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THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 20, 1851.

For the National Era.

MY SUMMER WITH DR. SINGLETARY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF MARGARET SMITH'S JOURNAL.

CHAPTER III.

The Doctor's Match-Making.

"Good morning, Mrs. Barnet!" cried the Doctor, as we drew near a neat farm-house, during one of our morning drives.

A tall, healthful, young woman, in the bloom of matronly beauty, was feeding chickens at the door. She uttered an exclamation of delight, and hurried towards us. Perceiving a stranger in the wagon, she paused, with a look of embarrassment.

"My friend, who is spending a few weeks with me," explained the Doctor.

She greeted me civilly, and pressed the Doctor's hand warmly.

"Oh, it is so long since you have called on us, that we have been talking of going up to the village to see you as soon as Robert can get away *from his* corn-field. You don't know how little Lucy has grown. You *must* stop and see her."

"She's coming to see me herself," replied the Doctor, beckoning to a sweet blue-eyed child in the door-way.

The delighted mother caught up her darling and held her before the Doctor.

"Doesn't she look like Robert?" she inquired. "His very eyes and forehead! Bless me! here he is now."

A stout, hale, young farmer, in a coarse checked frock and broad straw hat, came up from the adjoining field.

"Well, Robert," said the Doctor, "how do matters now stand with you? Well, I hope."

"All right, Doctor. We've paid off the last cent of the mortgage, and the farm is all free and clear. Julia and I have worked hard, but we're none the worse for it."

"You look well and happy, I am sure," said the Doctor. "I don't think you are sorry you took the advice of an old bachelor, after all."

The young wife's head drooped until her lips touched those of her child.

"Sorry!" exclaimed her husband, "not we! *If there's anybody* happier than we are within ten miles of us, I don't know them. Doctor, I'll tell you what I said to Julia the night I brought home that mortgage: 'Well,' said I, 'that debt's paid; but there's one debt we can never pay as long as we live!' 'I know it,' says she, 'but Dr. Singletary wants no better reward for his kindness than to see us live happily together, and do for others what he has done for us.'"

"Pshaw!" said the Doctor, catching up his reins and whip. "You owe me nothing. But I *must not forget* my errand. Poor old Widow Whiting needs a watcher to-night, and she insists upon having Julia Barnet, and nobody else. What shall I tell her?"

"I'll go, certainly. I can leave Lucy now as well as not."

"Good bye, neighbors."

"Good bye, Doctor."

As we drove off, I saw the Doctor draw his hand hastily across his eyes, and he said nothing for some minutes.

"Public opinion," said he at length, as if pursuing his meditations aloud—"Public opinion is, in nine cases out of ten, public folly and impertinence. We are slaves to one another. We dare not take counsel of our consciences and affections, but must needs suffer popular prejudice and custom to decide for us, and at their bidding are sacrificed love and friendship, and all the best hopes of our lives. We do not ask what is right and best for us, but what will folks say of it! We have no individuality, no self-poised strength, no sense of freedom. We are conscious always of the gaze of the many-eyed tyrant. We propitiate him with precious offerings: we burn incense perpetually to Moloch, and pass through his fire the sacred first-born of our hearts. How few dare to seek their own happiness by the lights which God has given them, or have strength to defy the false pride and the prejudice of the world, and stand fast in the liberty of Christians! Can anything be more pitiable than the sight of so many who should be the choosers and creators under God of their own spheres of utility and happiness, self-degraded into mere slaves of propriety and custom, their true natures undeveloped, their hearts cramped and shut up; each afraid of his neighbor, and his neighbor of him, living a life of unreality, deceiving and being deceived, and forever walking in a vain show? Here now we have just left a married couple who are happy because they have taken counsel of their honest affections, rather than of the opinions of the multitude, and have dared to be true to themselves in defiance of impertinent gossip."

"You allude to the young farmer Barnet and his wife, I suppose," said I.

"Yes. I will give their case as an illustration. Julia Atkins was the daughter of Ensign Atkins, who lived on the mill road, just above Deacon Warner's. When she was ten years old, her mother died; and in a few months afterwards her father married Polly Wiggin the tailoress, a shrewd, selfish, managing woman. Julia, poor girl, had a sorry time of it; for the Ensign, although a kind and affectionate man naturally, was too weak and yielding to interpose between her and his strong-minded, sharp-tongued wife. She had one friend, however, who was always ready to sympathize with her. Robert Barnet was the son of her next door neighbor, about ten years older than herself; they had grown up together as school companions and playmates; and often in my drives I used to meet them coming home hand in hand, from school, or from the woods with berries and nuts, talking and laughing as if there were no scolding step-mothers in the world.

"It so fell out that when Julia was in her sixteenth year, there came a famous writing-master to Peewawkin. He was a showy, dashing fellow, with a fashionable dress, a wicked eye, and a tongue like the old serpent's when he tempted our great grandmother. Julia was one of his scholars, and, perhaps, the prettiest of them all. The rascal singled her out from the first, and, the better to accomplish his purpose, he left the tavern, and took lodgings at the Ensign's. He soon saw how matters stood in the family, and governed himself accordingly, taking special pains to conciliate the ruling authority. The Ensign's wife hated young Barnet, and wished to get rid of her daughter-in-law. The writing-master therefore had a fair field. He flattered the poor young girl by his attentions, and praised her beauty. Her moral training had not fitted her to withstand this seductive influence; no mother's love, with its quick, instinctive sense of danger threatening its object, interposed between her and the tempter. Her old friend and playmate—he who could alone have saved her—had been rudely repulsed from the house by her mother-in-law; and, indignant and disgusted, he had retired from all competition with his formidable rival. Thus abandoned to her own undisciplined imagination, with the inexperience of a child and the passions of a woman, she was deceived by false promises, bewildered, fascinated, and beguiled into sin.

"It is the same old story of woman's confidence, and man's duplicity. The rascally writing-master, under pretence of visiting a neighboring town, left his lodgings, and never returned. The last I heard of him, he was the tenant of a Western penitentiary. Poor Julia, driven in disgrace from her father's house, found a refuge in the humble dwelling of an old woman of no very creditable character. There I was called to visit her; and, although not unused to scenes of suffering and sorrow, I had never before witnessed such an utter abandonment to grief, shame, and remorse. Alas! what sorrow was like unto her sorrow. The birth-hour of her infant was also that of its death.

"The agony of her spirit seemed greater than she could bear. Her eyes were opened, and she looked upon herself with loathing and horror. She would admit of no hope, no consolation; she would listen to no palliation or excuse of her guilt. I could only direct her to that source of pardon and peace to which the broken and contrite heart never appeals in vain.

"In the mean time, Robert Barnet shipped on board a Labrador vessel. The night before he left, he called on me, and put in my hand a sum of money, small indeed, but all he could then command.

"'You will see *her* often,' he said. 'Do not let her suffer, for she is more to be pitied than blamed.'

"I answered him that I would do all in my power for her, and added that I thought far better of her, contrite and penitent as she was, than of some who were busy in holding her up to shame and censure.

"'God bless you for these words!' he said, grasping my hand. 'I shall think of them often. They will be a comfort to me.'

"As for Julia, God was more merciful to her than man. She rose from her sick bed thoughtful and humbled, but with hopes that transcended the world of her suffering and shame. She no longer murmured against her sorrowful allotment, but accepted it with quiet and almost cheerful resignation, as the fitting penalty of God's broken laws, and the needed discipline of her spirit. She could say with the Psalmist, 'The judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves. Thou art just, oh, Lord, and thy judgment is right.' Through my exertions, she obtained employment in a respectable family, to whom she endeared herself by her faithfulness, cheerful obedience, and unaffected piety. Her trials had made her heart tender with sympathy for all in affliction.

"She seemed inevitably drawn towards the sick and suffering. In their presence, the burden of her own sorrow seemed to fall off. She was the most cheerful and sunny-faced nurse I ever knew; and I always felt sure that my own efforts would be well seconded when I found her by the bedside of a patient. Beautiful it was to see this poor young girl, whom the world still looked upon with scorn and unkindness, cheering the desponding, and imparting, as it were, her own strong, healthful life to the weak and faint; supporting upon her bosom, through weary nights, the heads of those who in health would have deemed her touch pollution; or to hear her singing, for the ear of the dying, some sweet hymn of pious hope or resignation, or calling to mind the consolations of the Gospel and the great love of Christ.

"'I trust,' said I, 'that the feelings of the community were softened towards her.'

"'You know what human nature is,' returned the Doctor; 'and with what hearty satisfaction we abhor and censure sin and folly in others. It is a luxury which we cannot easily forego, although our own experience tells us that the consequences of vice and error are evil and bitter enough, without the aggravation of ridicule and reproach from without. So you need not be surprised to learn that, in poor Julia's case, the charity of sinners like herself did not keep pace with the mercy and forgiveness of Him who is infinite in purity. Nevertheless, I will do our people the justice to say, that her blameless and self-sacrificing life was not without its proper effect upon them.'

"'What became of Robert Burnet?' I inquired.

"'He came back after an absence of several months, and called on me before he had even seen his father and mother. He did not mention Julia; but I saw that his errand with me concerned her. I spoke of her excellent deportment and her useful life, dwelt upon the extenuating circumstances of her error, and of her sincere and hearty repentance.'

"'Doctor!' said he, at length, with a hesitating and embarrassed manner, 'What should you think if I should tell you that, after all that has passed, I have half made up my mind to ask her to become my wife?'

"'I should think better of it if you had wholly made up your mind,' said I; 'and if you were my own son, I wouldn't ask for you a better wife than Julia Atkins. Don't hesitate, Robert, on account of what some ill-natured people may say. Consult your own heart, first of all.'

"'I don't care for the talk of all the busybodies in town,' said he; 'but I wish father and mother could feel as you do about her.'

"'Leave that to me,' said I; 'they are kind-hearted and reasonable, and I dare say will be disposed to make the best of the matter, when they find you are decided in your purpose.'

"'I did not see him again, but a few days after I learned from his parents that he had gone on another voyage. It was now autumn, and the most sickly season I have ever known in Peewawkin. Ensign Atkins and his wife both fell sick, and Julia embraced with alacrity this providential opportunity to return to her father's house, and fulfil the duties of a daughter. Under her careful nursing, the Ensign soon got upon his feet; but his wife, whose constitution was weaker, sunk under the fever. She died better than she had lived, penitent and loving, asking forgiveness of Julia for her neglect and unkindness, and invoking blessings on her head. Julia had now for the first time since the death of her mother, a comfortable home, and a father's love and protection. Her sweetness of temper, patient endurance and forgetfulness of herself in her labors for others, gradually overcame the scruples and hard feelings of her neighbors. They began to question whether, after all, it was meritorious in them to treat one like her as a sinner beyond forgiveness. Elder Staples and Deacon Warner were her fast friends. The Deacon's daughters—the tall, blue-eyed, brown-locked girls you noticed in meeting the other day—set the example among the young people of treating her as their equal and companion. The dear good girls! they reminded me of the maidens of Naxos, cheering and comforting the unhappy Ariadne.

"One midsummer evening, I took Julia with me to a poor sick patient of mine, who was suffering for lack of attendance. The house where she lived was in a lonely and desolate place, some two or three miles below us, on a sandy level, just elevated above the great salt marshes, stretching far away to the sea. The night set in dark and stormy; a fierce northeasterly wind swept over the level waste, driving thick snow-clouds before it, shaking the doors and windows of the old house, and roaring in its vast chimney. The woman was dying when we arrived, and her drunken husband was sitting in stupid unconcern in the corner of the fire-place. A little after midnight she breathed her last.

"In the mean time the storm had grown more violent; there was a blinding snow-fall in the air, and we could feel the jar of the great waves as they broke upon the beach.

"'It is a terrible night for sailors on the coast,' I said, breaking our long silence with the dead. 'God grant them sea-room!'

"Julia shuddered as I spoke, and by the dim-flashing fire-light I saw she was weeping. Her thoughts I knew were with her old friend and playmate, on the wild waters.

"'Julia,' said I, 'do you know that Robert Barnet loves you with all the strength of an honest and true heart?'

"She trembled, and her voice faltered as she confessed that when Robert was at home, he had asked her to become his wife.

"'And, like a fool, you refused him, I suppose—the brave generous fellow!'

"'Oh, Doctor!' she exclaimed, 'how can you talk so? It is just because Robert *is* so good, and noble, and generous, that I dared not take him at his word. You yourself, Doctor, would have despised me if I had taken advantage of his pity or his kind remembrance of the old days when we were children together. I have already brought too much disgrace upon those dear to me.'

"I was endeavoring to convince her, in reply, that she was doing injustice to herself, and wronging her best friend, whose happiness depended in a great measure upon her, when, borne on the strong blast, we both heard a faint cry as of a human being in distress. I threw up the window which opened seaward, and we leaned out into the wild night, listening breathlessly for a repetition of the sound.

"Once more, and once only, we heard it—a low, smothered, despairing cry.

"'Some one is lost, and perishing in the snow,' said Julia. 'The sound comes in the direction of the beach plum bushes on the side of the marsh. Let us go at once.'

"She snatched up her hood and shawl, and was already at the door. I found and lighted a lantern, and soon overtook her. The snow was already deep and badly drifted, and it was with extreme difficulty that we could force our way against the storm. We stopped often to take breath and listen; but the roaring of the wind and waves was alone audible. At last we reached a slightly elevated spot, overgrown with dwarf plum trees whose branches were dimly visible above the snow.

"'Here, bring the lantern here!' cried Julia, who had strayed a few yards from me. I hastened to her, and found her lifting up the body of a man who was apparently insensible. The rays of the lantern fell full upon his face, and we both, at the same instant, recognised Robert Barnet. Julia did not shriek nor faint; but, kneeling in the snow, and still supporting the body, she turned towards me a look of earnest and fearful inquiry.

"'Courage!' said I, 'he still lives. He is only overcome with fatigue and cold.'

"With much difficulty—partly carrying and partly dragging him through the snow—we succeeded in getting him to the house, where, in a short time, he so far recovered as to be able to speak. Julia, who had been my prompt and efficient assistant in his restoration, retired into the shadow of the room as soon as he began to rouse himself and look about him. He asked where he was, and who was with me—saying that his head was so confused that he thought he saw Julia Atkins by the bed-side. 'You were not mistaken,' said I; 'Julia is here, and you owe your life to her.' He started up and gazed round the room. I beckoned Julia to the bed-side; and I shall never forget the grateful earnestness with which he grasped her hand, and called upon God to bless her. Some folks think me a tough-hearted old fellow, and so I am; but that scene was more than I could bear without shedding tears. Robert told us that his vessel had been thrown upon the beach a mile or two below, and that he feared all the crew had perished save himself.

"Assured of his safety, I went out once more, in the faint hope of hearing the voice of some survivor of the disaster; but I listened only to the heavy thunder of the surf rolling along the horizon of the East. The storm had in a great measure ceased; the gray light of dawn was just visible, and I was gratified to see two of the nearest neighbors approaching the house. On being informed of the wreck, they immediately started for the beach, where several dead bodies, half-buried in snow, confirmed the fears of the solitary survivor.

"The result of all this you can easily conjecture. Robert Barnet abandoned the sea, and, with the aid of some of his friends, purchased the farm where he now lives, and the anniversary of his shipwreck found him the husband of Julia. I can assure you I have had every reason to congratulate myself on my share in the match-making. Nobody ventured to find fault with it except two or three sour old busybodies, who, as Elder Staples well says, 'would have cursed her whom Christ had forgiven, and spurned the weeping Magdalen from the feet of her Lord.'"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AGRICULTURAL GEOLOGY.—No. 6.

BY JOSIAH HOLBROOK.

Lime formations are more ates than ides. Carbonates are most abundant, various, and useful, frequently very beautiful. Common limestone of different textures and colors, most, perhaps all, the marbles, chalk, and crystals, of various forms and hues, are the carbonates of lime; about forty-four parts carbonic acid, and fifty-six quick-lime—oxyde of calcium.

Next to the carbonates of lime, sulphates are most abundant and useful. Common gypsum, a powerful manure; alabaster, much used for ornaments under a beautiful polish, crystals of considerable variety and beauty, are the sulphates of lime.

Fluate of lime is another calcareous formation. It is known as fluor spar, also Derbyshire spar. It receives a fine polish, when it is used for various ornamental purposes. From the fluate of lime fluoric acid is obtained, which has the power of acting on glass. By covering any piece of glass with a thin coat of wax, then cutting through the wax letters or any figures, and exposing the glass to fluoric acid, etching is produced on the glass. The fluoric acid is set free from the lime by charging it with sulphuric acid.

Nitrate of lime, though not common, is found in some considerable deposites. It has been supposed that it would furnish a good material for producing the oxygen gas for the calcium light. Bones are the phosphate of lime. Chloride of lime is a manufactured article, formed by exposing lime to chlorine. It was first manufactured some forty years since, and is now a most important article in the manufacture of cotton fabrics. It has great bleaching powers.

Every child knows that lime formations, especially carbonates and sulphates, are alike essential for the purposes of agriculture and architecture. They are essential to the greatest fertility of soils. By a proper mixture of quartz and feldspar, or sand, clay, and lime, a soil becomes permanently fertile. The three may be considered the essential elements of soils, though sand and clay, without the presence of lime, produce vegetation. Both the sulphate and the phosphate of lime probably add more as temporary stimulants of vegetation than as essential ingredients in soils.

By taking a review of the *ides* and *ates* already presented, as forming the elements of mountains, rocks, and soils, no one can well fail of being struck with the simplicity, beauty, and practical utility of geology and chemistry, as at the very foundation of the most practical knowledge, of course peculiarly fitted for the very "first lessons" both in schools and families.

EXPERIMENT.—By applying the thumb nail and the point of a knife to the different lime formations, especially the carbonates and sulphates, it may be found which give to the former, and whether all yield to the latter. Their hardness, compared with each other, also with feldspar, quartz, and other minerals, may thus be ascertained.

For the National Era.

TO ELMINA.

Soft dweller in the sunset light,
How pleads my heavy heart for thee,
That some good angel's hand to-night
Gather thy sweet love back from me.

For down the lonesome way I tread,
No summer flower will ever bloom—
All hope is lost, all faith is dead—
Thou must not, canst not, share my doom.

Nay, let me send no shadow chill
To the blue beauty of thy sky;
Fain would I shape my song to still
Thy sad fears like a lullaby.

Not in thy memory would I seem
As one that woe and sorrow claim—
Think of me, dear one, as a dream
That faded when the morning came.

A. C.

New York, December 17, 1850.

LIFE ON PRAIRIE DE LA FLEUR.—No. 2.

BY MARY IRVING.

A PEEP AT THE PRAIRIE.

"These are the Gardens of the Desert—these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful—
For which the speech of England has no name,
The Prairies."—*W. C. Bryant.*

Our Prairie of Flowers, in common with the whole broad surface of this Western country, is peopled by "many nations, and divers tongues." The [illegible] over-crowded European hives, and darken the wharves of Boston and New York like the locusts of Egypt, are generally borne *en masse* with the speed of steamboat and steam car into the valleys of the St. Lawrence and the Upper Mississippi. Seldom do the free-born of other climes, however poor they may be, seek homes under the shadowing of Slavery's banner. In our Lake ports they cluster for a time, affording many an illustration of Babel in the day of its "confusion." From these, most are, sooner or later, sprinkled over the wide prairies, or among the trees of the forests they quickly fell. Many, after replenishing their wasted stores by a few months' work, "start team" again, with their families, and explore the track to Oregon, Nebraska, or California.

I have spoken of "*the West.*" I use the term relatively, not presuming to fix limits where so many wiser heads than mine have been doubtfully shaken. Especially is this explanation due to the dwellers upon our otherwise insulated prairie, whose every spire of grass might almost be expected to uproot itself in sympathy with the scornful indignation of its inhabitants at finding their abode stigmatized as "*the* West." With the Chinese and the Ohioans, finding such a limitless extent of territory at either side, they are wont to fancy themselves in the "centre of the world!"

Twelve years ago, Prairie de la Fleur was emphatically a wilderness—a trampling ground for wild buffaloes, and savages scarcely less wild. The romance of the Indian's forest life is all unwritten; it has faded with the flowers he trod. Tradition gives a faint whisper here and there to dazzle and disappoint curiosity; 'tis all the history of a race that has been, and soon must cease to be!

This veil of oblivion hangs mysteriously over the origin of the broad, green prairies the red man has bequeathed us. What freak of Nature left these treeless tracts to bask thus openly in the sunshine? We ask of tradition, and her lips murmur some stifled sound, we know not what. We ask of Nature herself, and she, too, is dumb; but her interpreters, the philosophers who aspire to solve her unspoken enigmas, tell us of fires which swept over the country ages ago in desolating waves. Who kindled the spark that swept a race of Dryads from the earth? Who saw that deluge of flame pour its baptism of desolation over the face of this fair country? There is none to answer.

However they may have originated, it is certain that the Indians preserved the prairies in a grazing state by "firing" them every autumn, when the tall grass was scorched to tinder in the sun's rays, and the blaze flashed like summer lightning along the dusky evening horizon. Since the prairies have changed owners, they have changed also in appearance. The "coat of many colors," which their mother Nature gave, is often exchanged for the more homely livery of a useful servant; and the prairie, fenced off into corn, wheat, and oat patches, is made to minister daily bread to its masters, much to the disadvantage of its picturesqueness. Where the yearly fires are thus warded off, winged seeds from the groves take refuge, and find a welcome. Young trees spring up, and flourish most luxuriantly. Agriculturists and analysers of the soil tell us that the land, having exhausted in a measure, by long years of grass-growing, the element most favorable to grain-crops, is more valuable for timber-raising than for any other purpose. And it is everywhere found, I believe, that the difference between the *yield* and the excellence of wheat sown on an acre of prairie ground easily ploughed, and that which has been redeemed by much toil from the forest, is, in a few years, sufficiently in favor of the latter to pay for its "clearing." Orchards thrive excellently; and our Prairie de la Fleur, now in one important sense almost *fruitless*, gives rich promise of the harvests the children best love to gather, when a few more years shall have strengthened the young peach, pear, and apple twigs into maturity.

The first instinct of the emigrant settler leads him to provide for his head a shield from the arrows of the sun, and a shelter from the winds that sweep unchained over the prairie. "Timber" is precious and rare in this treeless territory; so he contents himself with as little of it as will accommodate his better half, "bairnies," chattels, and cow, leaving pigs, chickens, &c., to find their own quarters among the tall grass.

One of these "shanties" once caught my eye, nestled in a retired "hollow." It was the merest nut-shell of a domicil into which you could conceive the smallest family to be crowded. It was roofed and "sided up" with rough slabs, receding from any too intimate proximity to each other, and giving many a peeping place to rain drops or to prying eyes. A bit of "stove pipe" protruded through the top, in mimicry of a chimney. Yet it was the temporary home of a man who had held office of high trust in an Eastern State, with his wife, an accomplished lady, (in kitchen as in parlor, no doubt,) and five or six children. A few years later, the comforts of a tasteful cottage will probably make the remembrance of their humble home like a half-forgotten dream.

Do you see that log hut on yonder purple hillock, fortified by seven immense wheat-stacks, that overhang it as the Alps a Swiss village? We will take it as a tolerably fair sample of its kind, and pay it a visit, by your leave. A chimney of mud and mud-colored bricks covers half one side, with a projecting bulge in guise of an oven. Pull the string of the latch, that hangs out hospitably—it will ring no door bell, but it is all the same thing to the inmates. Lift aside the clematis that has tapestried the entrance with its exquisite tassels—the spontaneous, untrained gift of Nature to these children of hers—and pass through the low door-way. The four corners of the house are likewise the four corners of—call it the bedroom, kitchen, or parlor, as you please; it will answer to each and every one of these names—into which you find yourself ushered. Over a blazing brush fire, between the chimney jambs, the "gude wife," with a face that has caught its blaze, is bending to inspect her dinner kettle. One broad, low window lights the room, and two beds garnish the farthest corners. Poles and ropes describe lines of latitude and longitude against the dimness above you, hung with braces of prairie chickens, dried venison, strings of onions, ragged jackets, and so on, indefinitely. One man is lazily puffing his pipe, with what there is of brim to his hat drooped to shade his eyes from the cooking fire. Another is stretched at full length on the wooden bench upon the hearth, shivering, quaking, and chattering, as though he had just dropped from the North Pole.

"Why don't you attend to your sick man?" you would involuntarily exclaim to the indifferent woman at his side.

"Oh, it's nothin', only *the shakes*," she would answer you carelessly. "The *agur* takes us by turns, you see. T'other week 'twas on us all together, and a pretty fix we were in—couldn't 'ery one on us stand straight enough to fetch a drop o' water! A body must tough it out!"

And "tough it out" the poor fellow does, shaking and groaning most industriously, while half a dozen children romp unconcerned around and over him; and you wonder more and more where in the house all this living cargo finds storage.

There hangs a ladder behind you, leading to a "loft" between the eaves—a dark and fearful place to look into—lighted only by the fire-beams through the chinks of its floor, and the moonbeams through the chinks of its roof. Here the children are stowed away by night, and the superfluous "plunder" of all kinds by day.

While you have been reconnoitering, the one table has been spread with a white cloth, in honor of the visiter, and heaped with the treasures disgorged by that marvellous dinner-pot; a variety of steaming morsels, among which a dish of pork and cabbage figures most prominently. [illegible] stranger, and make yourself to home!" invites your hospitable hostess; for, in consideration of your *tastes* in general, I have taken you to a Yankee emigrant's table, instead of a Norwegian, Welch, Irish, or even a Scotchman's.

What is your surprise to see the ague-shaken invalid rear up his now fever-flushed visage opposite you, and make a successful dive into the platter of pork!

"Oh!" explains his "help-meet" once more, in reply to your glance of surprise, "we never mind the *fever-n'agur!* Folks must eat to live, shake or no shake! I reckon he'll be out to reap and bind in an hour, likely!"

The "fever and ague" is the thorn of this flower-prairie, as of all others in its vicinity. It is a singular disease, of which those who have seen its operation need no description, and those who have not can form little conception from words—so I will spare them. It hangs over the damp, decaying vegetation that rises in too rank luxuriance under the foot of Spring. It breathes in the summer gales, and poisons the arrowy sunbeams. It haunts the river-sides and the streamlets, and turns the water of life into a fluid that courses, burning, through the veins of its victims. But chiefly—

"The fever demon strews
Poison with the falling dews!"

At the hour sweetest on the hills of New England, when the day-star has left his throne to the suns that sparkle from the heights of the universe—and our nearer, brighter "sister orb" temps the romantic foot to step out from its confined abode beneath the blue "sapphire-set" roof of the night-heaven; at that hour, the miasma rises on its bat-like wing, dimly bodied forth in the nauseous fogs that warn the senses of sight and smell, fixing its "mark on the forehead" of all indiscreet devotees of romance. You *may* venture to the confines of the grove, to hear the owl's sobbing hoot, and the whippoorwill's wild, doleful chatter, but you must pay the penalty in achings, bitter dreams, and [illegible] of the brain, which will very probably burn up all lingering seeds of moonlight romance scattered in its dream-chamber!

With the hope that, by walking in the path of discretion, you may escape the clutches of this worse than "Giant Despair," I leave you to improve your acquaintance with him at your own leisure.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BEECHER'S LECTURE.

BOSTON, *January* 14, 1851.

To the Editor of the National Era:

The best thing by all odds which we have had this winter, by way of public lectures, was one delivered last Wednesday evening before the Mercantile Library Association, by Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn, New York. His theme was "Character," and a better subject could hardly have been selected to develop the intellectual resources of the speaker, and his intimate acquaintance with the human heart as seen in the various walks of life.

Mr. Beecher commenced by drawing a distinctive line between character and reputation. The former he compared to staple stocks, possessing an intrinsic value, subject to but little variation. The latter was a sort of *fancy* stock, with no intrinsic worth, but rising and falling from day to day with the fluctuations of the market.

Character, according to Mr. B., might be divided into three classes. The first of these classes comprised those in which one dominant faculty of the mind held all others in subjection. The man whose ruling passion was the selfish love of approbation furnished an example of this class. Every feeling of such a man's soul would be subservient to this one; to gratify this passion he would be and do anything—with the religious, he would be devout—with reformers, a reformer—with conservatives, an ardent admirer of stability—and his religion, like a seaman's dress, would vary with the latitude, from the equator to the pole, apparently changeable as the wind, but really as fixed as Nature's laws to his own controlling end. A miser is another form of a one-idea man. A thorough miser he considers as the victim of monomania, and fit only for the lunatic asylum and the care of physicians; but there are a class of men, whose every idea hinged on gain, not misers, but *the stuff of which misers were made.* Such a man might be a lover of art, and have his walls hung with Guidos, but the pleasure with which he would point to them would arise from his having purchased them at a quarter of their real value. If engaged in politics, he calculates revolutions by their probable effects on stocks; and as for religion, he would hardly consent to go to heaven at all, unless he could enter its gates for half the usual price of admission.

The second division of character included those in which a group of faculties control the mind. If the animal passions predominate, the result will be a sensualist and a glutton. If the intellectual group maintain the sway, we find the man whose greatest enjoyment is to do, to act; these are the men who are full of energy and action, and dash through the world under full headway, filled with fuel, and with the steam hissing at every rivet.

When the moral faculties hold the sceptre, the mind longs after the noble, just, and good, and instinctively shrinks from evil, because they loathe it, rather than because it is evil.

The third class comprises the multiplex or manifold character. This description of character has been so often satirized that its existence might be doubted; but such is psychologically the fact, for all have recognised it; the world always feels a truth before philosophy betrays it. People who are governed by this sort of character act under different impulses at different times, and in some positions employ a standard by which they judge of things wholly different from what they are in others. The merchant goes to church on the Sabbath; and when he hears the injunction, "look not every one on his own things, but also on those of his neighbors," he devoutly responds, "Amen!" When he goes to his store on the following day, and the voice of Commerce exclaims, "Every one for himself," to that, too, he responds, "Amen!" Are you in trouble, in pecuniary embarrassment, go to such a man as your neighbor, your friend, and he will relieve you in all friendliness, and aid you to the extent of his ability. But go to him at his counting-room, and as a business matter state to him your wants and your straitened condition, and you will find him the cool man of business, ready to shave your note at the largest discount, and perhaps he will calculate how he may take the greatest advantage of your necessities, and map you out with all the nicety that the ox is divided up in our cooking-books, to indicate where the choice pieces are to be found!

The varied trickery of trade, and the absence of sincerity of politics, are but forms in which this manifold character appears, framing, as it does, one conscience for public, and another for private use. Men's hearts, like houses, have various entrances; and articles which would be spurned from the front door, simply because they were brought to the wrong entrance, will find a ready admission at the kitchen door, and a hearty welcome in the cellar.

The Christian, Mr. Beecher remarked, was he who carried his honest convictions of duty into all his designs. Can the rule of Individual Right be carried out into all the affairs of the world? He (Mr. B) believed that it could. "Christianity," said he, "must be bankrupted, or Liberty become universal!" The greatest work of the two greatest nations of the earth, Britain and America, in developing this character, lies with the peasant and the slave!

Individual welfare is bound up in the general welfare. The general welfare rests on obedience to the rectitude of the law, and the rectitude of the law on the rectitude of conscience; and every one is bound to obey the law, *because* it is the exponent of all that is just, right, and true. Let those beware, then, who bring these two elements, rectitude of law and rectitude of conscience, in positious antagonistic to each other.

Such is a brief and meager sketch of this masterly essay, which was listened to with breathless interest for nearly an hour and a half by an audience crowded to the utmost capacity of the Tremont Temple.

At the close of the lecture, a gentleman was overheard to ask a friend who had been present, what he thought of Mr. Beecher. The striking reply attested how well his friend had been pleased—"Strike off ten extra copies of that man, and you would reform the world!"

G. F. B.

☞ The letter below is the first of a series which we expect from an intelligent citizen of Ohio, who lately left for New Mexico.—*Ed. Era.*

FROM NEW MEXICO.

Murders—Character of the People—The new Government—H. N. Smith—Slavery—The Indians, &c.

SANTA FE, *November* 20, 1850.

To the Editor of the National Era:

I arrived here last Thursday night in "good order and well conditioned" for one who had been an outcast from civilization, wandering over "wide-extended plains" and "cloud-capped" mountains for the space of two months. Of course, I have not been here a sufficient length of time to become well acquainted with either persons, events, or things, and cannot therefore send you just such a letter as I would like to furnish, and as I hope to furnish hereafter. In fact, I should not attempt a letter at all, but for the fact that I will not have another opportunity before the first of January, 1851. I might furnish your readers with a few extracts from wayside notes of travel, but these, perhaps, would be more interesting to myself than to them. Besides, should I commence such a work, with my tendency to infinite prolixity, I should be in danger of writing a book, as many other unfortunates before me, which would prove a nuisance to myself and an insupportable bore to the public.

There have been two or three very atrocious murders perpetrated here within a few weeks past. One of the murderers is now in jail, and will doubtless be hung, unless he can bribe his keepers, and make his escape. Such scenes of violence and bloodshed must continue to be frequent here till some salutary restraint of law can be thrown over this community. It is needless to say that such tragedies seldom, if ever, occur out of the precincts of the gambling "hells" and fandango rooms. Tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands, of dollars are annually swallowed up in these maelstroms of dissipation and ruin; and the almost beggared victims leave for California to recruit their broken-down fortunes. One man came out here last spring in charge of a train belonging to Judge Brown of Missouri, threw himself into the stream of dissipation, and was soon borne upon the rocks, and ruined. He sold the goods he had in charge, converted all he could into ready money, gambled it away in a few nights, and then left for California, leaving his employer minus some ten thousand dollars.

Drunkenness is also very prevalent here among both sexes, (this will apply to the Mexican *females,*) and among the Mexican women prostitution is almost universal. It is painful to see to what a profound of degradation human nature can sink itself when left to the freedom of its own will. Where *woman* is so sunken and debased, we are apt to think there is nothing redeeming, and we instinctively inquire, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" But here, as of old, the answer may appropriately be given, "Come and see." The little I have seen of these people has convinced me that they have many redeeming traits of character, with all their debasement. There is a natural ease and gracefulness of deportment strangely blended with filthy rags and marks of deepest abjection. It is Terpsichore sporting the cast-off duds of the Moenades after a Bacchanalia. In their extreme urbanity, this people are only equalled by the French, and far transcend our own American population in the States. They are sympathetic and impulsive in their feelings, and in this lies the element of their ruin. In short, if this people could be Americanized, and receive the polish and refinement of education and civilization, and above all the chastening, purifying influences of our holy religion, they would become a most interesting part of our population.

Can the work of reformation be accomplished? I believe it can, if the proper influences can be brought to bear for its consummation. Those influences must be *American*, and they must be *sanctified.* All, or nearly all, the influences hitherto brought to bear upon this community, (whether American or otherwise,) instead of being *reformatory*, have been of a corrupting and debasing character. Even those who have been the spiritual *fathers* and *guides*, have themselves led the way, and shown themselves the most notorious examples of profligacy and licentiousness. Is it surprising that when the "blind lead the blind," both should fall into the pit together? The holy *padre* here, I am informed, has *five* mistresses, with whom he is living in open adultery; and a like state of things exists among the Romish clergy throughout the whole Territory and old Mexico. In fact, it would be manifest injustice to judge the unfortunate female *here* by the rigid standard that condemns the prostitute of the States. *There*, public opinion condemns it; *here*, it sustains it. *There*, marriage is hallowed by religious respect, and sanctified by holy rites; *here*, its sacred obligations are scarcely known, much less religiously regarded. *There*, VIRTUE is one of the brightest ornaments of our holy religion; *here*, mitred priests have voted it a worthless bauble, and consecrated *licentiousness* as the handmaid of religion. Let the American mothers and daughters, then, pity rather than execrate these unfortunate ones, remembering her to whom the compassionate Son of God said: "Daughter, go thy way, sin no more."

All parties here are just at present on the *qui vive*, awaiting the official announcement of the new Government and Governor, and I do not know but the next mail stage will be demolished by the tumultuous rush that will be made upon it by the eager populace. Dame Rumor has been more modest and retiring in this instance than is her custom. I believe she has not ventured to tender, in advance, the gubernatorial chair and robes to any one, save Hugh N. Smith, and he has been too sick to accept of it. No doubt, however, but when the announcement is officially made, the old lady will look over her spectacles very wisely, and say, "I told you so!"

H. N. Smith has been very much afflicted with the erysipelas since his return, but is now convalescent. It is thought, by some of the knowing ones here, that his opposition to the introduction of slavery into this Territory abstracted largely from the number of votes that *would have been* in his favor in the recent election. I am informed that there is a much stronger disposition, among leading men here, in favor of slavery, than was suspected some time since. There will no doubt be a vigorous effort made to repeal the law of God which Mr. Webster has been kindly helping Providence to enact for the security of this Territory. Whether the effort shall succeed, is a matter for future trial. *Partially*, it has succeeded already, and there are now, as nearly as I can ascertain, some twenty or thirty negro slaves held in this Territory, notwithstanding the Divine prohibitory enactment in which Mr. Webster expressed so much confidence. If we shall succeed in consecrating this Territory to Freedom, we shall certainly feel very thankful to *God* for it, but feel under no particular obligations to Messrs. Webster, Cass, *et id omne genus.*

A Mr. Bird, merchant from Socoro, was here on yesterday, and informed Colonel Calhoun, the Indian agent, that 8,000 head of sheep had been driven off from that neighborhood by Navahoe Indians within a few days past. The Mexicans had assembled in a band of 500 or 1,000 men, all well armed, and declared their determination