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THE NATIONAL ERA.

G. BAILEY, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR; JOHN G. WHITTIER, CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

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G. BAILEY, *Washington, D. C.*

WASHINGTON, D. C.

IN THE COUNTRY, *July* 25, 1859.

MY DEAR ERA: I am in trouble. I wonder if you or your thousands of readers could help me out of it.

Very early this morning, as I was passing through an unoccupied chamber, I heard a cry of distress. It seemed to fill and flood the whole room; but at length I found that it proceeded from the fire-place. I sounded the tocsin, and the whole family marshalled themselves in every stage of dishabille. "Mice!" suggested one, in whom a mouse inspires more fear than would a regiment of volunteers with a band of music and a park of artillery. "Burning up, I suppose," said another, who had just been looking at the charming and graphic pictures in an old copy of Fox's Book of Martyrs. But, as no fire had been kindled, this was hardly probable. An immediate investigation was determined on. Gimlets, or hammers, or whatever you call those things that people pull out nails with, were brought, the iron fire-board wrenched from its place, and I peeped in. Black as Acheron. A lamp was lighted, and there was a little broken bird's nest, and four little birds, spilled out on the soot that had fallen on the hearth. For many weeks we had heard a kind of rumbling in the chimney, something like distant thunder, and had concluded it to be the chimney swallows—and now here they were. We took out the nest in fragments. It was built entirely of sticks, short bits, perhaps an inch and a half long, just twisted together, and seemingly stuck by cement. There was not a shred of down, or anything soft, on the inside, but it was comparatively smooth, the ends of the sticks having been made to come on the outside. We picked up the birds, one by one, from the soot, and a most distressed family they were—bulky bodies, disgusting skinny necks, straight little horrid pin-feathers that did not half cover their horrid thin skin, big heads, cold legs and claws, eyes shut close, mouths wide open, and such mouths and throats, yawning chasms that threatened to swallow you whole, or at least looked as if they would like to do it—in short, ugly as real babies, and, like real babies, yelling at the top of their voices in a deafening quartette of bird-baby agony. Well, it must be confessed there was something to cry for. To be waked out of a morning nap by one's house crashing about one's ears, and to be hurled, house and all, down a precipice of six hundred feet, is not agreeable, and the poor birds cannot be blamed for making an ado about it. Now, the question arises, what shall I do with them? The first thing was to get them a new house. The branch of a tree on which a pair of robins had built their nest was blown down, in a storm, a few days ago, and the four eggs fell out and were broken, whereupon the bereaved robins left the place. This nest was brought in. It was made of hay, and was of course much warmer and softer than the other; but we thought they must be accustomed to the unwonted luxury, even if it did slightly enervate their frames. I put them in, and then came another caterwauling from the chimney. A further search brought to light another fragment of the nest, with a fifth bird clinging to it for dear life. He was placed with his brothers, and then they were all put back in the fire-place, in the hope that the old bird would hear their cries, and take prompt measures for their relief. The fire-board was propped open, that she might have light enough to see the case in all its bearings, if she should wish to take a survey; but all to no avail. Two hours passed away, and there were no signs of a rescue. I thought the young things would certainly starve; so I took them out again, and attempted to feed them with molasses gingerbread; but they were in such convulsions of hurry, and wriggled about so, that I couldn't get the gingerbread in, though they opened their mouths to an incredible extent. What shall I do with them? If they were real babies, I could put them out to nurse, or bring them up with the bottle, or they would contrive to come up of themselves, somehow, as babies do, when they are emphatically born into the world, and nothing short. There were Romulus and Remus, for instance, suckled by a wolf, and throve upon it. But these birds don't take kindly to gingerbread, and I don't suppose bread and butter, or roast beef, would be any more successful. I have just put them out on a fork of the peach tree in the garden, and am now sitting near it, but not in sight, to watch and see if the old birds come, and to keep off the kitten, who has had half an eye on the nest in a very suspicious way.

That kitten. I must tell you about her, as a kind of offset to the birds. They are a total failure, but she may be considered a perfect success, a decided "hit." We brought her home surreptitiously in a basket, as the head of the house has put a veto on cats, and we feared would put a toe, and a pretty heavy one, too, on kittens. But this kitten stood in imminent danger of a watery grave, and, being a kitten of remarkable personal beauty, and exceedingly amiable and affectionate disposition, we concluded to make an effort in her behalf. So, as I said, she was smuggled into the house, and let loose in all her helplessness, orphanage, and charms. It was a touching and impressive scene. Her confiding innocence won the most obdurate heart, which "first endured, then pitied, then embraced." She was a city kitten—had never been up-stairs or out-doors in her life. It was necessary, however, to her health, to her happiness, to her highest future usefulness as a cat and a mother, that she should be accustomed to "out-doors." So I "took her up tenderly," and launched her on the front door step. She was scared out of her senses, scarcely stirred, but mewed piteously all the while. The next day, I determined to stay with her myself. When I went down stairs, she seemed to remember her frightful experience of the day before, and clung to me with the utmost tenacity, and kept up a steady mewing. When I sat down near her, however, she seemed to be comforted, and recovered in a measure her kitteny spirits. Presently, a grave old gander came along. He is a gentleman who has seen the world, was brought from over the sea, and is not easily imposed upon. He saw that the kitten was a new-comer, and he proceeded to institute an inquiry by poking his red nose into her face. Kitty was disconcerted, and retired behind me; but curiosity presently overcame fear, and she crept softly again to the door-sill, and peered cautiously out, this way and that, to see what had become of her late acquaintance. He was luxuriating in a bath, splashing about in a very lordly way, and Kitty watched him with the most unsophisticated and unmitigated interest. The next day, we borrowed a little white kitten, and put them out together. But they were not inclined to be sociable. One took one end of the doorstep, and the other the other; after eyeing each other with mutual dissatisfaction for about five minutes, they marched off in opposite directions, without so much as taking leave. This morning, however, before breakfast, it was announced that the two kittens were becoming intimate, and, looking out of the window, there they were, to be sure, in a state of high glorification. Did you ever see a little country girl receiving a visit from a little city girl? If you have, you will have an exact idea of the behaviour of these two kittens. The city kitten was all condescension, ease, and caprice. She led the games, flew off in a tangent on the slightest provocation—

"Was everything by turns, and nothing long."

The country kitten followed her lead implicitly, pretended to be very familiar, suited herself to her every mood, tried to be at ease, and was evidently nervous. If the city kitten shot up a tree, up shot the country kitten after her. If the city kitten rolled herself up and turned a somersault, the country kitten rolled herself up and turned two. If city showed the slightest symptoms of a frolic with country, country went into a perfect agony of frolic with city. When city, with utter want of tact, sprang on the back of a stately and dignified hen, country attempted to follow suit, and was ignominiously repulsed. City laid herself down at length, with aristocratic disregard of the forms of rural society. Country, with a great show of intimacy, went up to her, struck her back and tail softly and coquettishly with her paw, till city patronizingly sprung up again and organized a tussle. We are very glad to see the commencement of a friendship which we hope will prove lasting and beneficial to both. But the gander continues to be the chief object of interest to our Kitty. Whether it is owing to a fellow-feeling between foreigners, he having come from Ireland, I believe, and her grandmother from the Isle of Man, or whether it is because he was the first to pay his respects to her on her arrival, I cannot say; but whenever he makes his appearance, every other acquaintance is nonchalantly snubbed, and he receives her undivided attention. When he thrusts out his long neck at her, she retreats a step, but is not diverted from her watch. When he waddles away, she follows him slowly, lost in wonder. In fact, I have no doubt they will eventually become fast friends. Kitty is not yet sufficiently acquainted to go out doors alone, but she is exceedingly fond of going with me. As long as I am in sight, she frolics unrestrained. I leave her by stealth sometimes, or run away when she is up in a tree, and you should see her legs go as soon as she ascertains the fact. There, those poor birds are at it again! What *shall* I do with them? Whoever will give me a few hints as to the best methods of rearing callow birds, will confer a lasting obligation on Your obedient servant,

GAIL HAMILTON.

But, dear me! they will all be dead before I shall have a chance to hear from any one, I am afraid.

For the National Era.

GOING INTO THE COUNTRY.

BY MARTHA RUSSELL.

In looking over my portfolio, to-night, with the hope of finding some seedling thought which by care may be expanded so as to bear transplanting into the *Era*, I chanced upon the following letters from my old schoolmate, Stella H——. With a triumphant "Eureka!" I took up my pen and was about to make excerpts, when Conscience uprose with the query, "How will you justify this breach of trust?"

For a moment my hand seemed paralyzed; but when I remembered the spirit of inquiry that marks our age—that ardent pursuit of knowledge which requires an author to not only, as Sydney Smith has it, "serve up his heart, with brain sauce as a tit-bit for the public," but to open his very bed-chamber, and let his readers count his stockings, for instance, "this pair and the peach-colored ones, the one for superfluity and the other for use," I knew no reason why my friend should not minister to its wants as well as humbler people.

Besides, I know that few people will be able to identify the serene, calm-browed wife of Professor G——, with the gay, fun-loving being who wrote these letters. I shall therefore give them just as they were written, adding only a kind of hook-and-eye commentary, to give them the necessary connection and sequence:

"THORNEYCROFT, *April* 12, 184–.

"Ah! my dear M——, it will do very well for you to rave about the beauties of nature—the delights of country life—to grow sentimental over walks taken

'Under the opening eyelids of the morn,'

in company with 'dewy-footed Spring,' and fairies and nymphs and dryads—characters who, to say the least, 'have been much talked about;' to run wild about the sweet minstrelsy of birds, and woods, and waters, when you can listen to the enchanted notes of Salvi, Brignoli, and silver-throated Sontag, and walk dear, delightful Broadway without fear of getting swamped!

"Now, my firm conviction, backed by a three-weeks experience of 'changeful April' in the country, is, that these so much be-eulogized beauties and delights of country life are a *humbug*, born and bred in the brains of poets, fast prisoned within brick walls; and I strongly suspect that the 'Il Allegro' of Milton, instead of being written among the delightful scenery of Forest Hill, first saw light in some musty old court in London. If I stay here much longer, I may be tempted to write an essay in proof of that suspicion.

"Now, look on this picture, taken from Nature. A sky that is neither one thing nor the other; weather to match; patches of dirty snow lying along the fences and under the hills; mud ankle deep; roads unsettled, like the slough of Despond where the frost is out, and rough as the valley of Humiliation where it is not out; and often, over all, a wet, drizzling mist, which makes one think of *La Morgue*, and all the stories of French suicide of which he has ever read or heard. At first, I was as blissfully ignorant as yourself—'*green*,' Cousin Tom would say, and I know not if it be not the more fitting word—and took several romantic morning walks, returning with wet feet, bedraggled dress, and a tendency to sore throat, and, *par consequence*, had to endure an unmerciful quizzing from Tom, an anxious lecture from my mother, and the penance of wearing henceforth, whenever I go out, high, thick-soled walking shoes, and, if damp, a pair of overshoes beside. Just think, M., of shoes that creak and clatter at every step, like a drayman's! I asked papa, when he gave the order, if I had not better turn Nebuchadnezzar at once, but he only laughs at what he calls my city prejudices, and prophecies that, before autumn, I will be as great a lover of the country as Gilbert White himself, whose 'Natural History of Selborne' is seldom out of his hands. Indeed, he and ma'ma seem highly pleased with this change. He talks of the different breeds of cattle as zealously, if not as knowingly, as if he had the experience of Jacob, and ma'ma manifests an equal interest in all that pertains to the dairy. We drove over to H—— yesterday, and called at one of the bookstores. What think you papa bought? The latest work of Prescott or Hallam?—Carlyle or Emerson?—or some beautiful German legend or poem? Nothing of the kind—only a treatise on Milch Cows!

"Listening to papa and his friends has made me quite a convert to the doctrine of the immortality of animals, for not the most parchment-hued old Midas among them but keeps, hidden away somewhere in his heart, a dream of Paradise under the form of a 'snug place in the country, with a sprinkling of imported bloods,' Durhams or Ayrshires, and, if Paradise above be Paradise regained, I do not see how they are to be happy there without animals!

"As to the internal resources (for amusement, I mean) of a banker-turned-gentleman-farmer's mansion, there is the library, the piano, the chess and backgammon boards, the dogs, and Cousin Tom. I beg the gentleman's pardon; he would claim precedence on the list, I suppose, but 'what is writ is writ!' Papa says there is excellent society in H——, which is only four miles distant, and even in our own neighborhood; and the ladies who have called here are certainly very pleasant and agreeable, quite *comme il faut* in dress and address; then, as a *corps de reserve*, we have a plenty of students in the College at H——, some of whom, being the sons of my father's old friends, or acquaintances of Tom's, have already been out here to pay their respects.

"With these 'ways and means,' I suppose I shall contrive to exist until midsummer, and you make your appearance here, and then I intend to coax papa to let me return with you and spend the winter with Aunt C——.

"By the way, I have, as a *dernier resort*, taken to journalizing of late. You need not shrug your shoulders; there is little danger of my becoming a 'literary lady,' (bores, the whole tribe of them!) but I shall duly send my packet, and insist upon your reading every word, as a penance for that thought.

"Yours, STELLA."

Some weeks later, I received the promised packet, from which I make the following excerpts:

"*May* 25.—M——, dear, we have had a dinner party to-day; but I must pass over all the other guests, pleasant people enough, but as like those you meet every day as one bank note to another, to describe one, only one, but an original, who promises an inexhaustible fund of amusement to Tom and myself. Now, I wager, you are picturing to yourself some pedantic tutor, or dyspeptic minister half choked in a white cravat, some country Dogberry, or neck-or-nothing student. None of these; but the very Rev. Hezekiah G——, A. M., D. D., &c., Professor of Hebrew, and, for aught I know, of Hindoo, in W—— College. He is as absent-minded as Dominie Sampson, and as ugly as Vulcan.

"No, let me be just. *Ugly* is not the right word; for the outline—the design, so to speak—of the man's face is truly noble and highly intellectual; but it seems as if Nature, while moulding it, had suffered an attack of paralysis, and thus marred the beauty and regularity of the original plan. This may be, in part, owing to a large scar over his left eye, where the skin is so contracted, that when he knits his brow, as he invariably does when engaged in thought, the wrinkles gather round it, like waves about a miniature Maelstrom. Add to this, a large wart on his chin, and a nose like a promontory, and you have some faint notion of the lineaments of my Adonis. As to age, he may be forty, or fourscore; for of such a face it may be said, as truly as of one moulded in the most perfect font of beauty, 'Age cannot wither or custom stale its infinite variety.' As to his manner, you should have seen him at the dinner table! The conversation turned upon geology, the discoveries and theories of Hugh Miller and Agassiz, and so completely absorbed did he become in the subject, that he used mamma's finger-glass as freely as his own, poured wine upon his plate for vinegar, covered his pudding with catsup instead of sauce, and ate it in perfect unconsciousness. I was obliged to think of all manner of disagreeable things—martyrdoms and railway accidents, and the like—to keep from laughing; and I dared not look at Tom during the whole hour at dinner. Papa, who it seems has known him a long time, and holds him in high esteem, insists upon his being a frequent guest here; and Tom and I are highly delighted with our 'new specimen.'

"*June* 1.—I must confess, M——, that I do begin to like the country a little—just a *little*—though of course I should not be willing to own as much to any one here, for I dread the raillery, and, above all, papa's quiet, quizzical smile. Therefore, like most wise people, whose faith in the infallibility of their own prescience begins to be shaken, I protest the more loudly that I was never born to 'love pigs and chickens.' I have made several pleasant acquaintances; and, to say the truth, such walks and rides and sails and fishing parties are not to be got up in the city.

"*June* 5.—A glorious morning; and a young lady from the city, Miss Drayton, Ed. Pinckney, Tom, and myself, have had a delightful excursion on horseback. Pinckney is a student from the South, the best dancer, the best horseman, as well as the most *distingué* looking man I have ever seen. Since our return, we have been amusing ourselves with Professor G——, who sat in the library, working out a mathematical problem, of which there was some speech at the dinner table, and such horrible grimaces as he made whenever he discovered an error in the calculations! Tom and Ed. and I drew caricatures of him, and I could hardly prevent them from playing off some trick upon him. I knew papa would be very angry at any such proceeding; besides, the Dominie's face is fast becoming an object of interest to me. There is a fascination about it which I cannot explain. But you know my passion for individualities, of old. Sometimes, especially when he is speaking of anything that interests him, and he never speaks of a topic that does not, the features assume a phase and expression that is really beautiful; but the instant he ceases, it is gone, and the old landmarks—nose, and wart, and scar—remain. It is really one of the most vexatious, provoking faces I ever saw—constantly promising, and as constantly baffling.

"*Evening.*—Ah, M——, self-reproach is a most miserable feeling, as Tom and I both know to our sorrow. This evening, after Ed. and Miss Grayson were gone, we were comparing our caricatures of the Professor, when papa came along and looked over my shoulder. I could fancy how stern his face looked, though I did not dare to look up, when he took the papers from my hand, and held them nearer the lamp, as if to assure himself that he was not mistaken; then he very briefly bade us follow him to the library. We obeyed, and took the seats he indicated on the sofa before him, like a couple of culprits, as we were. He did chide us as we anticipated; but such a history of self-conquest, self-denial, and sacrifice, as he gave us! The struggle of a kingly soul against obstacles within and without, triumphing at last, through Divine grace, over its own fiery passions, and by unswerving meekness and patient forbearance, under the most galling insults and wrong, turning the hatred of hereditary enemies into admiration and respect. Even that scar, that has excited my silly mirth, was won in the performance of a deed of heroism, the very thought of which sends the blood tingling through the veins with quicker motion—a warmer glow. Sometime, I must tell you the story. Papa spoke of his wisdom and rare learning, but more fully of his charity and kindness—of his refusal of several lucrative settlements, because, having no family ties to bind him to any one locality, he being the last of his race, and unmarried, he prefers to remain here, strengthening the weak and the weary and the tempted among his pupils, and binding up the wounds of the broken-hearted among all ranks, conditions, and creeds. 'And now, children,' he said, as he turned away from us with that look of mingled pain and sarcasm upon his face, which always touches me so keenly, 'I leave it to your wisdom to decide whether such a man is a fitting subject for your idle tricks and silly laughter!'

"'If he had but scolded—given us a regular blowing up!' cried Tom, as he left the room. 'But this tone of quiet contempt is enough to drive a fellow mad. I never felt so meanly in my life. I'm glad Pinckney did not hear him!'

"'So am I, though Pinckney is not so much to blame as ourselves, Tom, for the Professor is our guest. Besides, if we had not have set the example, Pinckney never would have presumed to quiz him.' I could not help blushing as I spoke, M——, for I knew that Pinckney had been led on in this by a desire to please me, and I felt at once how meanly he must think of me, even while he permitted himself to be thus influenced.

"*June* 8.—The dear old Professor, M——! I am bound to him for life! But, that you may understand the height and depth of my obligation, I must tell you that my 'unco good and somewhat rigidly righteous' Aunt L——, is on a visit here. As she has long since given up lecturing papa on family government, and his culpable error in leaving me so large a liberty to follow my own sweet will, and as all she could ever win from ma'ma on the subject was a somewhat wider opening of the sweet blue eyes, and a 'Possibly, sister,' she deems it her double duty to be instant in season and out of season, with her words of rebuke and warning to me; and, judging from the effect, I am afraid that most of them are quite out of season. Yesterday I drove in town, and, calling at Hammersley's, brought home something beside a treatise on Milch Cows. Among my selections was a beautiful edition of 'Undine,' and I found the story just as wonderful and enchanting as ever. I could not let it be, and, stealing a seat in a recess to-day, I took it up, and had just reached the account of the old Priest's arrival at the cottage, and the marriage of the lovers, when Aunt L——'s spectacles bore down upon me, and her long digits were extended for the book. She would 'know the subject of my studies.' I watched her face as she turned over the leaves and read a passage here and there, and should have smiled at her look of supreme contempt and disgust, had I not been vexed at the tone in which she spoke of my tastes, and advised me not to 'waste my precious time over such idle trash as that.' *Waste!* I don't see why it is not just as well to spend my precious time over a book, as in pulling and pinching and patting every fold and plait in my dress until it becomes immaculate in primness, as does my excellent aunt!

"However, I made some unfortunate reply, that brought down on me all the wise arguments against novel reading that have been advanced since the era of Richardson; for, as the widow of a rigid Calvinistic minister, she has them all at her tongue's end.

"I attempted to defend myself, but, as usual, got excited, and then confused—the more so, as I perceived her tone had drawn upon us the attention of the Professor, who was here to dinner, and papa, and that the latter was highly amused at the combat. Aunt L—— saw that they observed us, too, and triumphantly called upon the Professor to lend the weight of his eloquence against this 'pernicious habit.'

"'To do this, it will be necessary, first, that I make a confession,' said the gentleman, with a humorous smile. 'I must say, Mrs. L——, that I really enjoy a good novel myself, now and then!'

"'You!' Aunt's power of speech could do no more.

"'Yes; and, certainly, it must be admitted that, like everything else, novel-reading has its good and bad side.'

"'Good!' cried Aunt, again finding herself mistress of her tongue, and heaving a long sigh. 'My late husband, the Doctor,' she continued, drawing herself up with a most dignified air, 'thought otherwise, sir.'

"'Just so, Mrs. L——, and so do many very excellent people of my acquaintance; but, surely, it is unjust to condemn all fiction indiscriminately. Many works belong to this class, that are written with a pure and noble aim, and such I deem not only agreeable, but useful. Besides, we should not forget that the craving for amusement is just as legitimate as any other want of the mind, and should find suitable gratification.'

"'I don't see how any aim or any craving of the mind can justify the use of *fiction*,' returned Aunt, dryly.

"'Perhaps not,' said the Professor; 'still my own observation has taught me that, in many instances, it is one of the most effective means of leading the young and thoughtless to admire and love truth and goodness. There are some minds—some stages of development—to which truth, presented under this form, is far more attractive and impressive than when stated in a more grave, didactic form. For instance,' he went on, coming forward, and taking from my hand 'Undine,' 'there is underlying the whole of this wild tale one of the most beautiful as well as most wonderful facts in our existence—worthy of the study of men and angels—the development of the soul through the affections. With all my reverence for intellect,' he continued, turning to my father, 'I am compelled to admit that I think this the only legitimate way to a full and perfect development. It is most exquisitely delineated here, and goes far to prove the truth of the poet's words,

"True fiction hath a higher end
Than fact; it is the possible compared
With what is merely positive."

When a book does this, Mrs. L——, we will not quarrel with the form, the mere garment that serves to drape the living spirit.'

"Ah, M——, you should have seen him, with his face lit up, transfigured as it were, by that beautiful expression which I have noted sometimes before; you should have heard those clear, rich, persuasive tones of his, to comprehend the impression his words made on me. I felt tempted to fall on my knees before him, and, confessing my former rudeness, beg for forgiveness. I *knew* while he was speaking that Aunt was partly right—that I have wasted my time—that there is something higher, better, nobler, to be realized in life than I have ever dreamed of, M——. 'A soul developed through the affections!' What does it mean? I shall read Undine with a deeper interest than ever."

Circumstances occurred to change my plan. I did not spend the midsummer at Thorneycroft, as I anticipated, but made the tour of the lakes with a party of friends. Our desultory movements precluded the possibility of a regular correspondence, or indeed any; therefore, I heard nothing from Stella, or nothing save a rumor from home, that she was to become the wife of Mr. Pinckney. I did not find her in town on my return, only a short note informing me of the illness of her mother, and the consequent necessity of her remaining at Thorneycroft to watch over her. Her mother's health was delicate all the winter, but, from Stella's hasty notes, I judged that she bore her disappointment and a winter in the country with quite a philosophic composure. Early in April, I received a letter which unravelled the mystery. It ran thus:

"THORNEYCROFT, *April* 10, 184–.

"M——, dear M——, although you remain so obstinately silent, I suppose you are well aware that your friend Stella H—— is no more. Three weeks since, she became the wife of Prof. G——. Don't ask me how it happened. I should have told you before, if I had rightly known myself. All I know is, that it is true, and I am so happy.

"Was it not strange that he—so good, so learned, so wise—should really *love* (I must write the word, though somehow it seems right to hear it only from his lips) such a giddy girl as I? Ah, M——, I begin to understand what he meant by a 'soul developed through the affections.' He has taught me this mystery, and through it I begin to apprehend truly my own immortality.

"Most earnestly do I pray to be made worthy of my noble husband, and for ability to make him happy. I know he is happier than when his life was solitary, for his face now wears that beautiful expression, and the grimaces are all gone. He is but fifteen years older than myself, and surely he needs the experience of these surplus years to train the wayward being he has chosen for a wife.

"You heard the rumor of my engagement to Pinckney. Our relation never came to that. What it might have grown to, I cannot say, if I had not been conscious of the daily-increasing conviction that I needed a *guide* in my husband—one to whom I could look for strength and support—a spiritual teacher as well as a pleasant household companion. Such I have found in G——. I need hardly say how well pleased papa and ma'ma are with my choice. G—— has taken a cottage about two miles from the Croft, and papa and he have fitted it up with excellent taste. His old landlady, a widow with whom he has boarded for some years, has consented to be our housekeeper, and she tells him that, for so 'young a person,' I have really some very 'correct ideas' about household affairs. But come and see us for yourself. The country is waking to life, and to me was never so beautiful. The arbutus, the wind-flower, and the liverwort, are all in blossom, and—here comes G——, with his hands full of blue violets! Ah, the bear—he has scattered them all over my head and desk! 'Avaunt, you thief!' Let go the pen!'

"But he did not obey, for in a free, bold hand, I read, 'And I repeat, come, for Stella's self will not be happier to greet her old friend than Stella's husband.' G."

It is feared, says the *Boston Transcript*, that the frightful scenes through which Mr. Perkins and his companions passed at the massacre of Perugia will result in the insanity of Mrs. Doane, whose nervous system does not recover from the shock.

For the National Era.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF SARATOGA.

UNITED STATES HOTEL, *July* 28, 1859.

MY DEAR G.: Here I am at last! The consummation of all my hopes has been attained, and I have made my first appearance at the Springs. Dreams of years are now realized, and the world of fashion is a real world to me, in which I live and breathe and have my being. And you will ask, "What sort of a world is it?" Yes, that is very easy for you to ask, but how can I tell you my constantly-changing estimate of the society around me? As I wish to see only what is lovely and attractive, I am enchanted, being surrounded by a large company of persons, all of whom are well dressed and well mannered, and all alike at leisure to enjoy and be enjoyed.

But you want me to be specific, and tell you all that interest me. Well, then, I am interested in everything and with everybody, as is natural enough in a young girl just out of school, entering the world of which she knows nothing and hopes everything.

It was delightful to me to be driven from our house, with our carriage piled up with trunks, containing all the dresses which had been the source of so much solicitude and care in their selection, and anxiety and trouble in the making up; threading our way through streets devoted to trade I had never before seen, though a native of New York, on our way to the Albany line steamer "New World"—a most fitting name for the boat which bore me up the Hudson on my way to Saratoga. And when on board I was surrounded by a multitude, all of whom, like myself, were wending their way to some of the many haunts of fashion. I sat watching them, and was surprised to see so little of interest expressed in their faces. To all but myself, it seemed a matter of routine, and many looked as if they were already weary in anticipation of a journey to me so delightful. And truly, some had reason to be distressed, for they were encumbered by ruby children, who, in spite of all entreaties and commands, would lose themselves among the crowd, to the great concernment of mammas and nurses; and I wondered that they should take their children away from homes, where only they could securely find play for their activities; but then, perhaps, to benefit these children was the only motive for the journey—at least, this was the urgent reason given to fathers.

As we glided along the banks of our beautiful Hudson, gazing with delight upon the beautiful villas which crown every height, and spying out sweet cottages hid in the nooks, and which my imagination pictured as the homes of beauty, taste, and refinement, my attention was attracted to a party near us, consisting of three girls, whose air and bearing showed me that they belonged to the 'upper tendom' of some city, and whose beaus were the very pinks of perfection. Such whiskers and moustaches and imperials I never before looked upon; and then, their way of talking and walking was so dashing, that I quite envied the girls their good fortune, for dear Cousin Dick looks like a student as he is, and has not the least bit of the Man of the World about him; but then he is so good, and good looking too, and, above all, he is so kindly cousinly to me, that I am proud of him, and mean to make him proud of me before we return to the city again—if I can.

At five in the morning we reached Albany, and after having breakfasted at the Delavan House, we took the cars for Saratoga. The party I had so carefully watched sat on seats opposite us, and I gathered up from what I heard—and all this was fragmentary, for the rattling of the cars made so much noise that talking was an effort—that the girls were not sisters, nor were the gentlemen brothers—the bevy of girls being chaperoned by a dear, motherly lady, they all called "Aunt Martha." The young ladies scanned Aunt Jane, and next Dick, and then me—and seeing Bridget sitting by the side of Dick, they looked at us again—but we evidently made no impression. Indeed, they were so entirely well pleased with their own party, that they did not give a single look of inquiry around them. All the rest of us were in their regard only members of that numerous family whose only use is to make up sets in a ball room, in which they were to shine as stars of the first magnitude, the bright points of the picture, while all the rest do but fill up the background—useful, indeed necessary, but the palpable obscure for all that.

It was eleven o'clock when the cars rushed onwards into the village of Saratoga, and I caught my first glimpse of the paradisiacal grounds of the United States Hotel—the Eden of my longing aspirations. As father had engaged rooms, we were in no doubt where we should go, and I was glad to see our Boston party, as I guessed them to be, preceding us through the gates leading into the grounds, and lounging along the smooth walks with the air of persons at home; to whom every object, so full of beauty and newness to me, was already familiar.

Know, then, dear G., that the United States Hotel takes rank of old Congress Hall and the Union, and is, *par excellence*, the home of fashion here. It is a vast caravansary, which, while it holds but eight hundred guests, feeds, when full as it is now, full twelve hundred persons; the surplus over what is housed are *colonized*—that is the word—in houses in the vicinity. The grounds into which we enter, coming across the street from the railroad depot, are beautiful for their walks and shade trees. The wings of the building and cottages occupy the sides of the lawn, while the main building fronts Broadway, the street leading to Congress spring. The great saloon of the hotel is quite equal in size to the East Room of the President's House in Washington, and is splendidly furnished with mirrors, sofas, and all the appliances of taste and luxury. Here it is that the mob of fashion meet after dinner and in the evening, before going out to the hotel ball room, which is one the most perfect dancing halls I have ever entered—of course, my experience in such matters is not worth much. Spacious piazzas, lofty as the roof, supported by pillars, extend along the front of the house and in the rear. Here is where the guests promenade, after tea especially, and where ladies in the morning sit about in groups, knitting, netting, and crocheting, as they please, in the most attractive negligee costumes, and with an *abandon* perfectly bewitching, with all the world to gaze at them; and these lovely ones as utterly indifferent and unconscious as they would be in their own parlors. I must confess it was with some shrinking that I seated myself with a party for the first time on the piazza fronting Broadway, with a mixed multitude sauntering the piazza around me, and in the gaze of all the world passing on the pavement of the street. But then we soon get courage to do as others do, and now I can work on your *riggolet* which I promise to knit for you, and never drop a stitch for the hour together, nor once look up, though I hear the creaking of boots at my side; but the color will come sometimes, as I feel some gentleman is gazing at me, and I cannot help myself from giving a sly glance at his feet, to see if they are handsome.

You see I have no method in my letter, and have not told you even that Aunt Jane and I have very nice rooms in the south wing, with a door opening between, and Cousin Dick has a room on the opposite side of the entry to his mother's. Bridget has a cot in Aunt's room, so as to be always near her at night, though I always have the connecting door open; but Aunty likes to have her maid close at hand; and we are all very nicely fixed, so that, when I compare our comforts with the discomforts of the many guests here, I am well content, though my room is, after all, only as large as my dressing room at home. I confess that the pleasure derived from such companions as these always make me angry with myself, for they are point blank proofs of dear grandfather's famous dogma of total depravity. Yes, and I, too, am totally depraved; for I am sure if everybody had better rooms than we, I could not but be restive under the infliction, and I should complain, as Mrs. Smith did, in our rooms this morning. She asked Aunt what we paid, and, on being told, exclaimed, "It is too bad! I pay just as much as you do for my rooms on the third story."

I am very sorry for Mrs. and the Misses Smiths, for their discomforts, but it is as Rochefoucault tells us, in his wicked Maxims—only they are so true—"We find something to please us in the misfortunes of our dearest friends."

Is not this a long letter, and yet it contains nothing; but, perhaps, I will write you another which will be more coherent, and it may be readable. One word more, dear G., and then good-by. My hat is regarded as a miracle of taste and beauty, and my wardrobe, so far as I have exhibited it, has been admired; as for the wearer, I will tell you more when I have more to tell.

With all love, your loving cousin,

NETTA.

P. S.—I shall expect a letter of four full pages from you for every letter I write, and you can't tell how hard it is to get time here to write even so bad a letter.

A LIBERIAN LOVE STORY.

From the Liberian Christian Advocate.

Among the number of recaptured Africans in the U. S. steamship Niagara, there were two young Congoes, Kabendah and Kandah, who became strongly attached to each other on the passage. During the few weeks that all who landed from the ship remained at Monrovia, and in the same receptacle, this mutual attachment strengthened and matured into a passion that regarded every earthly possession and enjoyment valueless, if it embraced not the one darling object of its choice.

None but the parties themselves were at all in their secret; and hence, when a division had to be made, and some of the company, for many wise reasons, must go to other portions of the republic, the young man Kabendah was selected to go to Bassa. When made acquainted with this determination as to himself, he manifested extreme reluctance, and begged to be permitted to stay where he then was. But those having authority in the matter, in the absence of any special reason, insisted that he must go. He went.

The secret soon got out. On reaching Bassa, this hitherto lively and promising young Congo was down-hearted—refused to wash or eat, and neglecting the personal attention common to his tribe, grew wan, poor, and soon fell sick, replying to those who spoke with him on the subject, in a spirit of desperate coolness, "what use he be for me to live? Suppose I no get dat gal, I want to die."

In the mean time, manifestations in the Monrovia receptacle, on the part of one there, showed that Kabendah's love was not misplaced or without compensation in the strong affection of his loving fellow in misfortune and misery—his wildly-adored Kandah.

The humane appreciation of those who had these children of wrong and suffering under care, arranged to save the life of Kabendah, and remove his savage grief, by having him returned to Monrovia. Once more the lovers met. Subsequently, Kandah, not being well, was inquired of by one of the teachers, as follows: "What if it should be thought not best for you to marry Kabendah?" Her cool reply, looking her teacher full in the face, was, "Well, I can die."

The lovers were submitted to no such trial of their affection and tendencies to desperation in the destruction of their own lives. It was agreed upon by the agents that their marriage be immediately celebrated, and in as nearly a civilized and Christian style as their own rude and barbarous state would admit of.

We were invited to attend the nuptials; but sickness dashed this cup of meditated pleasure from our lips. On the afternoon of the 17th March, the successful lovers were joined in matrimony by the Rev. John Seyes. Everything, we are informed, was conducted with much respectability, which, while it reflected no little credit on the managers in the matter, without doubt made its impression on the minds of all the witnesses belonging to the company.

The sequel to the above is to be found in the following announcement in the same paper:

"MARRIED—On Thursday, the 17th inst., (March,) at the Colonization receptacle, at Monrovia, by the Rev. John Seyes, Kabendah, alias James Buchanan, to Kandah, alias Ann Liberia Jeffs, both liberated Africans, of the company by the U. S. ship Niagara."

BALLOONS—THEIR USE IN WAR.

The reported use of a balloon by the Emperor Napoleon at the battle of Solferino is, by a majority of readers, esteemed an innovation of his own. Justice requires, however, that honor be bestowed where honor is due. And this honor is due to no less a personage than Robespierre.

Balloons were first invented by the brothers Montgolfier, who made their first experiment on the 5th of June, 1783, at Annony, repeating it afterwards, on the 26th of August, at Paris, in the Champ de Mars. Their balloons were called by the French *Montgolfière*, in compliment to the inventors. They were made of a linen cover, lined with paper, and contained only heated air, and not hydrogen gas, which was subsequently introduced. The paper balloons which are so much used on the Fourth of July by the patriotic citizens of America, as well as those which are nightly sent up from the Palace Garden in this city, are, properly speaking, *Montgolfieres*, and not balloons. In October of the same year, Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes were the first adventurers bold enough to undertake to ascend into the air in a basket attached to a *Montgolfière*: they rose to a height of three thousand feet, and descended in safety to the earth. Shortly after, the distinguished philosopher Charles substituted hydrogen gas for the heated air, the former being fifteen times as light as the latter. The first experiment on the Champ de Mars produced a great excitement among the assembled multitude, as well as through the streets of Paris. It was attended with complete success, notwithstanding a violent shower, which in no way appeared to interfere with its progress. *Libes*, in his *Dictionnaire de Physique*, thus concludes his notice of the event: "The satisfaction was so great, that even elegantly-dressed ladies remained with their eyes intently fixed on the balloon, regardless of the rain, which fell on them in torrents."

In 1793, the Committee of Public Safety, Robespierre presiding, established at the Palace of Meudon a company called the *Institut Aerostatique*. It consisted of fifty adventurous young men, whose duty it was to make constant experiments with their balloons, with a view to their advantageous employment in warfare. Their proceedings were conducted with the strictest secrecy. Special balloons were prepared for each of the fourteen French armies then about taking the field, and to each balloon a distinct name was attached. But the balloons appear to have been only once used to marked advantage during the wars of the Republic. This was at the battle of Fleurus, on the 26th of June, 1794, when the French General Jourdan defeated the imperialists under Prince Coburg. The name of the balloon was the *Entreprenant* (Enterprising.) Dupré's *Lexicographia Neologica Gallica* refers to it as follows:

"An aeronaut and two officers of rank ascended in it twice, and by their signals, made with flags, contributed to the success of the day, or, rather, successive days, which was of the greatest consequence to the Republican arms. When the labors of the Aerostatic Institution shall have attained to a degree of general utility and perfection, the transactions, it has been said, will be published; at present, the French know but little of what is doing. The greatest improvement the institution has hitherto made has been to add a kind of telegraph, falling below the gondola and suspended from it, consisting of eight cylinders of black taffeta, which form the signals by opening and shutting, and appear like so many paper lanterns. This simple apparatus forms two hundred and sixty-five changes, and has been found sufficient for the purposes of correspondence. The principal engineer has had in contemplation the construction of a telegraphic balloon which might be worked on *terra firma*, by means of strings communicating with the cylinder before mentioned, at the height of twelve feet from the ground."

Dupré's book was published about the year 1800.

The use of balloons for military reconnoissance was not long continued. In 1812, the Russians attempted to bring them again into play by directing a number of them over the French army, and dropping upon their heads a number of explosive projectiles, but the experiment failed. The most complete treatise on this subject is Turgan's work, published in Paris in 1850, entitled, "*Ballons, un Histoire de la Locomotion Aérienne depuis son Origine, jusqu' à nos Jours.*"—*N. Y. Eve. Post.*

LETTER FROM A ZOUAVE, A CORPORAL IN THE FRENCH ARMY.

A gentleman in this city has favored us with the following translation of a letter, received by Mr. E. Pinaud, from his brother, who fought in the terrible battle of Solferino:

SOLFERINO, *June* 26, 1859.

DEAR BROTHER: Finally I have found a chance to give you some of my news. It is not without trouble, because I find paper very scarce for the soldier, unless it be that of the cartridge, and that never is wanting; but if it should fail, we can defend ourselves quite as well, and perhaps much better. I can tell you the last battle was a great victory for us, but we paid dearly for it. It was a real butchery. For my own part, I only lost part of my left ear. Thank God! my head is still on my shoulders. The battle lasted fourteen hours.

During that time we had nothing to eat. As for myself, I am never without my glass of *eau de vie*, and this is only furnished a Zouave. When my regiment came back, we numbered 550 men, who were almost dead from fatigue. We never stood upon our feet in the battle, except when the sound of the trumpet bade us do so. I confess that the Austrians are brave soldiers, but their commanders are very poor. Their tactics are not ours, but they gave us occasion to exercise all our powers. I was conversing with several Austrian prisoners, and they told me that they were not afraid to battle with the French, but that their only fear was the bayonets of the redoubtable Zouaves. Many of them thought we were Arabs, but we are all French, mostly Parisian born. It is very easy to make the mistake, though, because we have not a very light complexion, and perhaps our long moustaches do give us a somewhat Arab appearance. Please write to my brother Julius, who is in New York, to send me a little money. A soldier always needs money, until dead; as I have been a soldier over four years for him, it seems to me it is a small reward. Tell him to give me twenty francs for each battle I fought for him, and I will be satisfied, and with that I will cure my ear.

I have had an interview with General Regnaud, of St. Jean d'Angelly. He is one of our countrymen, and knows our father well. It is with a little note from father that I had an introduction to him, and he received me kindly. He asked me how long I had served in this regiment.

"Four years, General!" I answered.

"And you are only a corporal," he replied.

"General," I answered, "I used to be a sergeant, but for a little frolic I was deposed, and put back to corporal. The fault is, in our country, the climate and the wine are so good that it turns the brain of any man."

"Oh," exclaimed the General, laughing, "I recognise you as one of my countrymen. Now, conduct yourself well, and before long you will see some change."

I thanked the General. Adieu, good brother. I wish you good health. Your affectionate brother,

LEON PINAUD,
Corporal Company, 2d Zouaves, Italian Army.

THE OCCUPATION OF THE ISLAND OF PERIM BY GREAT BRITAIN.

The continued occupation by Great Britain of the rocky islet of Perim, in the Straits of Bab el-Mandeb, at the entrance of the Red Sea, as a "coaling station" for the East India steamers running in connection with the Overland Mail, is again made the subject of grave controversy in political circles in Europe, although in the excitement of the war in Italy, with its battles of Magenta and Solferino, it might naturally be expected that so small a matter would be overlooked.

The French press is very indignant at this "deed of English usurpation," and insists on the evacuation of the diminutive island for the following reasons:

First, because Perim is a part of the Turkish Empire which has never been ceded by the Porte to the British Government; and its occupation is, therefore, a violation of the principle for which Great Britain and France went to war with Russia—namely, "the integrity of the Sultan's dominions;" and, second, because England has no right to erect fortifications which would give her the command of a highway open to all nations, and by which, whenever she pleases, she may obstruct—nay, prevent—their commerce. According to the advice of the French papers afflicted with Anglophobia, the strongest measures should be adopted to compel England to regulate her ambition more conformably to the rights of other countries. The English journals of the Gallo-phobic order regard this interference with, and question of, the right of Great Britain to "seize, occupy, fortify, and colonize" Perim, or any other place in the East which is conducive to her mercantile convenience or the maintenance of her supremacy in all matters relating to the route to India, as an impertinent intermeddling with affairs exclusively British, and in no wise concerning any other people. They insist that "the eminent domain" of Perim belongs either to the Sultan of Turkey or the Imaum of Muscat, and that whenever either of these potentates complains of Great Britain's occupation as a trespass, and appeals to the family of nations, it will be time enough for the members of said family to express their indignation or meddle in other people's business. With regard to the second objection to the new British "coaling station"—namely, the power it will give to obstruct and menace the commerce of the world whenever it suits British interests to do so—it is alleged in defence that, as far as a route over a sea open to the world, and over land the territory of allies, can be called the exclusive property of a nation, the overland route to India is British property; and as long as the English continue in amity with the people through whose country the route passes, no European State has any right to interfere.

The great question seems to be, whether the island is or is not a portion of the dominion of the Sultan? If it be, and the British have seized it without authority, there is some ground for the charge that the act is not quite consistent with the faithful fulfilment of the engagement to preserve the integrity of the Sultan's empire. But it is not at all clear whether the Sultan or the Imaum of Muscat is the legitimate owner of the little rock which has suddenly become so very important. International jurists are puzzled to decide whether it is the Sultan or the Imaum who is outraged by "England's perfidy," and whether the island really belongs to either.

Perim is described as a barren rock, four and a half miles long by two miles broad, rising in the centre 230 feet above the level of the sea, uninhabited, and utterly unproductive of anything, even of guano. It is situated in that part of the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb where the Abyssinian and Arabian coasts approach each other most nearly. It is two miles from the latter and twelve from the former, and quite close to the only safe passage for vessels going from the Red Sea into the Indian Ocean.

Were the island fortified and mounted with heavy guns, the Power holding it could effectually bar the ingress and egress of the Red Sea, and exercise quite as absolute control over that sea as Turkey exercises over the sea of Marmora and the approaches to the Black Sea by the possession of the castles and batteries of the Dardanelles. The British do not dispute that Perim is "the key of the Red Sea," but they assert that they have not fortified it, and they maintain that, as they have never exercised power to the prejudice of other commercial nations, and as the only interests in the Red Sea are British, nobody has any reason to complain. They want "the coaling station," and, therefore, they mean to hold it.

If we recollect aright, when this controversy first commenced, it was said that, upwards of sixty years ago, Sir David Baird occupied Perim on his advance from India to Egypt, and an English journal remarked, with considerable *naïveté*, "We require it again, and we have taken it again, and, after all, this appears to be the only title that can be shown for its occupation."

In an agricultural point of view, we do not think that either the Sultan or the Imaum need bemoan the "deed of English usurpation" with much bitterness. The refusal of the Viceroy of Egypt to allow the works of the Suez canal to proceed, may have reawaked French attention to the subject.—*Constitution.*

CHARLES DICKENS'S "COPY."—The New York correspondent of the Springfield *Republican* says:

"I saw the oddest manuscript yesterday. If it was sent to the *Republican* office, you would banish it as unintelligible. Written in a minute, staggering hand, the t's falling into the faces of the p's, every line full of errors, many containing not more than two words to be used—this was written by the hand of Charles Dickens, and sent by him across the ocean for publication. And from such an inky embryo, probably Little Nell and Dorrit, through agonized printers' hands, struggled into life. Charles Dickens doesn't copy, that's plain, but he crosses out."

Here is a fifty-year-old *jeu d'esprit* that is quite as good as new. A rich old gentleman by the name of Gould married a girl not yet out of her teens. After the wedding, he wrote the following, to inform a friend of the happy event:

"You see, my dear Doctor,
Though eighty years old,
A girl of nineteen
Falls in love with old Gould!"

To which the doctor replied:

"A girl of nineteen
May love Gould, it is true;
But believe me, dear sir,
It is GOLD without U!"

From the Boston Recorder.

THE NORWEGIAN "MAELSTRŒM."

The Truth at Last.

Editors of the Boston Recorder:

The celebrated vortex of olden time has had hard work with the present century. Not the "descent" of the Norwegian mariner, described with such terrific minuteness by Edgar A. Poe, nor all the pictures of the very whirlpool itself in our school geographies, have availed to keep up its reputation with our untoward generation of unbelievers in the wonderful. The inclination has been to gradually wipe from the map the series of little circles that have stood so long where the stormy waves of the North Sea dash between the last of the bleak Lofodon Islands. Nobody knows exactly why, but the public mind of to-day seems pretty much made up, that this great boiling has been only a great humbug from beginning to end. An occasional paragraph in a newspaper, coming from nobody knew where, has given it a hard cut; and an occasional passage in the book of a traveller, who went up and down the coast by the regular steam route, and didn't see it, has finished the matter. There is nothing there. In fact, a more unruffled and quiet nook couldn't well be found among all the Norwegian Isles.

Before I left Central Europe for a year in Scandinavia, my father enclosed me a newspaper slip, headed "The Maelstrœm." At the top of the slip he had written, "Look out for it," and at the bottom he had written "*Look out for it*," the one of which I concluded to mean "look out for it," and tell us something about it, and the other "*look out for it*," and don't get into it. The purport of the slip was, that the King of Denmark had once sent out a scientific commission to investigate the whole affair—that they had sailed thither, and searched in vain for any such place—that they had sailed over all the waters about the described locality, and couldn't find anything that could ever have given rise to such a fabulous humbug.

Mr. Bayard Taylor, one of the most investigating of travellers, founds his report on conversation with the captain of the steamer and other competent persons. He was uniformly advised that there was little or nothing remarkable in the motion of the water there. He adds a remark, which, notwithstanding what he has said before, might perhaps mislead. He speaks, if I rightly remember, (for I have not his book by me now,) of looking off in *that direction*, and finding the waters all calm and unruffled; as if that fact might be taken in as a cumulative argument, that there was no Maelstrœm in existence. Mr. Taylor's *personal observation* on this point would have been worth just as much from Broadway in New York as from the deck of the steamer where he was. "A very good reason," wrote a friend, with whom I had shortly before made this trip, "a very good reason Taylor had for not seeing the Maelstrœm; in fact, it was for very much the same reason that we didn't see the North Pole when we stood on the North Cape."

Lord Dufferin, a thorough-going young amateur navigator, who threaded his way through fields of ice, in his own little yacht, to the Island of Spitzbergen, alludes incidentally to the Maelstrœm in his "Letters from High Latitudes." He was at the house of Mr. Thomas, an English gentleman of high standing, who had resided for many years in the northern part of Norway, and even became a member of the Norwegian "Storthing," or National Congress. Mrs. Thomas was a Norwegian by birth, and from one of the Lofoden Islands. Lord Dufferin writes:

"The stories about the violence of this whirlpool, Mr. Thomas assures me, are ridiculously exaggerated. On ordinary occasions the site of the supposed vortex is perfectly unruffled, and it is only when a strong weather tide is running that any unusual movements in the water can be observed; even then, the disturbance does not amount to much more than a rather troublesome race. Often and often, when they were girls, had his wife and her sisters sailed over its fabulous crater in an open boat. But in this wild, romantic country, with its sparse population, rugged mountains, and gloomy fjords,* very ordinary matters become invested with a character of awe and mystery quite foreign to our own matter-of-fact world, and many of the Norwegians are as prone to superstition as the poor little Lapp pagans who dwell among them."

Such reports as these certainly "take off the rough edge" from the ancient Maelstrœm. It seems, however, quite too bad to annihilate the venerable wonder so completely as some of them do. Could all the stories of its terrors have originated in nothing? One is hardly fain to believe it, after all.

The best book which has ever been written on Norway is that by the *Amtman* Blom, himself a Norwegian. It is written in German, and has a preface from the pen of Dr. Karl Ritter, the great geographer of Berlin. Blom devotes little space to the Maelstrœm. He speaks, however, of boats having been drawn under the waves there, dashed to pieces, and the pieces thrown up in other places. This he would scarce have said, without knowing well the truth of what he was reporting.

In passing up the coast of Norway, I was, of course, interested to find out all I could about

*Fjord is pronounced precisely as fyord, in *one syllable*.