sole*, with a common scraper, after every walk by the river side, I should suppose, (and the Messrs. Berrian are welcome to patent the idea at their Museum of wonderful usefulness,) that a door-mat, with something like an inverted carpenter's plane imbedded in the centre, would be a saleable article in New Orleans. Clean floors are desirable even in haunts of business; and ladies, (those, at least, who find time to think of their carpets during a gentleman's morning call,) have occasion sometimes, of course, to wish that the remembrance of the pleasure could be a little less sweet and sticky.

But, as if New Orleans were the most piquant city in the world, there is another peculiar liability attached to the simple matter of taking a walk in its streets. With the elevation of the bed of the river above the level of the town, the gutters, of course, must either flow up hill to find an outlet, or evaporate at their sulky leisure. The latter is their choice, as far as my observation extended. Hackney-vehicles being in great demand, at the same time, in so warm a climate, and the stands for these conveniences beings along the sidewalks of the principal streets—and flies (thirdly) being active and numerous amid such fecund stagnation—the dashing of the hoofs of kicking horses, into the pools along which you walk, and in which they stand

waiting for your custom, is as perpetual as fly-biting can make it. With at least fifty thousand pair of white pantaloons daily exposed to the broadsides of this unsavoury artillery, gentlemen spotless in the afternoon are of course the conspicuous exceptions—a clean outside to a man's leg being tolerable evidence that he has not, that day, been out of doors. Like the yellow fever, for which the city is so formidable, at a distance, however, this trouser varioloid is an epidemic to which the inhabitants themselves are curiously indifferent. The stranger is naturally disturbed by it—but you may know a resident by the easy *nonchalance* with which he makes his bespattered entrance into bar-room or hotel.

Sitting at breakfast, one morning, at the St. Louis Hotel, I found my attention interested in a face at the upper end of the table, and, without more than the caprice which one's fancy thus takes, over a silver fork, I insensibly made quite a study of the physiognomy and manners of that one out of the thirty or forty persons breakfasting around me. I should be taking a liberty—not having made the acquaintance of the gentleman, and he being a private citizen on whom the *digito monstrari* has no claim—to do more than allude to the genial countenance and general air of superiority which thus drew my attention; but, a friend coming in, after a while, who pointed him out to me as the *purchaser of Powers' statue of the Greek Slave*, the feeling which it stirred made an event of my seeing him, for which I am inclined to give New Orleans, whose citizen he is, the tribute of such mention of the matter as I find coming to the tip of my quill.

That beautiful statue, I believe, is allowed to be the triumph of modern Art, and the price paid for it was a small fortune. I cannot very well explain the glow which ran through my blood at thus unexpectedly seeing the purchaser, without reminding the reader how unequal are the uses of money—how the same dollar, for instance, spent for a supper with an indigestion, might have bought the needlework of a sleepless mother, whose toil for her babes, that weary night, drew angels to look down upon her from heaven.

To buy a creation of genius, like that statue, was not the mere giving of ten thousand dollars for an equivalent. The price was noble—offered with a noble appreciation of what it bought—but there was *so much more* than the marble, which had been obedient to the money. The skill, the industry and the perfected object of beauty were little to the inner life which had been lived for it—the glow of inspired first conception, the strengthening of self-confidence, the disciplining agonies of doubt and obscured vision, the raptures of progressively developed ideal, the alterations between hope and

dread, between tears and triumphs—the superhuman portion, we may almost say, of the history of genius. And there sat a man who had made himself the master of so much more than it would seem possible to bargain for—a Prospero whose wealth

> "Correspondent, to command,
> Doing his spiriting gently,"

had indeed done him the service of an Ariel. Why, it seemed to me like seeing a potentate who had exercised a rare kind of power. It was better than seeing a king. And I trust that a breakfast, in which such an event could occur, will be thought legitimately within reach of the traveller's chronicle of adventure.

I find it takes new eyes to be surprised at very thought-stirring scenes, sometimes; but, to give a strong instance of what people may get so used to as to give over looking at it with any particular curiosity, I will describe *what was set out upon two tables* on the opposite sides of the bar-room of my hotel. The reader will perhaps remember the description already given of this drinking saloon—a vast dome, like the body of a cathedral, around which the hotel is built, and to which it seems a secondary appurtenance. It is thronged at the drinking hour, and, on the morning I speak of, I had gone down to take a lounge through the crowd, interested as always in the faces and manners of a strange city, but looking for no special novelty beyond. The day was warm and the drinkers many. I was amused with the usual contrast, as I went in, the architectural sublimities commonly reserved for places of sacred resort, (a dome sustained by lofty columns, and admitting light only from the meridian sky,) enclosing a throng so careless and lively. I strolled along one side, and saw the lunch-table spread out with *terrapin soup*, *olives*, *sandwiches*, *etc.*, and then, with a chance turn, I crossed the crowded floor and came upon another table on the opposite side, set out with —what does the reader suppose?—*half a dozen pretty and nicely dressed negresses*, from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, seated in chairs upon the top of the table, and waiting to be sold presently at auction!

And, to this, nobody was giving a second look. Groups of men stood about, on the marble floor of the vast area, with hats on and glasses in their hands, conversing gayly. The white-aproned waiters ladled out the soup. The gracious and gentlemanly master-bar-keepers stood braiding rainbows across their firmament of decanters as they flung the ice and the rosy liquor back and forwards into fragrant contact with the mint. Politics were talked

loud, and business was talked low. But it was not quite the hour—lacking a few minutes—when the destiny of these other warm dishes was to be decided.

Feeling themselves to be wholly unnoticed, probably, the negresses were perfectly natural, and their amused interest in the scene around, was sufficient to make them as gay as children at a show. The front of the table was on a line with the circle of columns, and it extended back across the corridor in the rear—one of the women, who had two children at her knee, sitting back against the wall of the dome. This last was the only one whose face expressed any seriousness or anxiety, though all were modest in their cheerfulness, and they were evidently girls of good conduct, as well as in admirable bodily condition. Two of them were really handsome, I thought, and, by the taste with which their bandannas were coiffed, they had inhaled a little of the French atmosphere of the city.

The auctioneer mounted a chair, presently, and the sale proceeded—too rapidly, however, for any very critical observation. With what I could see of it, I was exceedingly interested, though, of the crowd around, no one else except the bidders seemed to have the curiosity to look on. The girls seemed bashful more than anything else, dropping their eyes as the auctioneer told their ages and qualities, or stealing furtive glances at the low-voiced namers of the dollars they might be worth—their vanity, doubtless, somewhat excited in watching the ladder up which their value was so reluctantly ascending. Imagination might paint very touching pictures from this scene. It was over before I had got out my "brushes and colours." I just remember that the mother looked pleased with the destiny of herself and her children. The others were gone without my having been able to designate even their prices—deficient as of course I was in the practised alacrity of the market. But I looked down, from the gallery above, upon the two bare tables, later in the day, and indulged reverie over the contrasted disposal of the respected viands—the stomach's digestion of what had been spread upon one, and Fate's digestion of what had been spread upon the other.

DESULTORY NOTES

AND

INFORMATION PICKED UP ON THE WAY.

Breathing, which is among the negative sensations in other climates, seemed to me a positive pleasure—as positive as delicious feeding when hungry—in the balmy sea of the Lesser Antilles. I could have heartily "said grace" after every breath. Perhaps my nicer and quicker sensibility, as an invalid recently from a harsh winter at the North, may have made my experience a relief as much as an enjoyment; but it was a bliss of living, which kept me perpetually conscious of the enjoyment of it. Yet it was probable that I was in this latitude at its most favorable season, and one, too, that is a brief exception to the rest of the year. Dr. Evans (an English Physician) thus describes the usual effect of the climate upon the newly arrived French officer and soldier sent to his post in the Islands of St. Lucia or Martinique:—

> "The arterial system is excited; the blood is determined to the surface of the body; the skin is either preternaturally warm and dry, or covered with profuse perspiration. There is a desire for cool drink, which, when taken into the stomach, increases the perspiration, until the clothes become saturated with moisture. The skin then becomes irritable, and covered with a lichenous eruption, known by the name of 'prickly heat.' The body seems to have acquired an inflammatory diathesis; and, if blood be taken from a person under these circumstances, it will be found to be *of a brighter color* than in Europe."

Speaking of the effects of the marshes in the neighborhood of some of the French stations, the same writer says:—"A European, or a native after a long residence in a temperate and healthy climate, arriving in these places, complains of a feeling of weight in the atmosphere, a something which resists the wish for exertion or exercise. Both his mind and body are

oppressed: his intellect is clouded; his spirits are low and desponding, and all pre-existing love of enterprise vanishes. If his residence be protracted, he has slight febrile movements, which come on regularly or irregularly, not sufficiently severe to prevent his usual avocations, but which, nevertheless, are sufficient to induce him to throw himself on a sofa, and require a powerful resolution to combat. In this manner his body may gradually accommodate itself to the climate, but he may consider himself fortunate if he escape so easily. In general, if he be guilty of any imprudences, he feels restless at night, and can only sleep during the cool of the morning. He feels out of sorts; has pains in the back and extremities, as if from fatigue; he complains of head-ache, sickness, and nausea; and, if these symptoms are not attended to immediately, suffers what is called an attack of *seasoning fever*."

It would seem that the long-sustained opinion of the salubrity of change to warmer climates for consumptive patients, is losing ground, even with the medical authorities. The following is from the "New York Times" of a recent date:—

> CLIMATE ON CONSUMPTION.—It appears that the medical faculty are beginning to question the opinion which has so long prevailed among medical men, that a change of climate is beneficial to persons suffering with the consumption. Sir James Clark, of England, has assailed the doctrine with considerable force, and a French physician named Carriere, has written against it; but the most vigorous opponent of it is Dr. Burgess, of whom a recent article in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, which we find condensed in a Philadelphia paper, gives an account.
>
> Dr. Burgess contends that climate has little or nothing to do with the cure of consumption, and that if it had, the curative effects would be produced through the skin, and not the lungs. That a warm climate is not in itself beneficial, he shows from the fact that the disease exists in all latitudes. In India and Africa, tropical climates, it is as frequent as in Europe or North America. At Malta, right in the heart of the genial Mediterranean, the army reports of England show that one-third of the deaths among the soldiers are by consumption. At Nice, a favorite resort of English invalids, especially those afflicted with lung complaints, there are more native-born persons die of consumption, than in any English town of equal population.

In Geneva, this disease is almost equally prevalent. In Florence, pneumonia, in the Doctor's words, "is marked by a suffocating character, and by a rapid progress towards its last stage." Naples, whose climate is the theme of so much praise by travellers, shows, in her hospitals, a mortality by consumption equal to one in two and one-third, whereas Paris, whose climate is so often pronounced villanous, the proportion is only one in three and one-quarter. In Madeira no local disease is more common than consumption. The *Journal* adds:—

"The next position of Dr. Burgess is, that as the beasts, birds and fishes of one region die in another, a change of climate cannot, unless exceptionably, be beneficial to an invalid. Notwithstanding the greater adaptability to climate which man preserves, the human constitution, it is plain, cannot endure changes of temperature without being more or less affected by it. The frosts and thaws of England have corroded, during the lapse of ages, the solid stone on it of which their cathedrals were built. In like manner a foreign climate gradually undermines the health. Dr. Burgess refers to the shattered constitutions of every officer who has served for any length of time in India; and to the well-known fact that children born of white parents in India are delicate as a class. The African, as we know, by the experience of its country, cannot endure severe and protracted cold. Canada is the common grave, as well as refuge of fugitive slaves. If such is the effect of changes of climate on persons in health, what must it be, argues Dr. Burgess, on invalids? And he fortifies this theoretical conclusion, by reminding the reader that it is not only the natives who die of consumption in Maderia, but that the grave-yards of that island are whitened by the head-stones of thousands who have gone there for health, and remained to die.

"Persons, not professional, imagine that the consumptive patient, by breathing a mild atmosphere, withdraws irritation, and leaves nature free to work a cure. But this notion Dr. Burgess characterizes as entirely erroneous. It is through the skin, not through the lungs, he contends, that a warm climate acts beneficially. When a sudden change in the temperature produces a chill, cutaneous perspiration is checked, the skin becomes dry and hard, and the lungs suffer from excessive action, for they are compelled now to eliminate what should have passed off through the skin. The doctor illustrates this by referring to the

> instantaneous relief, which is generally obtained through free perspiration, where difficult breathing, or oppression of the chest, have been occasioned by artificial heat. What is best for consumptive patients, therefore, is an equable climate. It is the fluctations, not the high temperature of a climate, that is injurious."

The statistics of the Isles of the Caribbean Sea, along which our steamer glided like a cruiser among the islands of Paradise—so enjoyable was every minute, with scenery and intoxicating balm of atmosphere—show bountiful provision by Nature, with bountiful drawbacks as well. The soil of St. Lucia and Martinique is stated to be "*twelve times more productive than that of Europe, half an acre being sufficient to supply the wants of a man!*" In the valleys and alluvial plains it consists of a deep vegetable mould, mixed with clay, and, in the more elevated positions, of red earth. The substratum is a mixture of sand and ground. The mere enumeration of the productions of St. Lucia, (which I find in an English report on the subject) makes one's mouth water:—

> "The staple productions are sugar, coffee and cocoa. Maize is the only corn grown; it is principally used for poultry. The principal spices, dyeing-stuffs and medicinal plants, are cinnamon, ginger, vanilla, cloves, pimento, nutmeg, indigo, logwood, cassia, aloes, castor-oil, quinquina, cactus, ipecacuanha, jalap, simaruba, sarsaparilla, and lignum vitæ. Yams, edoes, sweet potatoes, and cassada are produced in great abundance. The other leguminous plants and esculents are cabbages, cucumbers, peas, parsnips, beans, carrots, salads, radishes, egg-fruit, beet-root, celery, mountain-cabbage, sorrel, spinage, pumpkin, tomatoes, succory, ocros, and calalou.
>
> "All the delicious fruits of the West Indies and many valuable exotics grow to perfection in St. Lucia. The most attractive are the pine-apple, cocoa-nut, grape, melon, date, fig, sappodillo, orange, shaddock, lemon, lime, citron, guava, plantain, fig-bananna, mango, star-apple, pomegranate, plum, cherry, mamee, grenadilla, water-lemon, avocado-pear, chestnut, tamarind, bread-fruit, cashew, papaw, bread-nut, custard-apple, golden apple, sugar-apple, and soursop. The quarter of Soufriere in particular is justly famed for the great variety and exquisite savour of its fruits and

vegetables. Its pine-apple, muscadine grape, melon, and fig are considered of a superior quality to those produced in any part of the West Indies.

"St. Lucia is covered with forest trees of every form and of endless variety. They are, with few exceptions, indigenous to the soil. Many of them furnish valuable materials for building, and some, excellent specimens of fancy wood. The locust, or native mahogany, grows in great profusion. The other principal trees are the palm tree, trumpet tree, oak, white cedar, black cedar, bully tree, poplar, orange tree, cotton tree, sand-box, cinnamon tree, Indian fig tree, bamboo, sandal wood, cocoa-nut tree, satinwood, mango tree, tamarind tree, cashew tree, bread-fruit tree, calabash tree, citron tree, date tree, mamee tree, manchineel, soap tree, rosewood, avocado-pear tree, ironwood, guava tree, laurel, bois immortal, bois diable, sour-orange tree, willow, seaside grape, simaruba, lignum vitæ, acacia, logwood, bois riviere, boistan, acoma, grigris, angelin, gommier chatanier-grand' feuille, bois doux, bois violon, bois sept ans, bois pian, barabara, boit d' inde, bois flambeau, galba, mangrove, macata, rose mohaut, bois fourmi, fromager, balisier, latanier, paletuvier, and fougere.

"The domesticated animals are the same as those of Europe, whence they were originally imported. Of the horse, ass, ox, mule, cow, hog, sheep, goat, duck, cock, hen, turkey, cat, dog, rabbit, goose, pigeon, and guinea bird, there are various species, and they all thrive admirably. The woods are inhabited by the wild ox, musk rat, wild hog, iguana, and agouti, which afford excellent sport to the native *chasseurs*.

"The game is plentiful, and from August to November, the shooting season, the island is visited by a great variety as well as quantity of birds. Among them are the partridge, the plover, dove, wild pigeon, parrot, snipe, banana-bird, egret, thrush, humming-bird, water-hen, crabier, hawk, galding, ground-dove, goat-sucker, swallow, cuckoo, wild duck, booby, frigate, trembler, white-throat, nightingale, woodcock, curlew and yellow-legs. The *crabier* is a native of the mountains, and measures generally *five to six feet in height, and six feet from wing to wing*.

"The fish are abundant in variety:—the sprat, cutlass, eel, dolphin, anchovy, herring, sole, flounder, mullet, ray, mackerel, doctor, flying-fish, baraconta, captain, king-fish, parrot-fish and

> snapper. Crabs, cramfish, and lobsters, are in great abundance, and an amazing quantity of sea turtles, and delicious small oysters."

In contrast with these prodigalities, which make hunger or pauperism wholly unknown in these islands, it may be instructive to name the reptiles and insects:—

> "The yellow serpent is only found on the two islands of St. Lucia and Martinique. It measures between six and eight feet in length, and its bite is generally fatal. There are numerous other serpents, and they multiply amazingly—the female bringing forth from thirty to forty young ones at a birth. In most cases, the bite, if immediately attended to, may be effectually cured, and the negroes are very skilful in the application of the various specifics. The yellow serpent subsists on birds, insects, and poultry. He has an enemy, and a formidable match, in the *cribo*, or black snake, an animal having the appearance and shape of the serpent, without his noxious power. A careless observer would be liable to mistake one for the other. In every encounter the cribo is the aggressor, and generally comes off victorious. It counteracts the mischievous bite of the serpent by rolling itself on the plant called *Pied-poule*, and returns to the attack with renovated strength. When (as is frequently the case) the body of the serpent is larger and longer than that of the snake, the latter, retaining possession of its prey, feeds upon it for several days, gradually sucking in such portions of the carcase as may be sufficient for the wants of the moment. The cribo is sometimes found with the lower parts of the serpent protruding between his jaws.
>
> "The insects are the scorpion, woodslave, annulated lizard, locust, tarantula, centipede, blacksmith, wasp, mosquito, bat, cockroach, fly, chigre, beetle, fire-fly, spider, wood-ant, butterfly, bete-rouge, caterpillar, cricket and bee. Of these the scorpion and centipede are the most dangerous, the ant and wood-ant the most destructive, the mosquito the most troublesome, and the cockroach the most repulsive. The destruction caused by the ant is generally confined to plants and flowers; but the depredations of the wood-ant extend to the houses, furniture, and clothes of the inhabitants; and the mischief they occasion is no less incredible than the promptitude with which it is accomplished." (The same nuisances were described, not long since, by a writer in the Edinburgh

> Review, and rather humorously:—) “The bete-rouge lays the foundation of a tremendous ulcer. In a moment you are covered with ticks. Flies get entry into your mouth, into your eyes, into your nose—you eat flies, drink flies, and breathe flies. Lizards, cockroaches, and snakes get into your bed; ants eat up the books; scorpions sting you on the foot. Every thing bites, stings, or bruises; every second of your life you are wounded by some piece of animal life. An insect with eleven legs is swimming in your tea-cup—a nondescript with nine wings is struggling in the small beer, or a caterpillar with a dozen eyes in its belly is hastening over the bread and butter. All Nature is alive, and seems to be gathering her entomological hosts to eat you up, as you stand, out of your coat, waistcoat and breeches.”

The alarming increase in the frequency of earthquakes and hurricanes in the Antilles, threatens, ominously, the depopulation of their white inhabitants; and the ever-increasing power of the negroes, by their more rapid re-production and constitutional adaptation to the climate, will, in all probability, soon give over these beautiful islands to an exclusive black population. The negro is the better soldier in these latitudes. “Stout, agile, expert in the use of arms, he can also endure patiently the scorching sun and the torrents of rain of the tropical climate. He can live on the roots, or on what grows spontaneously or with little culture in the fields; and being bold and cunning, he is ready to oppose his enemies by force, or deceive them by stratagem.” Property, in that island of gardens, Santa Cruz, (I was authentically informed,) is, at present, almost valueless from these causes, and considered as quite unsaleable.

But, of the earthquakes which are now becoming the perpetual terror of the Caribbean Archipelago, the one in the Island of Gaudaloupe in 1843, was the most frightful on record. It took place in the forenoon; and, on the night preceding, there had been a grand ball, which, with the sitting of the Court of Assize, had drawn in the population from the country around, in great numbers. The town of Pointe-a-Petre, which was the scene of it, though not the seat of government, was, in fact, the capital of the Island, and for the elegance of its buildings, both public and private, and the extent of its mercantile relations, it was considered one of the most flourishing cities in the West Indies. A writer of great graphic power thus describes this awful calamity:—

“The Court of Assize had just assembled for the administration of human justice; the principal hotel was thronged with strangers and planters from the interior, discussing matters of business, or seated together at the table d’hote; and on the quays and along the streets, trade and traffic were proceeding with their wonted bustle and activity. At the fatal hour of twenty-five minutes to eleven, there was heard a noise, a hollow, rolling, rumbling noise, as of distant unbroken thunder; the sea dashed tumultuously on the beach; the earth heaved convulsively and opened up in several places, emitting dense columns of water. In an instant all the stone buildings had tumbled to the ground—a wide-spread heap of rubbish and ruins: and in that one instant—a dreadful and destructive instant—*five thousand human beings*, torn from their families and friends, were ushered into the abyss of eternity. But the work of desolation did not stop here; hardly had the earthquake ceased its ravages, when a fire broke out in several places at once—and such were the terror and confusion of the surviving inhabitants, that not a single house was rescued from the flames. In another instant the pile was lit up—the devouring element was sweeping over the immense holocaust; and a loud shriek from the living, and a long and lingering groan from the dying, had told the tale and sealed the doom of Pointe-a-Petre.

“The scenes of horror that followed, it would be difficult to describe. Fathers ran about in search of their children—children screamed aloud for their mothers—mothers for their husbands—husbands for their wives; and the wild and wailing multitude that wandered over the ruins, in search of a mother, a father, a husband, a child, a brother, a sister, or a friend, found nothing but headless trunks and severed limbs. Rich and poor, black and white, planter and peasant, master and slave—all lay confounded in one vast sepulchre—all were crushed, calcined or consumed—all hushed in the shadow of death or the silence of despair.

“The night that succeeded was a night of wretchedness and want—of sorrow and suffering—twelve thousand inhabitants, without food, without raiment, without money, without means, without house, or home, or hope, had sought refuge under a temporary tent, erected in the open air. Who can depict, who imagine, the visions of darkness and danger that haunted these widowed thousands, weeping over the burning remains of the departed city? Three days did the devouring element, fed in its

> progress by a forest of projecting timbers, continue with unabated fury; three nights did the funeral pile send forth its lurid glare—a beacon to mariners, pointing to where Pointe-a-Petre stood no more.
>
> "On the morning of the 9th, the task of exploration began; but, to enable the workmen to proceed without danger, it became necessary to batter down several walls and portions of houses, whose shattered impending fragments threatened destruction on all sides. In the space of one week, six thousand bodies were dug out of the ruins, fifteen hundred of which were still living, but mostly in a horrible state of mutilation. These were immediately removed to the town of Basse-terre, and placed under medical care; yet, sad to say, not more than one-third of them recovered. With regard to the dead bodies, an attempt was made, at first, to have them buried in the public cemetery; but, as the exploration proceeded, so many were found that it was resolved to have them sunk in the sea. At this melancholy task hundreds of boats were employed for several days. At length the inconvenience of the floating corpses, many of which were washed ashore, compelled the authorities to resort to the expedient of burning them in heaps—and this proceeding continued till the whole were dug out and consumed. Some of the soldiers employed in the task had gone mad, doubtless from the harrowing impression produced by the sight."

I must confess to have been considerably interested in the colored population of the Antilles. As they will, unquestionably, soon become the masters of these islands, curiosity as to their capabilities of progress was natural enough; but, besides this, there is something in the look, mien, countenance and manners of the negroes there, which was the "shadow cast before the coming event." I took many notes of peculiarities that struck me, from time to time, but it would require much discriminating labor to make their contradictory chronicles read plausibly or intelligibly. In a volume kindly given me by the English Consul at Martinique, (a gentleman whose courteous dignity and intelligence eminently adorn his office) I found some most valuable and curious information on this subject. The book, though printed in London, is one not likely to have been met with, by the American reader. Its author, Henry Breen, was thirteen years a resident in the island a few miles from Martinique, (St. Lucia,) and he writes most graphically and

understandingly of the people of these latitudes. I do not think I can, in any way, throw more light on the character and grade of negro habits and manners here, than by quoting a portion of his account of them:—

> The Negro language is a jargon formed from the French, and composed of words, or rather sounds, adapted to the organs of speech in the black population. As a *patois* it is even more unintelligible than that spoken by the Negroes in the English Colonies. Its distinguishing feature consists in the suppression of the letter "*r*" in almost every word in which it should be used, and the addition of "*ki's*" and "*ka's*" to assist in the formation of the tenses. It is, in short, the French language, stripped of its manly and dignified ornaments, and travestied for the accommodation of children and toothless old women. I regret to add that it has now almost entirely superseded the use of the beautiful French language, even in some of the highest circles of colonial society. The prevalence of this jargon is one of the many disadvantages resulting from a want of educational institutions. It is the refuge of ignorance, and the less you know of French, the greater aptitude you have for talking Negro; a child three years old will speak it more fluently than a man of thirty. I can say for myself that, although possessing an extensive knowledge of the French language, acquired during a sojourn of five years in France, I have failed in obtaining any thing like an adequate notion of this gibberish, during a residence of nearly fifteen years in St. Lucia and Martinique. Having remarked that I was laughed at by the Negroes whenever I attempted to use it in conversation, I have adopted the plan of addressing them in my best French—and now the laugh is all on my side. Nothing can be more amusing than the faces they put on to convince you that they are unable to understand French. "*Pas tan*" (*Je n'entends pas*) is the reply to every observation; but the truth is, they often pretend ignorance in order to allure you into their own soft, silly dialect, whose accents are always flattering to their ears, however imperfectly it may be spoken.
>
> Nor is this corruption of the language confined to mere words: it also extends to proper names; so much so, indeed, that there are few persons in the island that are not designated by any name but their own. Some have the *sobriquets* of *Moncoq*, *Montout*, *Fanfan*, *Laguerre*. Others have their names mollified by means of certain

dulcet, endearing terminations: thus, Anne becomes *Annzie*, Catherine *Catiche*, Besson *Bessonnette*: whilst the greater number, dropping altogether the names given them at the baptismal font, have adopted others of more modern vogue. Jean Baptiste is supplanted by *Nelson*; Francois by *Francis*; Cyprien by *Cammille*; and what is still more preposterous, not only are the christian names altered in this way, but the patronymics of many are entirely suppressed. M. Jean Marie Beauregard considers *Jean Marie* too vulgar, and adopts the name of Alfred, and his friends consider *Beauregard* too long, and omit it altogether in their dealings with him. By this process M. Jean Marie Beauregard is metamorphosed into plain M. *Alfred*; and his wife, if any he have, goes by the name of *Madame Alfred*. This confusion of names would be merely ludicrous, if it were not pregnant with mischief to the community. From being first sanctioned by intercourse of every-day life and introduced into family circles, the alterations and substitutions had gradually crept into the more serious relations of trade and litigation; so that, when the Commissioners of Compensation were about to adjudicate upon the claims and counter-claims from St. Lucia, scarcely a single individual was found to have invariably preserved his *proper* name in the different documents submitted on his behalf. Difficulty and delay were the result; and many persons only succeeded in establishing their identity and securing their fortunes, by obtaining affidavits, certificates of baptism, and notarial attestations, at considerable expense, from various parts of the world.

The higher class of Creoles are distinguished for their courteous manner and cordial hospitality. Although few amongst them ever attain any eminence in literary or scientific pursuits, they are nevertheless generally intelligent and well-informed. The practice of duelling, so common in their "days of chivalry," has now almost totally disappeared. Impelled by a mistaken or exaggerated principle of honor, they were wont to seek reparation in single combat for the most trivial injuries—nor were they deterred from such exhibitions by the stringent laws of Louis XIV., then, as now, in force in St. Lucia. In those days no scion of colonial aristocracy was deemed qualified to enter on the business of life, until, in the phraseology of their code of honor, he had given proof in a duel of his daring and dexterity. To have shot his man and debauched his friend's wife, were the surest

recommendations to honor and distinction—without these he was held incompetent to assume the solemn duties of a husband and a father; without these he was exposed to the taunts and trials, the sneers and slander of the self-styled brave. Now-a-days, however, this disgraceful practice is only resorted to in extreme cases. The example of our neighbours of Martinique, by whom the fashion of duelling was once regarded as the pink of gallantry, and the "ne plus ultra" of social refinement, contributed in no small degree to promote a bellicose disposition amongst our friends in St. Lucia; and the abatement of the evil in the "Faubourg St. Germain du Golf du Mexique," has produced a kindred feeling and corresponding results in the once sister Colony of St. Lucia.

The creole women are a race apart; and, as far as I am able to judge, are not inferior to those of any country for elegance of form, gracefulness of carriage, suavity of temper, and buoyancy of disposition. To them may be truly applied Lord Byron's description of the Italian woman:—

> "Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
> Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies."

Dancing, with its train of airy and gaysome evolutions, is the idol passion of the fair creole; and in no place or position do her delicate beauty and exquisite loveliness appear to greater advantage than amidst the attractions and superficial excitement of the ball-room. Even the dance itself is not with her what it is in the more extended circles of European society—a thing of attitudes and gestures—a round of skimming and shuffling. Here it is all gravity and decorum—there nothing but flutter and frivolity. In France it is the wild creation of fashionable extravagance; between the tropics a chastened and rational exercise, which is often carried to the utmost extent, without infringing any of the decencies of life.

Amongst the lower orders the dance exercises a still greater influence. Not satisfied with aping those above them in finery and dress, the Negroes carry their love of dancing to the most extravagant pitch—much too extravagant perhaps for their means. True, the evil has its bright side in the encouragement of trade and the promotion of a spirit of emulation and industry amongst the labouring classes; but it must greatly impair their physical

energies, if it does not ultimately mar their independence. The best that can be said of it is, that it is inherent in, and common to, all colonial populations of French origin—and that it is not to be put down either by preaching or persecution. The spoiled children of artificial enjoyment, French Negroes, like their betters, will have their feasts and festivals, their dressing and dancing. Let us hope that these recreations may long continue to preserve their primæval character of innocence and simplicity—nor, by contact with fashion and false refinement, become the vehicles of corruption and crime.

In order to gratify their propensity for dancing, the Negroes have formed themselves into two divisions, or “societies,” under the somewhat fantastic style of “Roses” and “Marguerites.”[10] These “societies” exist by immemorial usage in the French colonies, and are still to be found in more or less activity in St. Lucia, Dominica, and Trinidad. The history of the Antilles is involved in such total obscurity in all that concerns the black population, that it would be impossible at the present time to trace the origin of the Roses and Marguerites. It appears that at one period they were invested with a political character; and their occasional allusions to English and French, Republicans and Bonapartists would seem to confirm this impression. Their connection with politics must have ceased at the termination of the struggle between England and France, from which period their rivalry has been confined to dancing and other diversions.

[10] The Marguerites are also sometimes called “Wadeloes.”

These *societies*, which had remained almost in abeyance during the latter days of slavery, have been revived within the last five years with unusual *éclat* and solemnity. Although few persons, besides the labouring classes and domestic servants, take any active part in their proceedings, there is scarcely an individual in the island, from the Governor downwards, who is not enrolled amongst the partisans of one coterie or the other. The Roses are patronized by Saint Rose, and the flower of that name is their cherished emblem. The Marguerites are in the holy keeping of Saint Marguerite, and the *Marguerite*, or bachelor’s button, is the flower they delight to honour. Each society has three kings and three queens, who are chosen by the suffrages of the members. The first, or senior, king and queen only make their appearance on solemn occasions, such as the anniversary of their coronation or

the fete of the patron saint of the society: on all other emergencies they are represented by the kings and queens elect, who exercise a sort of vice-regal authority. The most important personage next to the sovereign is the *chanterelle*, or female singer, upon whom devolves the task of composing their *Belairs*,[11] and of reciting them at their public dances. Each society has a house hired in Castries, in which it holds its periodical meetings. Here the woman, whose attendance is much more regular than that of the men, assemble in the evening to rehearse some favourite "belair" for their next dance, or to receive a *lecture* from the king, who may be seen at one end of the room, pacing up and down with an air of dignity and importance suited to his station. If any member has been guilty of improper conduct since their last meeting, the king takes occasion to advert to it in terms of censure, dwelling with peculiar emphasis upon the superior decorum observed by the rival society. Gross misconduct is punished by expulsion from their ranks.

[11] The *Belair* is a sort of pastoral in blank verse, adapted to a peculiar tune or air. Many of these airs are of a plaintive and melancholy character, and some are exquisitely melodious.

The "belairs" turn generally on the praises of the respective societies; the comparative value of the Rose and the Marguerite; the good qualities, both physical and mental, of individual members; the follies and foibles of the opposite party, and of persons supposed to be connected with or favourable to them. Nothing can surpass the poetical fecundity of the chanterelles: almost every week produces a fresh effusion and a new belair. Some, indeed, are of a higher order than one would be entitled to look for from untutored Negroes: and it is but natural to suppose that they are assisted in these by their friends among the educated classes. Of this description are the following stanzas in praise of the Roses, which appeared in print in 1840:—

LES ROSES.

Venez, amis; venez, dansons;
De Sainte Rose c'est la fete:
Disons pour elle nos chansons,
Et que chacun de nous repète:
Chantons, amis; rions, dansons.

C'est aujourd'hui jour d'allégresse;
Nargue des soucis, des chagrins;
A nous le plaisir et l'irresse,
A nous les vifs et gais refrains.

Venez, &c.

Des fleurs la *Rose* est la plus belle:
"Par mon parfum, par mes couleurs,
"Par mon éclat, je suis, dit-elle,
"Oui, je suis la reine des fleurs!"

Venez, &c.

Sur sa tige trist et flétrie
La *Marguerite* nait, périt;
Mais la Rose, toujours fleurie,
Renait toujours et reverdit

Venez, &c.

La Rose est la reine du monde,
Elle est aussi celle des amours!
Qu' à nos chansons chacun réponde
Vive la Rose pour toujours!

Venez, &c.

The occasions of festivity and dancing are ushered in with universal demonstrations of gaiety and joyousness. After assisting at a solemn service commemorative of the day, the Messieurs and Dames, decked out in their most costly dresses, proceed in groups to visit their friends amongst the higher classes, distributing cakes and flowers in honour of the fete. The costume of the men differs little from that commonly worn by gentlemen in England or France. The silk or beaver hat, the cloth coat, the swelled cravat, the sleek trowsers, the tasseled cane—in short, the whole *tournure*

and turn-out of the male exquisites, would do honour to Bond-street or the Palais Royal. But the dress of the women is quite another affair: although in many instances the *Jupe*[12] has given way to the regular English gown; yet, on fete days, the former re-asserts its preponderance, as being more in harmony with the general costume. First you have the head-dress set off by the varied and brilliant colours of the Madras handkerchief, erected into a pyramid, a cone, or a castle, according to the fancy of the wearer, and spangled over with costly jewels; next a huge pair of ear-rings of massive gold; then several gold and coral necklaces, tastefully thrown over the dark shoulders; then the embroidered bodice trimmed with gold and silver tinsel; and lastly, the striped jupe of silk or satin, unfolding its bright tints and broad train to the breeze. Add to these a profusion of bracelets and bouquets, of *foulards* and favours, and you will have a faint impression of this bizarre yet brilliant, grotesque but gorgeous costume. Thus travestied the dancers proceed at sunset to the place appointed for the *bamboula*.[13] A circle is formed in the centre of some square or grass-plot. On one side appear four or five Negroes, quite naked down to the waist, and seated on their *tamtams*.[14] These, together with two or three timbrels, compose the orchestra. Flags and banners, richly emblazoned upon a red or blue ground, and bearing characteristic legends in gilt letters, are seen fluttering in the air: and, as the groups of dancers advance in all directions, the darkness of the night disappears before the blaze of a thousand flambeaux. Now the *chanterelle*, placing herself in front of the orchestra, gives the signal with a flourish of her castanet: she then repeats a verse of the belair; the dancers take up the *refrain*; the tamtams and timbrels strike in unison; and the scene is enlivened by a succession of songs and dances, to the delight and amusement of the assembled multitude.

[12] The *Jupe* is a species of gown worn by the Negresses and some of the coloured women in the French Antilles. Having neither sleeves nor bodice, it presents the exact dimensions of a petticoat—hence the name.

[13] The Negro dances are of two kinds—the ball and the *bamboula*. When conducted within doors it is always called a ball—when "sub dio" a bamboula. The use of them varies according to the state of the weather; but there is a marked predilection for the out-door recreation.

[14] The *tamtam* is a small barrel, covered at one end with a strong skin. To this, placed between his legs, the Negro applies the open hand and fingers, beating time to the belair with the most astonishing precision.

To a superficial observer these exhibitions present somewhat of a profane and even heathenish appearance. In this light they were doubtless regarded by a reverend gentleman, who visited St. Lucia in October 1842, and on witnessing the dance exclaimed

with a sapient shake of the head: “Juggernath! Juggernath!” But the truth is, there is no Juggernath at all in the matter; and the Christian moralist, who takes the trouble to examine and inquire, will find less to censure in these primeval though fantastic diversions, than in the more civilised seductions of the quadrille, the galopade, and the waltz.

The whole labouring population being divided into Roses and Marguerites, it follows that, upon the good understanding which subsists between them, must mainly depend the peace and prosperity of the Colony. This good understanding, however, is liable to be disturbed by the intrigues of interested partisans, on the one hand, and officious, would-be patrons on the other: and then their rivalry, habitually characterised by the most friendly relations, will assume all the acerbity of a political feud. Thus, in 1840, an attempt was made by an unscrupulous planter to set one society in opposition to the other, by pandering to the worst passions of undisciplined humanity, and exciting their emulation beyond its legitimate sphere. The object was to allure the labourers to his estates and get them to work on his own terms: for this purpose he took one of the societies under his special protection; had himself elected their king; purchased superb dresses for the queens; and got up splendid fetes for their entertainment. Attracted by these dazzling frivolities hundreds of the labourers hastened to range themselves under the banner of the “white king.” For some time all went on well, and the planter had every cause to rejoice in the success of his scheme; but when the day of reckoning came, and the labourers discovered that all their wages had been frittered away in gilded extravagance, the prestige of the white king’s popularity speedily vanished, and his estates were deserted.

Another interruption of the general harmony occurred in September 1841. At the instigation of two or three individuals, in the assumed character of Patrons of the Roses, these foolish people procured a blue flag (the colour peculiar to the Marguerites) and paraded it in derision through the streets. In the evening they gave a *bamboula*, and the flag having been again exhibited, a party of the Marguerites rushed into the ring, seized the flag, and were carrying it off in triumph, when the Attorney-General, who happened to be present, ran forward, and by threats of vengeance succeeded in wresting it from the discomfited

Marguerites, amidst the *vivats* and vociferations of the Roses. The pretext for this proceeding was the prevention of a breach of the peace; but if such had really been the object, a more obvious and efficacious means would have been, to have interdicted in the first instance, the insulting display of the rival flag. In fact, the course pursued, instead of allaying the popular excitement, only fanned it into a flame; for when the dance was concluded, and the Roses were returning to their houses, they were assaulted by a numerous body of the Marguerites. A general melee ensued, in which the chief combatants were the women, and their chief weapons the flambeaux which they had brought away from the dance; and these they used with such indiscriminate fury against their opponents, that the respectable inhabitants were compelled to interfere to prevent the town from becoming a prey to the flames.

Amongst the numerous peculiarities of the Negro character, as it is moulded or modified by French society, is their constant aping of their superiors in rank. During slavery the most venial offence, the most innocent familiarity was regarded as an "insolence;" and all the year round the din of "Je vous trouve bien insolent" resounded in the Negro's ear. From long habit this expression has now become a bye-word with the lower orders: it is, in fact, the staple of their abuse of each other, and most opprobrious epithet in their Billingsgate vocabulary. *Canaille* is deemed too vulgar, and *negraillie* too personal; while "*in-so-lent*" carries with it a pungency and privilege, which receive added zest from the recollections of the past.

But if to be deemed *insolent* is the lowest depth of degradation, to be held *respectable* is the highest step in the ladder of social distinctions. From Marigot to Mabouya, from Cape Maynard to the Mole-a-chiques, respectability is the aim and end of every pursuit. With the baker in his shop, as with the butcher in his stall, it is the one thing needful—the corner-stone of social existence; and though it may not, like charity, cover a multitude of sins, it will screen a vast amount of meanness and misery. Nothing can be more amusing than to observe the talismanic effect of this word upon the lower orders: even the common street-criers take advantage of it in the disposal of their wares. Some time ago, a female servant, being commissioned to sell a quantity of biscuits of an inferior quality, hawked them about to the cry of "Mi biscuits pour les dames respectables." As she passed along the

street the conceited recommendation did not fail to attract the attention of those, for whom it was thrown out. The hawker was stopped at every door, and so great was the anxiety of the Negresses to test the quality of her biscuits as a patent of respectability, that before she reached the end of the street, she had disburdened herself of the contents of her tray.

A still more striking illustration of the charm of respectability is presented in the following circumstances, which occurred in August 1842. A dispute had arisen between the queen of the Roses and a colored woman—a warm advocate for the Marguerites. During the altercation the parties came to blows, and the queen being a strong, lusty woman, inflicted a pair of black eyes upon her antagonist. The matter soon reached the ears of the Attorney-General, and both combatants were brought up before Chief Justice Reddie in the Court of Police. As the quarrel had grown out of the previous dispute about the blue flag, the Court House was crowded to suffocation by the friends and supporters of the accused—each party anxiously expecting a verdict against its antagonist. This feature of the case did not escape the penetration of the Judge, who, resolving not to give either any cause of triumph, dismissed them both with a severe admonition, expressing his surprise that two such "respectable demoiselles" should have so far forgotten what was due to themselves, as to have assaulted each other in the public streets. The word "respectable" shot like electricity through the audience. A thrill of exultation seized every breast; the Marguerite looked at the Rose; the Rose smiled at the Marguerite; and as they retired from the Court, pleased with themselves and proud at the Judge, a murmur of applause ran from mouth to mouth. Since that period nothing but harmony has prevailed between the rival societies; and it would now require no small amount of provocation to draw them down from the niche of respectability in which they are enshrined.

The Negro's pretensions to respectability are founded more upon the contrast between himself and the European laborer, than upon any positive good qualities he can lay claim to. In some points there is a decided superiority on his side. His person and his hut, apart from the influence of climate, are cleaner than those of the white peasant; his holiday dress more stylish, and his gait and attitudes less clumsy and clownish: but he is surpassed by the white man in the more solid advantages of industry and

perseverance. A Negro espies his fellow at the end of the street, and rather than join him in a tete-a-tete, he will carry on a conversation with him for several hours at the top of his voice, to the unspeakable annoyance, perhaps the scandal, of all those who may occupy the intermediate houses. Should the wind blow off his hat and warn him to depart, he will continue the conversation and let some one else pick it up for him—or if he condescend to notice the occurrence, he turns round with an air of offended dignity, put his arms a-kimbo, takes a quiet look at the hat as it rolls along, shrugs up his left shoulder, and walks leisurely after it until it meets with some natural obstruction.

The general character of the St. Lucia Negro, physical, moral, and social, may be summed up in a few words. His person is well-proportioned, his movements are brisk, his carriage easy, without stiffness or swagger. His disposition is uncommonly gay and good-humored—he is always singing or whistling when compatible with his actual occupation. He is submissive, but never obsequious; and though born and bred in slavery, there is not a trace of servility in the outward man. Unlike the European peasant, who seldom presents himself before a clean coat without a feeling of crawling obsequiousness and degradation, the St. Lucia Negro is polite to a point; he can touch his hat to anyone, but he will not uncover himself in the open air, even for the Governor of the Colony. He is docile, intelligent and sober—active but not laborious—superstitious but not religious—addicted to thieving without being a rogue—averse to matrimony, yet devoted to several wives; and though faithful to neither, he can scarcely be deemed debauched. His friendship is sincere, his gratitude unbounded, and his generosity to all about him only surpassed by his affectionate attachment to his children. In him the undisciplined character of the African is tempered by the accident of his birth.—He is, in short, a compound of savageness and civilization—the rude production of the desert, transplanted to a more genial soil, and polished off externally by the decencies and humanizing contact of English and French society; but without that culture in religion and education, which alone can impart either weight or moral dignity to the social man.

APPENDIX.

The coronation of the negro Soulouque, alluded to in Letter 28, took place a few days after, but I have looked in vain at the English and American journals for any definite description of the ceremony. I have a document which this chance omission of news may render interesting—a printed *Programme of the Ceremonial*, which was furnished only to official persons on the island. It is in French, and rather tediously minute—but the following translation I think will interest the public, as giving a key to the character of this negro Court and its Emperor. The high sounding titles of the royal black family, and the distinguished darkies of the nobility will be amusing—especially if the coronation be looked at as an almost simultaneous caricature of the impending coronation and revival of titles in France. To any one who has seen the rags and rubbishy arms and uniformity of the troops whose doings are thus pompously set forth, this programme will be indeed most ludicrous. Thus it runs:—

LIBERTY. INDEPENDENCE.

EMPIRE OF HAYTI.

(PROGRAMME.)

The ceremonies for the coronation of their Majesties are to take place the evening of the 11th of next April. At sunset, a salute of a hundred cannon shall be discharged from the forts, and the entire city shall be illuminated.

The next day, at three o'clock in the morning, the military Deputations, from different ports of the Empire, summoned to the ceremony, shall assemble at the garrison upon the Champ-de-Mars.

The Emperor himself will assign to the Imperial Guard the position which it shall occupy at the Champ-de-Mars.

At four o’clock, the Members of the Legislative Council shall repair to their accustomed place of meeting, the Members of the Judicial and Municipal Departments shall assemble at the Palace of Justice, from whence, at half-past four o’clock, they shall proceed to the Champ-de-Mars, where they shall be received, together with the Consuls from Foreign Powers, by the Grand Master and the Master of Ceremonies, and conducted to the places assigned to them.

These Departments shall be escorted by a piquet of sixteen Cavalry and a piquet of forty-eight Infantry.

At five o’clock, the Vicar General and Grand Almoner shall leave his Palace and proceed to the Champ-de-Mars. The march of his *cortege* shall be accompanied by a rear and vanguard of a piquet of Cavalry, and by twelve Grenadiers commanded by an officer.

The Clergy shall assemble at the church previous to the Vicar General.

The Almoner of her Majesty, the Empress shall present the “aspersior” to the Vicar, with which he shall sprinkle with holy water the Clergy, the Magistracy and the people. From there he shall penetrate into the sanctuary conducted under a canopy.

At six o’clock, their Imperial Majesties shall leave the Palace to proceed to the Champ-de-Mars, amid the ringing of bells, martial music and a military salute. The march of the Imperial *cortege* shall be led by the King at arms. In advance shall proceed on foot the Heralds at Arms, six abreast; the Hussars the same.

The Chevaliers on foot, six abreast; the Barons the same; Counts the same; all the Dukes abreast, and on foot.

The three Ministers and the Chancellor abreast and on foot.

The Ministers of the Interior and of Agriculture to the right; next, the Ministers of War and of the Navy, the Ministers of Finance and of Commerce, and the Chancellor.

The Princes of the Imperial family abreast and on foot.

Next, the Prince Jean-Joseph alone and on foot.

Two platoons of Light Horse, six abreast, each platoon commanded by an officer.

A detachment of two platoons of six officers of the Light Guards abreast, on horseback, each platoon commanded by a superior officer.

A detachment of two platoons of Grenadiers, mounted, six abreast, each platoon commanded by an officer.

A detachment of two platoons of six officers of Infantry abreast, mounted, each platoon commanded by a superior officer.

A detachment of six Aides-de-Camp to the Emperor, on horseback, commanded by an officer, shall go before the carriage of his Majesty.

The carriage of the Emperor, drawn by eight horses, in which will be the Emperor, the Empress and the Princess Olive. The pages shall ride before and behind the carriage of their Majesties; beside the front wheels, on the right, a Colonel on horseback; on the left, a Colonel of the Light Guards; beside the hind wheels, on the right, the Master of the Horse to his Majesty; on the left, the Grand Equery to the Empress.

The carriage of the Imperial Princesses Celia and Olivette, shall be drawn by six horses; a Lieutenant-Colonel shall ride beside each wheel.

A piquet of six Aides to the Emperor, all six riding abreast, commanded by a superior officer.

Two platoons of Light Horse mounted, six abreast, each platoon commanded by an officer.

Next shall come the carriages of members of the Imperial family: those of the Ladies of Honour; of the Tire-Women to the Empress; those of Princesses, Duchesses, Countesses, Baronesses and Gentry, each according to his rank.

The *cortege* shall be closed by a piquet of eight platoons of Cavalry, commanded by a Colonel of the corps at the head, and an officer of Cavalry in the centre of each platoon.

Upon the arrival of the *cortege* at the Champ-de-Mars, the Heralds-at-Arms and the Hussars shall divide to the right and to the left, and shall remain at the entrance of the church to await the *cortege* from the Imperial tent.

The Chevaliers, Barons, Counts and Dukes, who shall not carry any of the insignia of the Emperor, shall repair immediately to the places assigned to them behind the Grand Throne; in the same manner the Baronesses, Ladies, etc., etc.; they shall remain standing, until permission to sit shall be given. Near the Imperial tent shall remain only the Grand Dignitaries who carry the insignia of their Majesties, the Ladies of Honour and the Ladies of the Robes, etc.

The first platoon of Light Horse shall wheel about to the right, place themselves in battle array beside the wings of the church, and shall remain there facing the Imperial tent.

The second platoon of Light Horse shall wheel to the left, placing themselves in battle array, beside the wing of the church, and shall remain there also, fronting the Imperial tent.

The first platoon of officers of the Light Horse shall pass to the right, form a line before the grand door of the church, and shall leave place for the platoon of Aides-de-Camp to stand in front of it.

The second platoon of officers of the Light Horse shall pass to the left, form a line before the great door of the church, leaving place, also, for a platoon of Aides-de-Camp.

The first platoon of Mounted Grenadiers shall wheel about to the right, place themselves in battle array beside the wing of the church, behind the Light Horse, remaining there, also fronting the Imperial tent.

The second platoon shall wheel to the left, place themselves in battle array beside the wing of the church, behind the Light Horse, also fronting the tent.

The first platoon of officers of the grenadiers shall pass to the right, form a line before the great door of the church, behind the platoon of officers of the Light Horse, leaving place for the platoon of Aides-de-Camp.

The second platoon shall pass to the left, in the same manner.

The first platoon of Light Infantry shall wheel about to the right, shall draw up in battle array after the Grenadiers, fronting the tent.

The second shall wheel to the left, and draw up in the same manner.

The first platoon of officers of the Light Infantry shall pass to the right, form a line after the platoon of officers of the Grenadiers.

The second platoon shall pass to the left, and draw up in the same manner.

The first platoon of Aides-de-Camp shall pass rapidly to the right, in front of the Light Horse.

The carriages of their Majesties arriving in front of the imperial tent shall stop.

The pages shall dismount and form a line to the right and to the left of the tent.

The officers beside each wheel shall dismount. The Grand Equery shall open the door, and give his hand to the Emperor, shall aid him to descend from his carriage, and shall conduct him to the door of the tent.

The Colonel of the Light Horse shall give his hand to her Imperial Highness, Madame Olive, and conduct her in the same manner.

The carriage of the Emperor shall turn quickly to the left, and give place to the carriage of the Princesses Celia and Olivette. The four Lieutenant-Colonels who are at the wheels shall dismount, open the door, assist the Princesses to alight, and lead them to the door of the tent; then the carriage of the Princesses shall follow that of the Emperor.

The platoon of six Aides-de-Camp, who have followed the carriage of the Princesses shall divide—the half turning to the right, the other half to the left, and draw up after the Aides-de-Camp already placed.

The second platoon of Light Infantry shall wheel to the right and to the left, as did the Light Horse, and draw up to front of the Imperial tent.

Next shall come the carriages of the Ladies of the Imperial family, as well as those of the Ladies of Honour, the Ladies of the Robes, etc.

The eight platoons of Cavalry, on arriving at Champ-de-Mars, shall divide to the right and to the left, and close the circle of Champ-de-Mars, at the rear of the tent.

Their Majesties, after being robed in the Imperial mantle, shall depart with their *cortege*, to go on foot to the nave of the church. In the march from the tent to the nave, the Imperial *cortege* shall observe the following order, with four paces between each group.

The Hussars, four abreast.

The Heralds-at-Arms, four abreast, the King-at-Arms at the head.

The Pages, six abreast.

The Aides and Masters of Ceremonies.

The Grand Master of Ceremonies.

Monsieur le Baron de Duval shall bear the cushion intended to receive the ring of the Empress, which he shall present to her Majesty before the ceremony; on his left, Mon. le Baron de Labonte, on his right, Mon. le Baron de Pernier.

Mon. le Baron Hilaire de Jean Pierre, carrying the basket to receive the mantle of the Empress, shall have on his left, Mon. le Baron de Leveille, on his right, Mon. le Chevalier de Capoix.

Mon. le Duc de Cayes, bearing upon a cushion the Crown of the Empress, shall have upon his left, Mons. le Compte de Cap Rouge, upon his right, Mons. le Compte de Porte Margot. The Empress with the Imperial mantle, but without the ring and without the crown.

Their Imperial Highnesses Mesdames the Princesses Olive, Olivette, and Celia, shall hold up the mantle of her Majesty. Mons. le Baron d'Alerte, gentleman of honour, Mons. le Baron de Lassere, first Equery, and Mons. le Comtede Carrefour, first Chamberlain of the Empress, shall march; the two first at her right, the latter at her left, a little behind Mesdame the Princess Olive; the mantle of each Princess shall be held up by an officer of her household, the Chevalier de Sampeur, Leander de Denis, and Myrtel de Latortue. The Ladies of Honour at the right, abreast, the Ladies in Waiting at the left, abreast.

Messieurs les Ducs de Grande-Bois and de Leogane shall carry the Imperial flag; at their right the Count de Camp-Coq, at their left, Mons. Count Palmiste-Tempe.

Mons. le Duke de Mirebalais shall bear the collar of the Emperor; on his right, the Duke de Gonaives, on his left, the Duke de Plaisance.

Mons. the Duke de St. Marc, bearing the ring of his Majesty, shall have upon his right, Mons. the Duke de la Grand-Anse, upon his left, Mons. the Duke de l'Anse-a-Veau.

Mons. the Duke de la Table, bearing the Imperial globe, shall have upon his right, Mons. the Duke de Caracol, upon his left, Mons. the Duke de la Petite-Riviere.

Mons. the Duke du Trou, bearing the basket intended to receive the mantle of the Emperor, shall have upon his right, Mons. the Duke de la Vega, upon his left, Mons. the Duke de Bellevue.

The Emperor, bearing in his hands the sceptre and the *main de justice*, the crown upon his head.

Their Imperial highnesses, the Princes Jean Joseph and Alexander de Jean-Joseph, holding up the mantle of the Emperor.

The Grand Equery, the Duke de Limonade, the Chief of the Aides-de-Camp, the Grand Marechal of the Palace, the Ambassadors, the Chancellor, all four abreast.

The Ministers of the interior and Agriculture.

The Ministers of War and of the Navy.

The Ministers of Finance and of Commerce.

The Chancellor.

At the entrance of their Majesties into the nave of the Church, another salute of Artillery shall be fired.

Holy water shall be presented to the Empress by her Almoner, and to the Emperor by Mons. the Vicar General; they shall compliment their Majesties, and conduct them under a canopy, supported by the Clergy, to the place they are to occupy in the chancel, where they shall be perfumed.

Each of the Clergy who accompanied their Majesties to the door, shall proceed, in inverse order, and turn into the chancel, where he shall take his place.

From the entrance of their Majesties into the church until they arrive at the little throne, the choir of their Majesties' chapel and of the band of the Imperial Guard shall perform a grand triumphal march.

The order of procession from the door of the church to the chancel shall be the same; but the Ministers and grand Military Officers, who follow the Emperor, shall turn to the left of the throne, near which they shall arrange themselves upon the steps beyond the Senators, the first to the right, the second to the left.

Arriving at the entrance to the chancel, the Hussars, the Heralds-at-Arms and the Pages shall stop and form a line to the right and to the left in the nave.

When the Imperial *cortege* shall be in the chancel, the part which is in the nave shall arrange themselves in the inverse order of their former march, that they may find themselves placed in the proper order to accompany their Majesties, when they go to the grand throne.

The remainder of the *cortege* shall continue its march from the door of the chancel to the steps of the sanctuary, except the Aides-de-Camp, who shall form a line on entering the chancel to the right and to the left.

Before reaching these steps, the Grand Officers who precede the Empress shall range themselves on the left; those who precede the Emperor, on the right, that their Majesties may pass into the sanctuary.

The Emperor and Empress shall seat themselves upon the chairs which shall be prepared in the sanctuary under the canopy.

The places around the throne of their Majesties shall be occupied as follows:—

Behind the Emperor, the Princes de Jean-Joseph and Alexander de Jean-Joseph.

Behind the Princes, the Duke de Limonade, the grand *Marechal* of the Palace; the two Grand Officers bearing the ring

and the collar of the Emperor, and he who bears the globe.

To the right of the Princes, before them, and obliquely from them, shall stand the Grand Chamberlain and the Grand Equery.

Behind them, two Chamberlains.

Behind the Empress, the Princesses Imperial; behind the Princesses, the Ladies of the Court.

To the left of the Princesses, before and obliquely from them, the Ladies of Honour and the Ladies in Waiting; behind them, the First Equery, the First Chamberlain, and the Gentlemen of Honor to the Empress.

The Grand Master and Master of Ceremonies to the right, near the altar.

The Assistants of the Ceremony upon the right and left, at the entrance to the sanctuary.

Their Majesties being thus placed, at the moment when they enter the chancel, the Vicar General shall go to the altar, and shall commence the *Veni Creator*.

The Clergy shall remain kneeling during the first stanza of this hymn, which shall be concluded by the following stanza and prayer:—

Emitte spiritus, etc. *Et renovabis*, etc.

OREMUS.

Deus qui corda fidelium, etc.

During this hymn, the Emperor and Empress shall pray for a moment upon their prie-dieu, and rise.

The Chancellor, passing to the right of the Emperor, shall salute successively the altar and His Majesty, and shall approach so near that the Emperor may hand to him the *main de justice*, and without turning his back upon the altar or His Majesty, shall fall back to the right, and in front of the Grand Chamberlain.

The Grand *Marechal* of the Palace shall follow in the same manner; shall receive the sceptre, and shall take his place to the left, and below the Grand Chancellor, between him and the Grand Chamberlain.

Next, the Grand Chamberlain shall take the crown, hand it to the Duke de Los Puertos, who shall place himself at the right of the Chancellor.

The Grand Officer who is to bear the grand collar, shall approach the Grand Chamberlain, who shall take the collar and hand it to him.

The Grand Chamberlain and the Grand Equery shall next approach and detach the mantle, place it upon their baskets, and shall resume their places.

The Duke de Bany shall approach in the same manner, the Emperor shall draw his sword and hand it to him; he shall place himself on the left of the Grand *Marechal* of the palace, between him and the Chancellor.

The Grand Officer who is to carry the ring, shall receive it from the Grand Chamberlain, and shall place himself upon his right, and at that of the Grand Equery.

The Grand Officer who is to carry the globe, shall place himself at the left of him who is to bear the ring.

Meanwhile, the Ladies of Honour, and the Ladies in Waiting, shall approach and detach the mantle of the Empress, fold it upon their baskets, and return to their places.

Lastly, the Grand Officer who is to bear the ring, shall approach to receive it from the hands of the first Lady of Honour, and shall place himself on her left, and on that of the Ladies in Waiting.

The Grand Dignitaries and the Grand Officers designated above, shall successively place upon the altar the Imperial insignia, in the following order.

The Crown of the Emperor.

The Sword.

The Main de Justice.

The Sceptre.

The Mantle.

The Ring.

The Collar.

The Imperial Globe.

The Crown of the Empress.

The Mantle.

The Ring.

These Grand Officers shall return successively in order to their places.

The Vicar General, after having chaunted, standing, the "Veni Creator," and the prayer above mentioned, shall put the following question to the Emperor.

"Profiteris-ne, charissime, im Christo filio," etc., etc.

The Emperor, clasping the Book of the Holy Evangelists, which shall be handed to him by the Deacon, shall answer —"Profiteor."

The Vicar General shall next repeat the following prayer.

OREMUS.

"Omnipotens sempiterne Deus," etc.

This prayer finished, he shall repeat, kneeling, the Litany, during which, their Majesties shall remain seated upon the little throne.

After the verse, "Ut omnibus fidelibus defunctis," he shall rise, shall turn to their Majesties, shall repeat the three verses, "Ut hunc famulum tuum," etc., during which their Majesties shall kneel and bow their heads.

The Clergy shall make the sign of the cross in the form of a benediction, following the example of the Vicar, and at the same time with him; they shall continue to repeat the Litany as far as the *Pater*.

The Litany being repeated, the Vicar shall rise; the Clergy, still kneeling, shall repeat with him, the following chaunts and prayers.

"Et ne nos," etc.

"Sed libera," etc.

OREMUS.

"Pretende, quœsimus," etc.

OREMUS.

"Actiones nostras," etc.

These prayers being finished, the persons officiating shall approach their Majesties, bow reverently to them, and lead them to the foot of the altar in order to receive Holy Unction. No one shall follow their Majesties in this march.

Their Majesties shall kneel at the foot of the altar on cushions.

The Vicar shall make a triple unction, upon the head and in the two hands, representing the following prayers:—

OREMUS.

"Deus dei filius," etc.

OREMUS.

"Omnipotens sempiterne," etc.

The Vicar shall administer the same Unctions to the Empress, repeating the following prayer:—

OREMUS.

"Deus Pater œternae sit tibi adjutor," etc.

During the consecration, the choir of the Imperial chapel shall execute the following motette:—

"Unxerunt Salomonem, sadoch sacerdos, et Nathan propheta regem in Sion, et accedentes lœti dixerunt; vivat in œternum."

After this ceremony, their Majesties shall be reconducted to the little throne by the officiating persons.

The unction shall be wiped off by the Grand Almoner of the Emperor, and by the Almoner of the Empress.

Meanwhile the Vicar shall commence Grand Mass, and shall continue it exclusively to the "Alleluia du graduel;" the Clergy shall repeat with him the psalm "Judica," as well as the other prayers, until the opening of Mass.

Immediately after the chaunt of the "graduel," the Vicar shall bless the Imperial insignia in the order, and with the prayers, which follow:—

“Adjutorium nostrum,” etc.

“Qui fecit,” etc., etc.

To be followed by the

Benediction of the Imperial Sword.

OREMUS.

“Exaudi quæsumus,” etc.

Benediction of the Imperial Mantles.

OREMUS.

“Omnipotens Deus,” etc.

Benediction of the Imperial Rings.

OREMUS.

“Deus totius creaturæ principium et finis,” etc.

Benediction of the Crowns of the Emperor and the Empress.

OREMUS.

“Omnipotens sempiterne Deus,” etc.

Benediction of the Globe.

“Omnipotens et misericors Deus,” etc., etc.

During this ceremony their Majesties shall remain seated upon the little throne.

The benedictions being given, their Majesties shall again go to the foot of the altar accompanied by the same officials who led them to the consecration; the Chancellor, the Grand *Marechal* of the Palace, the Grand Chamberlain shall follow the Emperor to the altar, and stand behind him: the Ladies of Honour and the Ladies in Waiting, the First Equery, the First Chamberlain, and the Gentlemen of Honour, shall follow the Empress to the altar, and stand behind her: all the other persons of the *cortege* shall remain in their places.

The presentation of the insignia of the Emperor shall be made by the Vicar General to his Majesty, in the following order:—

The Ring.

The Sword, which his Majesty shall put in his scabbard.

The Mantle, which shall be attached by the Grand Chamberlain and the Grand Equery.

The Globe, which the Emperor shall give to the officer charged to receive it.

The “Main de Justice.”

The Sceptre.

The Emperor, holding in his hands the two last ornaments, shall pray.

During the time of this prayer, the presentation of the ornaments of the Empress shall be made by the Vicar General to her Majesty, in the following order:—

The Ring.

The Mantle, which shall be attached by the Ladies of Honour and the Ladies in Waiting.

During the presentation of the ornaments of the Emperor and Empress, the choir shall execute the following motette:

“Accingere gladio tuo super femur tuum potentissime specie tua et pulchritudine tua intende, prospere procede, et regna.”

The Vicar General shall repeat the appropriate prayer for each of these ornaments as follows:

Delivery of the Ring.

“Accipite hos annulos,” etc.

Delivery of the Sword.

“Accipite gladium de altari super tuum,” etc.

Delivery of the Mantles.

“Induat vos, Dominus,” etc.

Delivery of the Globe.

“Accipe globum hunc,” etc.

Delivery of the Main de Justice.

“Accipe virgam virtutis, ac veritatis,” etc.

Delivery of the Sceptre.

“Accipe sceptrum potestatis imperialis insigne,” etc.

After the Emperor shall have handed the “main de justice” to the Chancellor, and the sceptre to the Grand Marechal of the

Palace, he shall ascend the altar, take the crown and place it upon his head; he shall take that of the Empress, shall approach her and crown her.

The Empress shall receive the crown kneeling.

The Vicar shall repeat the following prayer during the ceremony of crowning.

"Coronet vos Deus corana gloriæ," etc.

Their Majesties shall return to the little throne.

Then the Grand Officers, and the Officers who are to precede the Empress, the Princesses, Ladies and those who have followed them, shall resume the same order of march in which they came to the entrance to the chancel; the Empress shall move towards the Grand Throne, the Princesses holding her mantle.

At the entrance to the chancel, the Officers, the Pages, the Heralds-at-Arms, the Hussars, shall resume their order, and shall march to the throne, gradually forming a line as they approach it.

The Grand Officers who bear the insignia of the Empress, and the Officers who accompany them, shall ascend the steps of the throne, pass by the *couloir* to the right, and arrange themselves behind the throne.

The *cortege* which precedes the Emperor, shall resume its order in turn.

The Emperor, surrounded by the Princes and Dignitaries, preceded by the Officers who bear the insignia, followed by the Grand Equery, by the Grand Chamberlain and by the Grand Marechal of the Palace, having taken from the Grand Dignitaries the sceptre and the *main du justice*, shall march to the throne, the Princes holding his mantle. The Grand Officers bearing his insignia, shall place themselves behind the throne, also the Officers who accompany them; the Aides-de-Camp shall form a line to the right and to the left, upon the steps of the throne; the Grand Chamberlain, the Grand Equery, and the Grand Master of Ceremonies, shall sit upon cushions, upon the first step below the estrade of the throne; the Princes and Dignitaries shall pass to the left of the throne to take the places assigned to them; the Grand Marechal of the Palace shall pass to the left of the *couloir*, and place himself behind the Emperor.

Lastly, the Vicar and the Clergy shall march also towards the Grand Throne.

The Vicar, after having ascended to it, and their Majesties being seated, shall address them in the following words:—

“In hon Imperii solio confirmet vos Deus,” etc.

After having repeated these words, the Vicar shall kiss the Emperor upon the cheek, and shall turn to the assistants, and shall say, in a loud voice: “Vivat Imperator in æternum!”

The assistants shall cry, *Long live the Emperor, long live the Empress!*

The “Vivat” shall be executed by the Imperial choir.

During these acclamations, the Vicar, with his cortege, shall be reconducted to his seat by the Grand Master of Ceremonies, preceded by the Masters and Aides of the Ceremonies, by the Heralds-at-Arms, and by the Hussars.

The Pages shall place themselves upon the steps of the throne.

The places around the throne of the Emperor shall be disposed of in the following order:—

The Emperor on the throne.

A step lower, on his right:

The Empress upon a fauteuil.

A step lower to the right of the Empress, between the two columns:

The Princesses, upon chairs.

Behind them, the Ladies of Honour and the Ladies in Waiting, and the Ladies of the Palace appointed to carry the offerings.

On the left of the Emperor, and two steps below him, between the two columns:

The Princess—the two Grand Dignitaries at their left, upon chairs.

Behind the Emperor, the Grand *Marechal* of the Palace, the four Grand Officers bearing the insignia of his Majesty, upon the right of the Grand *Marechal*; and the three Grand Officers bearing

the insignia of the Empress, behind his Majesty: the Civil Officers of the Emperor and the Princesses, behind the Grand Officers, all standing; upon the first step below the estrade of the throne, the Grand Chamberlain, the Grand Equery and the Grand Master of Ceremonies, seated upon cushions. At the foot of the throne, on the right, shall be a *tabouret*, upon which the Grand Master of Ceremonies shall place himself often, in order to overlook the details of the ceremony; behind this *tabouret*, two Assistants of the Ceremonies; behind these Assistants, the King-at-Arms and the two Heralds; opposite the *tabouret* of the Grand Master, the Masters of the Ceremonies; behind them, two Heralds.

The Vicar having reached the sanctuary, the imperial choir shall sing the *Te Deum*, and afterwards the hymns and prayers, as follows:—

"Firmetur manus tua," etc.

"Justitia et judicium," etc.

OREMUS.

"Deus, qui victrices Moysis," etc.

OREMUS.

"Deus inerrabilis auctor mundi," etc.

The Vicar shall continue the mass.

At the end of the reading from the Gospel, the Grand Master shall invite the Grand Almoner to the altar by a bow: the Grand Almoner shall receive the Gospel from the Sub-Deacon: afterwards, accompanied by the Clergy, preceded by the Grand Master, the Masters and Assistants of the Ceremony, he shall carry the Holy Book to be kissed by their Majesties; return to the altar and give it back to the Sub-Deacon.

At the Offertory, the Grand Master of Ceremonies shall bow reverently to their Majesties to summon them to the oblation.

Madame the Princess de Jacmel bearing a wax candle to which shall be attached thirteen pieces of gold, shall have at her side Mons. the Count de Campan.

Madame the Duchess de Tiburn bearing another candle with the same number of pieces of gold, shall have at her side Mons. the Count de Petit-Goave.

Madame the Duchess de St. Louis du Sud, bearing the silver bread, shall have at her side Mons. the Count de la Tannerie.

Madame the Duchess du Mirebalias, bearing the golden bread, shall have at her side Mons. the Count d'Umani.

Madame the Duchess de St. Louis du Nord, bearing the vase, shall have at her side Mons. the Count de la Briquerie.

Quitting their places successively, by the right of the "couloir," to receive, below the steps of the throne, these different offerings, which shall be presented to them:—

The Emperor and Empress shall descend from the throne; meanwhile the Imperial Band shall execute a triumphant march.

The Empress surrounded by the Princesses who hold up her mantle, followed by the Ladies of Honour, by the Ladies in Waiting, and by the Grand Civil Officers of her Majesty, shall quicken their march in order to precede the Emperor below the steps: the Emperor shall march more slowly, accompanied by the Princes who hold up his mantle, followed by the Grand Marechal of the palace, and preceded by his grand Chamberlain, and by his Grand Equery, in such a manner that, dividing at the steps of the throne, the march to the chancel shall be in the following order:—

The Hussars.

The Heralds-at-Arms.

The Pages.

The Assistants of the Ceremony.

The Masters of the Ceremony.

The Grand Master of the Ceremony.

The offerings in the order above mentioned.

The Empresses followed as above described.

The Grand Chamberlain, the Grand Equery, and the Gentlemen of Honour.

The Emperor and his suite.

On arriving at the door of the chancel, the same persons who, in the first march, formed a line, shall do so again; the Emperor

and the Empress, with the rest of the “cortege,” shall continue their march to the foot of the altar.

The Emperor, the Empress on his left, shall kneel upon the cushions; the person bearing the offerings shall arrange themselves on their right a little behind, forming a line; the Grand Master, a Master, and an Assistant of the Ceremonies on the right, also on the left. The Princes and Princesses, on entering the sanctuary, shall no longer hold up the mantle of their Majesties, and shall occupy the same place in the sanctuary, which they did during the consecration and crowning.

On reaching the altar, the Emperor shall hand the sceptre and the “Main de Justice” to the Chancellor and to the Chamberlain, who shall remain at the right, near the altar.

Their Majesties being crowned, shall take the offerings from the Ladies who bear them, in the order of the march, and present them to the Vicar.

They shall then seat themselves upon the little throne; depart from it again in the order above mentioned, to proceed to the Grand Throne.

The Vicar shall continue the Mass.

At the elevation of the Host their Majesties being on the Grand Throne, the Grand Chamberlain shall take off the Crown of the Emperor, and the Lady of Honour, and Mons. the Gentleman of Honour, that of the Empress.

Their Majesties shall kneel. After the elevation of the Host, their Majesties shall rise, and the Grand Chaplain shall replace the Crown of the Emperor, and the Lady of Honour and the Gentleman of Honour, that of the Empress.

At the “Agnes Dei,” the Deacon shall receive the kiss of peace from the Vicar, “cum instrumento pacis,” and shall carry it to their Majesties.

The Mass shall continue.

The Mass being finished, the Grand Almoner shall again carry the Gospel to the Emperor, and shall remain standing upon the left of his Majesty.

His Great Highness the Duke de la Bande-du-Nord, Minister of the Interior, etc., shall call Messieurs the President of the Senate, and of the Chamber of Deputies, and Mons. the Baron d'Acloque, President of the Court of Appeals, and present them to his Majesty. They shall lay before the Emperor the constitutional oath, and range themselves on the left of the throne, upon the first steps; the Grand Master of Ceremonies shall remain on the other side of the steps, opposite the President of the Senate.

The Emperor, seated and crowned, his hand upon the Holy Gospel, shall repeat the oath in these words:—

I swear to support the integrity and the independence of the Empire, etc.

This oath being pronounced, the King-at-arms shall proclaim in a loud voice:—

THE MOST GLORIOUS, MOST AUGUST EMPEROR FAUSTIN THE FIRST, EMPEROR OF HAYTI, *is crowned and enthroned*.

LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR!!

The prolonged cries of "Long live the Emperor!" "Long live the Empress!" shall be heard in all parts of the church.

A discharge of a hundred cannon shall proclaim the coronation and the enthronement of their Majesties.

The clergy shall return to the foot of the throne with the canopy to re-conduct their Majesties.

At the same moment the Hussars, the Heralds-at-Arms, the Pages, the Assistants of the Ceremony, the Masters and the Grand Master of Ceremonies, shall advance from the right to the throne, to rejoin the procession. The Grand Officers, bearing the insignia of the Emperor shall successively pass by the "couloir" to the right, shall descend the steps, and take their place before the canopy of the Empress.

The Empress shall descend from the throne accompanied by the Princesses, followed by the Ladies of Honour, by the Ladies in Waiting, and by the Ladies and Officers of the Palace.

Next, his Majesty shall come under the canopy, and continue the march towards the Imperial tent.

The seven Grand Officers who bear the insignia of the Emperor shall successively pass by the "couloir" to the left, and shall march before the canopy in the order with which they came from the tent to the church.

The Emperor shall take from the Chancellor and from the Grand "Marechal" of the Palace, the sceptre, and the "Main de Justice," and shall descend from the throne, followed by the Princes holding up his mantle, and by the Grand Officers who followed him coming to the church.

When the Emperor shall leave the nave, the Ministers and the other Grand Military Officers shall take their same rank in the cortege to return to the Imperial tent.

The formalities finished, their Majesties shall return to the Imperial Palace in the same order of march as above designated.

The public rejoicings shall continue until six o'clock, and at sunset of that day, a salute of a hundred cannon shall announce the conclusion of the festivities.

Port au Prince, March 9th, 1852, the 49th year of Independence, and the 3d of the reign of his Imperial Majesty.

The Duke-du-Nord, Minister of the Interior and of Agriculture.

D. HYPPOLITE.

THE END

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

Footnotes have been moved closer to their reference points.

Book name and author have been added to the book cover. The resulting cover is placed in the public domain.

[The end of *Health Trip to the Tropics* by N. (Nathaniel) Parker Willis]