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A Winter's Journey To Georgia

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BENTLEY'S MISCELLANY.

A WINTER'S JOURNEY TO GEORGIA, U. S.

BY MRS. BUTLER.

ON Friday morning we started from Philadelphia, by railroad, for Baltimore. It is a curious fact enough, that half the routes that are travelled in America are either temporary or unfinished,—one reason, among several, for the multitudinous accidents which befall wayfarers. At the very outset of our journey, and within scarce a mile of Philadelphia, we crossed the Schuylkill, over a bridge, one of the principal piers of which is yet incomplete, and the whole building (a covered wooden one, of handsome dimensions) filled with workmen, yet occupied about its construction. But the Americans are impetuous in the way of improvement, and have all the impatience of children about the trying of a new thing, often greatly retarding their own progress by hurrying unduly the completion of their works, or using them in a perilous state of incompleteness. Our road lay for a considerable length of time through flat low meadows that skirt the Delaware, which at this season of the year, covered with snow, and bare of vegetation, presented a most dreary aspect, we passed through Wilmington (Maryland), and crossed a small stream called the Brandywine, the scenery along the banks of which is very beautiful. For its historical associations I refer the reader to the life of Washington. I cannot say that the aspect of the town of Wilmington, as viewed from the railroad cars, presented any very exquisite points of beauty; I shall therefore indulge in a few observations upon these same railroad cars just here.

And first, I cannot but think that it would be infinitely more consonant with comfort, convenience, and common sense, if persons obliged to travel during the intense cold of an American winter (in the northern states) were to clothe themselves according to the exigency of the weather, and so do away with the present deleterious custom of warming close and crowded carriages with sheet-iron stoves, heated with anthracite coal. No words can describe the foulness of the atmosphere, thus robbed of all vitality by the vicious properties of that dreadful combustible, and tainted besides with the poison emitted at every respiration from so many pairs of human lungs. These are facts which the merest tyro in human physiological science knows, and the utter disregard of which on the part of the Americans renders them the amazement of every traveller from countries where the preservation of health is considered worth the care of a rational creature. I once travelled to Harrisburg in a railroad car, fitted up to carry sixty-four persons, in the midst of which glowed a large stove. The trip was certainly a delectable one. Nor is there any remedy for this: an attempt to open a window is met by an universal scowl and shudder; and indeed it is but incurring the risk of one's death of cold, instead of one's death of heat. The windows, in fact, form the walls on each

side of the carriage, which looks like a long green-house upon wheels; the seats, which contain each two persons, (a pretty tight fit too,) are placed down the whole length of the vehicle, one behind the other, leaving a species of aisle in the middle for the uneasy (a large portion of the travelling community here) to fidget up and down, for the tobacco-chewers to spit in, and for a whole tribe of little itinerant fruit and cake-sellers to rush through, distributing their wares at every place where the cars stop. Of course nobody can well sit immediately in the opening of a window when the thermometer is twelve degrees below zero; yet this, or suffocation in foul air, is the only alternative. I generally prefer being half frozen to death to the latter mode of martyrdom.

Attached to the Baltimore cars was a species of separate apartment for women. It was of comfortable dimensions, and without a stove; and here I betook myself with my children, escaping from the pestilential atmosphere of the other car, and performing our journey with ease enough. My only trial here was one which I have to encounter in whatever direction I travel in America, and which, though apparently a trivial matter in itself, has caused me infinite trouble, and no little compassion for the rising generation of the United States—I allude to the ignorant and fatal practice of the women of stuffing their children from morning till night with every species of trash which comes to hand. Whether this is a custom which they pursue at home as well as abroad, of course I cannot tell; but, travelling, it appears to be universal; and I have often felt as if I must lay myself open to the charge of impertinent interference, and remonstrate against the cruelty and folly of such proceedings. As surely as you meet an American woman travelling with a child, there is a basket or a bundle in their society well filled with greasy cakes, sugar-plums, apples, peppermint-drops, &c., &c. The little wayfarer generally makes its appearance with both fists furnished, and a mouth full of such matter, and as soon as this is despatched begins clamouring for more. Between each supply the child, of course, becomes more uneasy, the torments of a sick stomach being added to the irksome confinement of a coach or cabin; and by the end of the day screams of distress and ill-temper, engendered by nausea, flatulency, and every species of evil naturally resulting from such a day's diet, proclaim the mistake of the half-distracted mother, whose line of conduct was dictated by the laudable desire of keeping her child *quiet*. I once took the liberty of asking a young woman who was travelling in the same car with me, and stuffing her child incessantly with heavy cakes, which she also attempted to make mine eat, her reason for this system,—she replied, it was to 'keep her baby good.' I looked at her own sallow cheeks and rickety teeth, and could not forbear suggesting to her how much she was injuring her poor child's health. She stared in astonishment, and pursued the process, no doubt wondering what I meant, and how I could be so cruel as not to allow pound-cake to my child. Indeed, as may easily be supposed, it becomes a matter of no little difficulty to enforce my own rigid discipline in the midst of the various offers of dainties which tempt my poor little girl at every turn; but I persevere, nevertheless, and am not seldom rewarded by the admiration which her appearance of health and strength excites wherever she goes.

I remember being excessively amused at the woful condition of an unfortunate gentleman on board one of the Philadelphia boats, whose

sickly-looking wife, exhausted with her vain attempts to quiet three sickly-looking children, had in despair given them into his charge. The miserable man furnished each of them with a lump of cake, and, during the temporary lull caused by this diversion, took occasion to make acquaintance with my child, to whom he tendered the same indulgence. Upon my refusing it for her, he exclaimed in astonishment,

‘Why, madam, don’t you allow the little girl cake?’

‘No, sir.’

‘What does she eat, pray?’ (as if people lived upon cake generally).

‘Bread and milk, and bread and meat.’

‘What! no butter? no tea or coffee?’

‘None whatever.’

‘Ah!’ sighed the poor man, as the chorus of woe arose again from his own progeny, the cake having disappeared down their throats. ‘I suppose that’s why she looks so healthy.’

I supposed so, too, but did not inquire whether the gentleman extended his inference. All this may appear puerile, though I have little fear of those condemning it as such who have children of their own, and know the importance of both quantity and quality in this matter. I appeal, too, from those who consider this subject as trifling to the beauty, vigour, and activity of the children in my own country; results which are acknowledged with admiration by all foreigners who visit England, and are derived more from the careful system of physical education there pursued than from any other cause whatsoever. In this, diet forms a most important consideration, the neglect of which is to insure at once loss of health, and all the beauty that belongs to a healthy stomach, teeth, breath, and complexion.

We pursued our way from Wilmington to Havre de Grace on the railroad, and crossed one or two inlets from the Chesapeake, of considerable width, upon bridges of a most perilous construction, and which, indeed, have given way once or twice in various parts already. They consist merely of wooden piles driven into the water, across which the iron rails are laid, only just raising the cars above the level of the water. To traverse with an immense train, at full steam-speed, one of these creeks, nearly a mile in width, is far from agreeable, let one be never so little nervous, and it was with infinite cordiality each time that I greeted the first bush that hung over the water, indicating our approach to *terra firma*. At Havre de Grace we crossed the Susquehanna in a steam-boat, which cut its way through the ice an inch in thickness with marvellous ease and swiftness, and landed us on the other side, where we again entered the railroad cars to pursue our road.

It is now only five years since I undertook this same journey from Baltimore to Philadelphia, at the same inclement season of the year. We travelled over a dreary and horrible coach-road for three days, sleeping two nights on the way. We were once in such imminent peril of being overturned that ropes were fastened to the top of the carriage, by which men who ran on each side of it preserved its equilibrium. We crossed the Susquehanna at night, in an open boat, at infinite risk of being jammed to pieces by the floating masses of ice which were sweeping down the river, and over which the oars of our rowers scraped with a most ominous sound. Only five years ago! and now the same journey is performed with ease between breakfast and dinner-time, and the passage of the Susquehanna, even though

frozen from bank to bank, is effected in a few minutes, with no more discomposing sensation than one experiences sitting quietly in one's own drawing-room. This is wonderful indeed, and worthy of all praise, as well as thanksgiving, from those whose flight, like ours, is in the winter.

We arrived in Baltimore at about half-past two, and went immediately on board the Alabama steam-boat, which was to convey us to Portsmouth, and which started about three-quarters of an hour after, carrying us down the Chesapeake Bay to the shores of Virginia. We obtained an unutterably hard beefsteak for our dinner, having had nothing on the road, but found ourselves but little fortified by the sight of what we really could not swallow. Between six and seven, however, occurred that most comprehensive repast, a steam-boat tea; after which, and the ceremony of choosing our berths, I betook myself to the reading of *Oliver Twist* till half-past eleven at night. I wonder if Mr. Dickens had any sensible perception of the benedictions which flew to him from the bosom of the broad Chesapeake as I closed his book. I am afraid not. Helen says, 'tis pity well-wishing has no body,' so it is that gratitude, admiration, and moral approbation, have none, for the sake of such writers, and yet they might, peradventure, be smothered. I had a comical squabble with the stewardess—a dirty, funny, good-humoured old negress, who was driven almost wild by my exorbitant demands for towels, of which she assured me one was a quite ample allowance. Mine, alas! were deep down in my trunk, beyond all possibility of getting at, even if I could have got at the trunk, which I very much doubt. Now I counted no less than *seven* handsome looking-glasses on board of this steam-boat, where one towel was considered all that was requisite, not even for each individual, but for each washing-room. This addiction to ornament, and neglect of comfort and convenience, is a strong characteristic of Americans at present, luxuries often abounding where decencies cannot be procured. 'Tis the necessary result of a young civilisation, and reminds me a little of Rosamond's purple jar, or Sir Joshua Reynolds' charming picture of the naked child, with a court cap full of flowers and feathers stuck on her head.

After a very wretched night on board the boat, we landed at about nine o'clock, at Portsmouth, Virginia. I must not omit to mention, that my morning ablutions were as much excepted at by the old negress as those of the preceding evening. Indeed, she seemed perfectly indignant at the forbearance of one lady, who withdrew from the dressing-room, on finding me there, exclaiming,

'Go in, go in, I tell you; they always washes two at a time in them rooms.'

At Portsmouth there is a fine dry dock, and navy yard, as I was informed. We had not leisure to visit them, as we walked directly from the wharf to the railroad, which runs immediately through the main street of the town. The appearance of the place in general was mean and unpicturesque. Here I encountered the first slaves I ever saw, and the sight of them in no way tended to alter my previous opinions upon this subject. They were poorly clothed; looked horribly dirty, and had a lazy recklessness in their air and manner as they sauntered along, which naturally belongs to creatures without one of the responsibilities which are the honourable burthen of rational humanity.

Our next stopping-place was a small town called Suffolk. Here the negroes gathered in admiring crowds round the railroad cars. They

seem full of idle merriment and unmeaning glee, and regard with an intensity of curiosity, perfectly ludicrous, the appearance and proceedings of such whites as they easily perceive are strangers in their part of the country. As my child leaned from the carriage-window, her brilliant complexion drew forth sundry exclamations of delight from the sooty circle below, and one woman, grinning from ear to ear, and displaying a most dazzling set of grinders, drew forward a little mahogany-coloured imp, her grandchild, and offered her to the little 'Missis' for her waiting-maid. I told her the little missis waited upon herself, whereupon she set up a most incredulous giggle, and reiterated her proffers, in the midst of which our kettle started off, and we left her.

To describe to you the tract of country through which we now passed would be impossible, so forlorn a region it never entered my imagination to conceive. Dismal by nature, indeed, as well as by name, is that vast swamp, of which we now skirted the northern edge, looking into its endless pools of black water, where the melancholy cypress and juniper-trees alone overshadowed the thick-looking surface, their roots all globular, like huge bulbous plants, and their dark branches woven together with a hideous matting of giant creepers, which clung round their stems, and hung about the dismal forest like a drapery of withered snakes. It looked like some blasted region lying under an enchanter's ban, such as one reads of in old stories. Nothing lived or moved throughout the loathsome solitude, and the sunbeams themselves seemed to sicken and grow pale as they glided like ghosts through these watery woods. Into this wilderness it seems impossible that the hand of human industry, or the foot of human wayfaring, should ever penetrate; no wholesome growth can take root in its slimy depths; a wild jungle chokes up parts of it with a reedy, rattling covert for venomous reptiles: the rest is a succession of black ponds, sweltering under black cypress boughs,—a place forbid. The wood which is cut upon its borders is obliged to be felled in winter, for the summer, which clothes other regions with flowers, makes this pestilential waste alive with rattlesnakes, so that none dare venture within its bounds, and I should even apprehend that, travelling as rapidly as one does on the railroad, and only skirting this district of dismay, one might not escape the fetid breathings it sends forth when the warm season has quickened its stagnant waters and poisonous vegetation.

After passing this place, we entered upon a country little more cheerful in its aspect, though the absence of the dark swamp water was something in its favour,—apparently endless tracks of pine-forest, well called by the natives Pine-Barren. The soil is pure sand; and, though the holly, with its coral berries, and the wild myrtle, grow in considerable abundance, mingled with the pines, these preponderate, and the whole land presents one wearisome extent of arid soil and gloomy vegetation. Not a single decent dwelling did we pass; here and there, at rare intervals, a few miserable negro huts squatting round a mean framed building, with brick chimneys built on the outside, the residence of the owner of the land, and his squalid serfs, were the only evidences of human existence in this forlorn country.

Towards four o'clock, as we approached the Roanoke, the appearance of the land improved; there was a good deal of fine soil well farmed, and the river, where we crossed it, although in all the naked unadornment of wintry banks, looked very picturesque and refreshing

as it gushed along, broken by rocks and small islands into rapid reaches and currents. Immediately after crossing it, we stopped at a small knot of houses, which, although christened Weldon, and therefore pretending to be a place, was rather the place where a place was intended to be. Two or three rough-pine ware-rooms, or station-houses, belonging to the railroad; a few miserable dwellings, which might be not either half built up, or not quite fallen down, on the banks of a large mill-pond; one exceedingly dirty-looking old wooden house, whither we directed our steps as to the inn; but we did not take our ease in it, though we tried as much as we could. However, one thing I will say for North Carolina—it has the best material for fire, and the noblest liberality in the use of it, of any place in the world. Such a spectacle as one of those rousing pine-wood chimney-fulls is not to be described, nor the revivification it engenders even in the absence of every other comfort or necessary of life. They are enough to make one turn Gheber,—such noble piles of fire and flame, such hearty brilliant life, full altars of light and warmth. These greeted us upon our entrance into this miserable inn, and seemed to rest and feed, as well as warm us. We (the women) were shown up a filthy flight of wooden stairs, into a dilapidated room, the plastered walls of which were all smeared and discoloured, the windows begrimed, and dark with dirt. Upon the three beds, which nearly filled up this wretched apartment, lay tattered articles of male and female apparel; and here we drew round the pine-wood fire, which blazed up the chimney, sending a ruddy glow of comfort and cheerfulness even through this disgusting den. We were to wait here for the arrival of the cars from a branch railroad, to continue our route; and in the meantime a so-called dinner was provided for us, to which we were presently summoned. Of the horrible dirt of everything at this meal, from the eatables themselves to the table-cloth, and the clothes of the negroes who waited upon us, it would be impossible to give any idea. The poultry, which formed here, as it does through all the South, the chief animal part of the repast, (except the consumers always understood), were so tough that I should think they must have been alive when we came into the house, and certainly died very hard. They were swimming in black grease, and stuffed with some black ingredient that was doubt and dismay to us uninitiated; but, however, knowledge would probably have been more terrible in this case than ignorance. We had no bread, but lumps of hot dough, which reminded me forcibly of certain juvenile creations of my brothers, yeleft dumps. I should think they would have eaten very much alike.

I was amused to observe that while our tea was poured out and handed to us by a black girl of most disgustingly dirty appearance, no sooner did the engine drivers, and persons connected with the railroads and coaches, sit down to their meal, than the landlady herself, a portly dame, with a most dignified carriage, took the head of the table, and did the honours with all the grace of a most accomplished hostess. Our male fellow-travellers no sooner had despatched their dinner, than they withdrew in a body to the other end of the apartment, and large rattling folding-doors being drawn across the room, the separation of men and women so rigidly observed by all travelling Americans, took place. This is a most peculiar and amusing custom, though sometimes I have been not a little inclined to quarrel with it, inasmuch as it effectually deprives one of the assistance of the man under whose protection one is travelling, as well as all the advantages,

or pleasure of their society. Twice during this southward trip of ours my husband has been most peremptorily ordered to withdraw from the apartment where he was conversing with me, by coloured cabin-girls, who told him it was against the rules for any gentleman to come into the ladies' room. This making rules by which ladies and gentlemen are to observe the principles of decorum and good-breeding, may be very necessary, for aught I can tell, but it seems rather sarcastical, I think, to have them enforced by servant-girls.

The gentlemen, on their side, are entrenched in a similar manner; and if a woman has occasion to speak to the person with whom she is travelling, her entrance into the male den, if she has the courage to venture there, is the signal for an universal stare and whisper. But, for the most part, the convenient result of this arrangement is, that such men as have female companions with them pass their time in prowling about the precincts of the 'ladies' apartment;' while their respective ladies pop their heads first out of one door and then out of another, watching in decorous discomfort the time when 'their man' shall come to pass. Our sole resource on the present occasion was to retire again to the horrible hole above stairs, where we had at first taken refuge, and here we remained until summoned down again by the arrival of the expected train of railroad cars. My poor little children, overcome with fatigue and sleep, were carried, and we walked from the *hotel* at Weldon to the railroad, and by good fortune obtained a car to ourselves.

It was now between eight and nine o'clock, and perfectly dark. The cars were furnished with lamps, however, and, by the rapid glance they cast upon the objects which we passed, I endeavoured in vain to guess at the nature of the country through which we were travelling; but, except the tall shafts of the everlasting pine-trees which still pursued us, I could descry nothing, and resigned myself to the amusing contemplation of the attitudes of my companions, who were all fast asleep. Between twelve and one o'clock the engine stopped, and it was announced to us that we had travelled as far upon the railroad as it was yet completed, and that we must transfer ourselves to stage-coaches; so in the dead middle of the night we crept out of the cars, and taking our children in our arms, walked a few yards into an open space in the woods, where three four-horse coaches stood waiting to receive us. A crowd of men, principally negroes, were collected here round a huge fire of pine-wood, which, together with the pine-torches, whose resinous glare streamed brilliantly into the darkness of the woods, created a ruddy blaze, by the light of which we reached our vehicles in safety, and, while they were adjusting the luggage, had leisure to admire our jetty torch-bearers, who lounged round in a state of tattered undress, highly picturesque,—the staring whites of their eyes, and glittering ranges of dazzling teeth, exhibited to perfection by the expression of grinning amusement in their countenances, shining in the darkness almost as brightly as the lights which they reflected. My husband had especially requested that we might have a coach to ourselves, and had been assured that there would be one for the use of our party. It appeared, however, that the out-side seat of this had been appropriated by some one, for our coachman was obliged to take a seat inside with us; and, though it then contained five grown persons and two children, it seems that the coach was by no means considered full. The horrors of that night's journey I shall not easily forget. The road lay almost the whole way through swamps, and was frequently itself under water. It was made of logs of wood, (a corduroy road)

and so dreadfully rough and unequal, that the drawing a coach over it at all seemed perfectly miraculous. I expected every moment that we must be overturned into the marsh, through which we splashed, with hardly any intermission, the whole night long. Their drivers in this part of the country deserve infinite praise both for skill and care; but the road-makers, I think, are beyond all praise for their noble confidence in what skill and care can accomplish.

You will readily imagine how thankfully I saw the first whitening of daylight in the sky. I do not know that any morning was ever more welcome to me than that which found us still surrounded by the pine-swamps of North Carolina, which, brightened by the morning sun, and breathed through by the morning air, lost something of their dreary desolateness to my senses. However, I had passed the night in terror; for when one carries two young babies along with one, it is astonishing how much one's appetite for adventure slackens, and how very little desirous one is of breaking one's neck, or even running little agreeably-exciting risks of it. I remember the time, and that not very far off either, when the roughest road was the one I should have chosen; but these precious burthens make one careful and cowardly, and I care not how level the way is over which I lead these poor little fellow-wayfarers. Not long after daybreak we arrived at a place called Stantonsborough. I do not know whether that is the name of the district, or what; for I saw no village,—nothing but the one lonely house in the wood at which we stopped. I should have mentioned, that the unfortunate individual who took our coachman's place outside, towards daybreak became so perished with cold, that an exchange was effected between them, and thus the privacy (if such it could be called) of our carriage was invaded, in spite of the promise which my husband had received to the contrary. As I am nursing my own baby, and have been compelled to travel all day and all night, of course this was a circumstance of no small annoyance to me; but as our company was again increased some time after, and that subsequently I had to travel in a railroad-car that held upwards of twenty people, I had to resign myself to this, among the other miseries of this most miserable journey.

As we alighted from our coach, we encountered the comical spectacle of the two coach-loads of gentlemen who had travelled the same route as ourselves, with wrist-bands, and coat-cuffs turned back, performing their morning ablutions all together at a long wooden dresser in the open air, though the morning was piercing cold. Their toilet accommodations were quite of the most primitive order imaginable, as indeed were ours. We (the women) were all shown into one small room, the whole furniture of which consisted of a chair and wooden bench; upon the latter stood one basin, one ewer, and a relic of soap, apparently of great antiquity. Before, however, we could avail ourselves of these ample means of cleanliness we were summoned down to breakfast; but as we had travelled all night, and all the previous day, and were to travel all the ensuing day and night, I preferred washing to eating, and determined, if I could not do both, at least to accomplish the first. There was neither towel, nor glass for one's teeth, nor hostess or chambermaid to appeal to. I ran through all the rooms on the floor, of which the doors were open; but though in one I found a magnificent veneered chest of drawers, and large looking glass, neither of the above articles was discoverable. Again the savage passion for orna-

ment occurred to me as I looked at this piece of furniture, which might have adorned the most luxurious bed-room of the wealthiest citizen in New York—here in this wilderness, in a house which seemed but just cut out of the trees, where a tin pan was brought to me for a basin, and where the only kitchen, of which the window of our room, to our sorrow, commanded an uninterrupted prospect, was an open shed, not fit to stable a well-kept horse in. As I found nothing that I could take possession of in the shape of towel or tumbler, I was obliged to wait on the stairs, and catch one of the dirty black girls who were running to and fro, serving the breakfast-room. Upon asking one of these nymphs for a towel, she held up to me a horrible cloth, which, but for the evidence to the contrary which their filthy surface presented, I should have supposed had been used to clean the floors. Upon my objecting to this, she flounced away, disgusted, I presume, with my fastidiousness, and appeared no more. As I leaned over the bannisters in a state of considerable despondency, I espied a man who appeared to be the host himself, and to him I ventured to prefer my humble petition for a clean towel. He immediately snatched from the dresser where the gentlemen had been washing themselves a wet and dirty towel, which lay by one of the basins, and offered it to me. Upon my suggesting that it was not a *clean* towel, he looked at me from head to foot with ineffable amazement, but at length desired one of the negroes to fetch me the unusual luxury.

Of the breakfast at this place no words can give any idea. There were plates full of unutterable-looking things, which made one feel as if one should never swallow food again. There were some eggs, all begrimed with smoke, and powdered with cinders; some unbaked dough, cut into little lumps, by way of bread; and a white hard substance, calling itself butter, which had an infinitely nearer resemblance to tallow. The mixture presented to us by way of tea was absolutely undrinkable: and when I begged for a glass of milk, they brought a tumbler covered with dust and dirt, full of such sour stuff that I was obliged to put it aside, after endeavouring to taste it. Thus *refreshed*, we set forth again through the eternal pine-lands, on and on, the tall stems rising all around us for miles and miles in dreary monotony, like a spell-land of dismal enchantment, to which there seemed no end. Frequently these huge pine trees were barked half way up on one side, the turpentine, the sole valuable produce of the country, distilling in the sun from the wounded trunk. North Carolina is, I believe, the poorest state in the Union: the part of it through which we travelled should seem to indicate as much. From Suffolk to Wilmington we did not pass a single town,—scarcely anything deserving the name of a village. The few detached houses on the road were mean and beggarly in their appearance; and the people whom we saw when the coach stopped, had a squalid, and at the same time reckless air, which at once bore witness to the unfortunate influences of their existence. Not the least of these is, the circumstance that their subsistence is derived in a great measure from the spontaneous produce of the land, which, yielding without cultivation the timber and turpentine, by the sale of which they are mainly supported, denies to them all the blessings which flow from labour. How is it that the fable ever originated of God's having cursed man with the doom of toil? How is it that men have ever been blind to the exceeding profitableness of labour, even for its own sake, whose moral harvest alone—industry, economy, patience, foresight, knowledge—is in itself an exceeding great

reward, to which add the physical blessings which wait on this universal law, — health, strength, activity, cheerfulness, the content that springs from honest exertion, and the lawful pride that grows from conquered difficulty. How invariably have the inhabitants of southern countries, whose teeming soil produced, unurged, the means of life, been cursed with indolence, with recklessness, with the sleepy slothfulness which, while basking in the sunshine, and gathering the earth's spontaneous fruits, satisfied itself with this animal existence, forgetting all the nobler purposes of life in the mere ease of living? Therefore too southern lands have been always the prey of northern conquerors; therefore the bleak regions of Upper Europe and Asia have poured forth from time to time the hungry hordes, whose iron sinews swept the nerveless children of the gardens of the earth, from the face of their idle paradises; and, but for this stream of keener life and nobler energy, it would be difficult to imagine a more complete race of lotos-eaters than would now cumber the fairest regions of the earth. Doubtless it is to counteract the enervating effects of soil and climate that this northern tide of vigorous life flows for ever towards the countries of the sun, that the races may be renewed, and the earth reclaimed, and the world, and all its various tribes, rescued from disease and decay by the influence of the stern northern vitality, searching and strong, and purifying, as the keen piercing winds, that blow from that quarter of the heavens. To descend to rather a familiar illustration of this, it is really quite curious to observe how many New-England adventurers come to the southern states, and bringing their enterprising active character to bear upon the means of wealth, which to the north they lack, but which abound in these more favoured regions, return home, after a short season of exertion, laden with the spoils of the indolent southerners. The southern people are growing poorer every day, in the midst of their slaves and their vast landed estates; whilst every day sees the arrival amongst them of some penniless Yankee, who presently turns the very ground he stands upon into wealth, and departs a lord of riches at the end of a few years, leaving the sleepy population among whom he has amassed them floating still farther down the tide of dwindling prosperity. It is difficult to imagine, however, that any energy—even that of a Yankee—could make much of a tract of pine-swamp, such as is the estate of most North-Carolinians; and when to the disadvantages of a barren soil and hot climate, are added those of slave-labour and gold-mines, it is no wonder that a population, such as the pine-landers of that state, should spring up, the result of so many evil influences.

At a small place, called Waynesborough, we had to get out of the stage-coaches we were in, and, after half an hour's delay, get into others. I could not understand why this change was made, more especially as we had but ten miles further to travel until we reached the rail-road, upon which we were to proceed to Wilmington. At this place I asked for a glass of milk, and they told me they had no such thing. Upon entering our new vehicle, we found another stranger added to the party, to my unspeakable annoyance. Complaint or remonstrance I knew, however, would be of no avail, and I therefore submitted in silence to what I could not help. At a short distance beyond Waynesborough we were desired to alight, in order to walk over a bridge, which was in so rotten a condition as

to render it very probable that it would give way under our weight. This same bridge, whose appearance was indeed most perilous, is built at a considerable height over a broad and rapid stream, called the Neuse, the colour of whose water we had an excellent opportunity of admiring through the numerous holes in the plankage, over which we walked as lightly and rapidly as we could, stopping afterwards to see our coach come at a foot's pace after us. This may be called safe and pleasant travelling. The ten miles which followed were over heavy sandy roads, and it was near sunset when we reached the place where we were to take the railroad. The train, however, had not arrived, and we sat still in the coaches, there being neither town, village, nor even road-side inn at hand, where we might take shelter from the bitter blast which swept through the pine-woods by which we were surrounded; and so we waited patiently, the day gradually drooping, the evening air becoming colder, and the howling wilderness around us more dismal every moment.

In the meantime the coaches were surrounded by a troop of gazing boors, who had come from far and near to see the hot-water carriages come up for only the third time into the midst of their savage solitude. A more forlorn, fierce, poor, and wild set of people, short of absolute savages, I never saw. They wandered round and round us, with a stupid kind of dismayed wonder. The men clothed in the coarsest manner, and the women also, of whom there were not a few, with the grotesque addition of pink and blue silk bonnets, with artificial flowers, and imitation-blonde veils. Here the gentlemen of our party informed us that they observed, for the first time, a custom prevalent in North Carolina, of which I had myself frequently heard before—the women chewing tobacco, and that, too, in a most disgusting and disagreeable way, if one way can be more disgusting than another. They carry habitually a small stick, like the small implement for cleaning the teeth, usually known in England by the name of a root,—this they thrust away in their glove, or their garter-string, and, whenever occasion offers, plunge it into a snuff box, and begin chewing it. The practice is so common, that the proffer of the snuff-box, and its passing from hand to hand, is the usual civility of a morning visit among the country people, and I was not a little amused at hearing the gentlemen who were with us describe the process as they witnessed it in their visit to a miserable farm-house across the fields, whither they went to try to obtain something to eat.

It was now becoming twilight, and the male members of our caravan held council round a pine fire as to what course had better be adopted for sheltering themselves and us, during the night, which we seemed destined to pass in the woods. After some debate, it was recollected that one Colonel ——, a man of some standing in that neighbourhood, had a farm about a mile distant immediately upon the line of the railroad, and thither it was determined we should all repair, and ask quarters for the night. Fortunately, an empty baggage-car, or rather a mere platform upon wheels (for it was nothing more) stood at hand upon the iron road, and to this the luggage, and the women and children of the party, were transferred. A number of negroes, who were loitering about, were pressed into the service, and pushed it along, and the gentlemen, walking, brought up the rear. I don't know that I ever in my life felt so completely desolate as during that half-hour's slow progress. We sat cowering among the trunks, my faithful M—— and I, each with a baby in

our arms, sheltering ourselves and our poor little burthens from the bleak northern wind that whistled over us. The last embers of daylight were dying out in dusky red streaks along the horizon, and the dreary waste around us looked like the very shaggy edge of all creation. The men who pushed us along encouraged each other with wild shouts and yells, and every now and then their labour was one of no little danger, as well as difficulty,—for the road crossed one or two deep ravines and morasses at a considerable height, and, as it was not completed, and nothing but the iron rails were laid across piles driven into these places, it became a service of considerable risk to run along these narrow ledges, at the same time urging our car along. No accident happened, however, fortunately, and we presently beheld, with no small satisfaction, a cluster of houses in the fields at some little distance from the road. To the principal one I made my way, followed by the rest of the poor womankind, and, entering the house without further ceremony, ushered them into a large species of wooden room, where blazed a huge pine-wood fire. By this welcome light we descried, sitting in the corner of the vast chimney, an old ruddy-faced man, with silver hair, and a good-humoured countenance, who, welcoming us with ready hospitality, announced himself as Colonel —, and invited us to draw near the fire. The worthy Colonel seemed in no way dismayed at this sudden inbreak of distressed women, which was very soon followed by the arrival of the gentlemen, to whom he repeated the same courteous reception he had given us, replying to their rather hesitating demands for something to eat, by ordering to the right and left a tribe of staring negroes, who bustled about preparing supper, under the active superintendence of the hospitable Colonel. His residence (considering his rank) was quite the most primitive imaginable,—a rough brick-and-plank chamber, of considerable dimensions, not even whitewashed, with the great beams and rafters by which it was supported displaying the skeleton of the building, to the complete satisfaction of any one who might be curious in architecture. The windows could close neither at the top, bottom, sides, nor middle, and were, besides, broken so as to admit several delightful currents of air, which might be received as purely accidental. In one corner of this primitive apartment stood an exceedingly clean-looking bed, with coarse furniture, whilst in the opposite one, an old case-clock was ticking away its time and its master's, with cheerful monotony. The rush-bottomed chairs were of as many different shapes and sizes as those in a modern fine lady's drawing-room, and the walls were hung all round with a curious miscellany, consisting principally of physic phials, turkey-feather fans, bunches of dried herbs, and the Colonel's arsenal, in the shape of one or two old guns, &c. According to the worthy man's hearty invitation, I proceeded to make myself and my companions at home, pinning, skewering, and otherwise suspending our cloaks and shawls across the various intentional and unintentional air-gaps, thereby increasing both the comfort and the grotesqueness of the apartment in no small degree. The babies had bowls of milk furnished them, and the elder portion of the caravan was regaled with a taste of the Colonel's home-made wine, pending the supper, to which he continued to entreat our stay. Meantime he entered into conversation with my husband; and my veneration waxed deep, when the old man, unfolding his history, proclaimed himself one of the heroes of the revolution,—a fellow-fighter with

Washington. I, who, comforted to a degree of high spirits by our sudden transition from the cold and darkness of the railroad to the light and shelter of this rude mansion, had been flippantly bandying jokes, and proceeded some way in a lively flirtation with this illustrious American, grew thrice respectful, and hardly ventured to raise either my eyes or my voice as I inquired if he lived alone in this remote place. Yes, alone now; his wife had been dead near upon two years.

Suddenly we were broken in upon by the arrival of the expected cars. It was past eight o'clock. If we delayed we should have to travel all night; but, then, the Colonel, pressed us to stay and sup (the bereaved Colonel, the last touching revelation of whose lonely existence had turned all my mirth into sympathising sadness). The gentlemen were famished, and well inclined to stay; the ladies were famished too, for we had eaten nothing all day. The bustle of preparation, urged by the warm-hearted Colonel began afresh; the negro girls shambled in and out more vigorously than ever, and finally we were called to eat and refresh ourselves with—dirty water—I cannot call it tea,—old cheese, bad butter, and old, dry biscuits. The gentlemen bethought them of the good supper they might have secured a few miles further, and groaned; but the hospitable Colonel merely asked them half a dollar a-piece (there were about ten of them;) paying which, we departed, with our enthusiasm a little damped for the warrior of the revolution, and a tinge of rather deeper misgiving as to some of his virtues stole over our minds on learning that three of the sable damsels that trudged about our supper service, were the Colonel's own progeny. I believe only three,—though the young negro girl, whose loquacity made us aware of the fact, added, with a burst of commendable pride and gratitude, 'Indeed, he is a father to us all!' Whether she spoke figuratively, or literally, we could not determine. So much for a three-hours' shelter in North Carolina.

GUY'S CLIFFE MILL.*

AN EVENING SKETCH.

BY WILLIAM JONES.

A TRANQUIL beauty marks the spot
 Where stands the ancient mill;
 The fetter'd water heaveth not,
 The noisy wheel is still!
 Ev'ning with ling'ring step, draws on,
 As though it fain would stay
 Its reign awhile, subdued and lone,
 To aid the parting day.

A light gleams from the miller's home,
 His cheerful meal is spread,
 The tankard wreathes itself in foam,
 The fire is amply fed.

* This is one of those beautiful points of scenery with which Warwickshire is so plenteously studded. An additional charm belongs to this venerable structure from the fact of a mill having occupied its site long anterior to the Norman Conquest, which was bestowed by Geoffrey de Clinton on his newly-founded monastery at Kenilworth, together with, as Dugdale quaintly observes, 'both the miller and his children.'

GUY'S CLIFFE MILL.

The good-man from his toil doth rest
 And with a smiling mien,
 Shares in the story and the jest,
 That cheerful intervenc.

No lot more favour'd or secure
 Could man in truth desire,
 Than that where comfort's thrifty store
 No further wants require.
 Content grows with them; who shall say
 It is not happiness?
 Where envious thoughts can have no sway,
 And means, though few, can bless.

Have ye not feelings near akin
 To awe, as thus ye stand
 Beside the pile, that erst hath been
 The work of Saxon hand?
 Time after time, this site hath stood,
 Devoted, as 'tis now,
 Yielding to monk and baron, food,
 The produce of the plough.

By belted knight it hath been held
 And for his soul's estate,
 The holy father's lands hath swelled,
 (A goodly estimate!)
 Sacred from spoil, the feud's dark rage
 Hath pass'd it harmless by,
 And left it firm and strong, though age
 Hath graven deep its dye.

Here, from yon sanctuary oft,
 When sky and earth grew dim,
 Would breathe around in accents soft
 The hallow'd vesper hymn!
 And as the solemn Ave smote
 Upon the pilgrim's ear,
 His heart hath risen with each note
 In calm and thoughtful pray'r.

Here, too, the murd'rous culverin
 The forest glades hath woke
 From some near field of strife, whose din
 The fane's deep rest hath broke.
 And here the dying hath been laid
 All blood stain'd to be shriven,
 Whilst, bending o'er, the priest hath bade
 Their last looks turn to Heaven!

Now all is chang'd, the woods are raz'd,
 The solitary's cell;
 The chantry where a host hath prais'd,
 Their sites alone doth tell!
 But this old pile yet standeth now,
 Unsear'd and quaint in form,
 With added strength upon its brow,
 To cope with age and storm!

The moon is shaded by a cloud,
 Night closes round its vest,
 The dew floats in a misty shroud
 Upon earth's slumb'ring breast;
 Whilst, through the gloom that gathers round,
 The old mill seems to be
 A temple in the waste profound
 To Nature's deity!