VARIOUS

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CHILDHOOD: A STUDY

There is a rushing southwest wind. It murmurs overhead among the willows, and the little river-waves lap and wash upon the point below; but not a breath lifts my hair, down here among the tree-trunks, close to the water. Clear water ripples at my feet; and a mile and more away, across the great bay of the wide river, the old, compact brick-red city lies silent in the sunshine. Silent, I say truly: to me, here, it is motionless and silent. But if I should walk up into State Street and say so, my truth, like many others, when uprooted from among their circumstances, would turn into a disagreeable lie. Sharp points rise above the irregular profile of the line of roofs. Some are church spires, and some are masts,—mixed at the rate of about one church and a half to a schooner. I smell the clear earthy smell of the pure gray sand, and the

fresh, cool smell of the pure water. Tiny bird-tracks lie along the edge of the water, perhaps to delight the soul of some millennial ichnologist. A faint aromatic perfume rises from the stems of the willow-bushes, abraded by the ice of the winter floods. I should not perceive it, were they not tangled and matted all around so close to my head.

Just this side of the city is the monstrous arms factory; and over the level line of its great dike, the chimneys of the attendant village of boarding-houses peep up like irregular teeth. A sail-boat glides up the river. A silent brown sparrow runs along the stems of the willow thicket, and delicate slender flies now and then alight on me. They will die to-night. It is too early in the spring for them.

The air is warm and soft. Now, and here, I can write. Utter solitude, warmth, a landscape, and a comfortable seat are the requisites. The first and the last are the chiefest; if but one of the four could be had, I think that (as a writer) I should take the seat. That which, of all my writing, I wrote with the fullest and keenest sense of creative pleasure, I did while coiled up, one summer day, among the dry branches of a fallen tree, at the tip of a long, promontory-like stretch of meadow, on the quiet, lonely, level Glastenbury shore, over against the Connecticut State Prison at Wethersfield.

Well, here on the river-shore, I begin; but I shall not tell when I stop. Doubtless there will be a jog in the composition. The blue sky and clear water will fade out of my words all at once, and a

carpet and hot-air furnace, perhaps, will appear.

Nothing.

Then, a life. And so I entered this world: a being, sliding obscurely in among human beings. But whence, or whither? Those questions belong among the gigantic, terrible ones, insoluble, silent,—the unanswering primeval sphinxes of the mind. We can sit and stare at such questions, and wonder; but staring and wondering are not thought. They are close to idiocy: both states drop the lower jaw and open the mouth; and assuming the idiotic *physique* tends, if there be any sympathetic and imitative power, to bring on the idiotic state. If we stare and wonder too long at such questions, we may make ourselves idiots, —never philosophers.

I do not recollect the innocent and sunny hours of childhood.[1] As to innocence, the remark of a certain ancient and reverend man, though sour, was critically accurate,—that "it is the weakness of infants' limbs, and not their minds, which are innocent." It is most true. Many an impotent infantine screech or slap or scratch embodies an abandonment and ecstasy of utter uncontrolled fury scarcely expressible by the grown-up man, though he should work the bloodiest murder to express it. And what adult manifestation, except in the violent ward of an

[1] The paragraphs here following were written in the summer of 1862, and had been meditated or memorandumed long before. Thus they were not derived from the similar disquisitions of Gail Hamilton in the Atlantic for January, 1863. There is no danger that anybody will suspect that *spirituelle* lady of extracting her sunbeams out of my poor old cucumbers.

insane retreat, or perhaps among savages,—the infants of the world,—equals, in exquisite concentration and rapture of fury, that child's trick of flinging himself flat down, and, with kicks and poundings and howls, banging his head upon the ground? Without fear or knowledge, his whole being centres in the one faculty of anger; he hurls the whole of himself slap against the whole world, as readily as at a kitten or a playmate. He would fain scrabble down through the heart of the earth and kill it, rend it to pieces, if he could! If human wickedness can be expressed in such a mad child, you have the whole of it,—perfectly ignorant, perfectly furious, perfectly feeble, perfectly useless.

And as to the sunny hours, I believe those delights are like the phantasmal glories of elf-land. When the glamour is taken away, the splendid feasts and draperies, and gold and silver, and gallant knights and lovely ladies, are seen to have been a squalid misery of poor roots and scraps, tatters and pebbles and bark and dirt, misshapen dwarfs and old hags. Or else, the deceitful vision vanishes all away, and was only empty, unconscious time. Or am I indeed unfortunate, and inferior to other men in innate qualities, in social faculty, in truthfulness of remembrance?

Let me see. Let me "set it out," as an attorney would say. Let me state and judge those primeval, or preliminary, or forming years of my life.

How many were they? More at the North, than in the hot, hurrying South. As a rule, the Northerner should be twenty-five years old before assuming to be a man. For my own part,

I have always had an unpleasant consciousness, which I am only now escaping from, of non-precocity, anti-precocity, in fact, *post*cocity. I have been relatively immature. In important particulars I have been, somehow, ten years behind men—boys if you like—of my own age. The particulars I mean are those of intercourse with other people.

The first ten years of my life seem to me now to have been almost totally empty. I can conjure up, not without some effort, a scanty platoon of small, dim images from school and Sunday school and church and home; but they are few and faint.

I remember a little dirty-faced rampant girl at an infant school in Pine Street, who was wont to scratch us with such fell and witch-like malignity and persistence, that the teacher was fain to sew up her small fists in unbleached cotton bags,—Miss Roquil's school (I never found out that the name was Rockwell until ten years afterwards,—so phonetic is nature!) in Parade Street, where the huge, cunning Anakim of the first class used to cajole me, poor little man, always foolishly benevolent, into bestowing upon them all the gingerbread of my lunch, which I gave, and found a dim, vague sense of incorrectness remaining in my childish mind. They must have been boys of fourteen or fifteen; but I remember them as of giantly stature and vast age.

A grisly being haunted the neighborhood through which I had afterwards to pass to another school,—a great, hulking, brutal fellow, Tom Reddiford by name, from whom I apprehended unimaginable tortures. I crept back and forth in such dumb,

nameless frights as frontier children may have felt, who, in old times of Indian war, passed through woods where the red hand of a Wyandot might grasp them out of any bush. I have not the least idea why this wretched Reddiford used to hunt me so, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains, unless out of pure beastly enjoyment of my childish frights. He did, once or twice, hustle me about, I believe, but never inflicted actual bodily harm. I told my parents; but they helped me not at all. Either they thought I was not really scared, or that the experience would do me good; but it was a mistake. My father should have searched out this young bully and effectually quieted him. Fright is a most beneficial thing for bullies, but a sadly harmful one for a little boy. How fervently I vowed to "lick" that Tom Reddiford, if I ever grew half as big as he! Very likely he has died in a brawl or a poor-house by this time. But his outrages burnt into my mind scars so deep that they are part of its structure. I will pay him off yet, if I meet him.

Another awful figure haunted the same neighborhood,—"Old Britt," a street sot,—an old, filthy, unshorn hog of a man, moving in a halo of rags and effluvium,—whom I used to meet lurching along the pavement, or sometimes prone by the roadside in a nauseous rummy sleep. Him I passed by with a wide circuit of fear and disgust and detestation.

My local attachments must have been stunted, like the roots of plants often transplanted. They twine close and strong about no place. How could they, when in my native city alone—not

to mention the six other towns where I have sojourned, four of whose names begin with the syllable "New"—I can count twenty houses where I remember to have lived? The Wandering Jew is a parable for a tenant housekeeper that "moves" every spring; and I might be his son. Cursed be moving! What a long list of houses! There is the A– house, which I dimly recollect, and where I think we had some beehives; the S– house, where we boarded, and I fell down and broke a bone; the L– house, where also we boarded, and there were many young girls. There I dreamed of an angel,—a person about eight feet long, flying along past the second-story side-windows, in the conventional horizontal attitude, so suggestive of a "crick in the neck," with great, wide wings, tooting through a trumpet as long as himself; and out of each temple, as I distinctly remember, grew a thing like a knitting-needle, with a cherry on the end. There was also the Cl– house, where was a tree of horrible, nauseating red plums; the W– house, quaint and many-gabled; the C– house, where I had my last whipping. Ah, that whipping,—those other whippings! How resolutely did they each make me vow that the next ugly thing which I could safely do should surely be done! A whipping inflicted upon a child old enough to remember it is almost certainly a horrible mistake. No one knows how often it happens that a child's sense of personal insult or degradation, though incapable of expression, is every whit as quick and deep as a man's.

Other houses I remember,—in broad streets, narrow streets,

—in close-built blocks, in open outskirts,—even a mile or two away among the green fields,—lived in, boarded in. I am cheated in heart by injurious superfluity of houses. One home, remembered alone, would stand embowered forever,—if not among ancestral trees and vines, then in clustering memories far more lovely and more cherished. But what dignity or beauty or quiet or distinctness can attach to the score of tenements that scurry helter-skelter through my memory? It is little better than the vision of the drunken men-at-arms in the castle of the parodist:—

> "Then straight there did appear, to each gallant Gorbalier,
> *Forty* castles dancing near, all around!"

An unblest memory!

I believe I once stole a quantity of rather moist brown sugar, and hid it, a clumsy, sticky, brown-paper parcel, between my bed and the sacking. A chambermaid discovered the *corpus delicti*, and something was done,—I forget what. But I wish I had never done anything worse!

O dear! I used to have to go to church twice every Sunday, and to Sunday school before forenoon service beside. I cannot express the extreme dreariness to me, poor little boy, of perching on those uncomfortable, old-fashioned, grown-up seats, too high for my little legs, too wide for my short thighs, so that I sat backless above and dangling below. What had I to do with those

grown-up sermons? Men's talk is babble to a child, as much as children's to a man. The wind that blew past my ears meant as much, and sounded better. Or what were the prayers to me, or the singing? This perfunctory, formal early piety of mine had much influence, long afterward, by natural reaction. Nothing can better shadow forth the weariness of those weekly *jornadas del muerto* than the fact that I found now and then an oasis of delight in pious stories for children, out of the Sabbath-school library. Thus we hear of starving men chewing upon an old boot, or famished desert-travellers sucking rapturously at a hole full of mud. I remember once being so absorbed in a story during sermon-time, that, coming to a word of new and queer physiognomy, and having forgotten all circumstance, I repeated it, according to my custom, quite aloud. "Cuddy," I said, in the middle of the silence of a pause in the sermon. Everybody stared quickly at me. I might as well have uttered a round oath. The awful shame that flushed me and crushed me cannot be imagined. My parents talked kindly, but seriously, to me for such an irreverence; yet I suspect that by themselves they laughed. This book was a story called "Erminia," with an East India voyage in it. I don't know why the name should stick so fast in my memory these thirty years.

My parents, alike inflexible in hygiene and morality, had reasons out of either realm against those stomachic reinforcements to religion which can mollify so sweetly the child's desert pathway through "meeting." Neither cooky, raisin,

nor peppermint lozenge would they dispense. It would violate two important rules,—"Attend to the sermon," and "No eating between meals";—the latter law, otherwise of Medo-Persic stringency, having only this severe and secular exception: "My son, if you are hungry, you can eat a piece of good dry bread. You may have that."

So much the more lovely is the remembrance of that kind interceder, usually an occupant of the same pew with ourselves, who, regarding the minister the while with unmoved countenance, was wont ever and anon, with quiet hand, to insinuate within my childish grasp the beatifying lozenge, or the snow-white and aromatic sassafras or wintergreen "pipe." The sweet savor of those frequent gifts, sweeter for their half-secret, half-forbidden conferring, will never disappear out of my memory. That candy, if I had the power, should be paid for with rewards (not one whit more worth, if loving-kindness in giving be any criterion), in a place where, we are told, "congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths have no end,"—and where, therefore, let us earnestly hope, their delights are superior to those of their earthly antetypes.

Behind us, all one year, there sat in church a platoon of imps. They were children of a red-eyed father, who must have been a drinker; they were curiously ugly in countenance; and they used at once to prove and practise their petty demonism by tormenting us who sat in the pew just before them. They slyly pulled our hair; poked us, and then, when we turned round,

made frightful, malignant faces close to ours; talked loud in sermon-time; dropped crumbs down the backs of our necks; and whispered loudly in our scandalized ears that standing, supreme reproach and insult of my childish days—then confined to little boys, since adopted by the great Democratic party—of "Nigger! Nigger!"

We had not, perhaps, too many rules at home. (There were sometimes too many at school.) Some of them were well enough. We might not have both butter and molasses, or butter and sugar, on the same piece of bread. One luxury was enough. Flavors too compound coax toward the Epicurean sty; the most compound of all is doubtless that of the feast which the pig eateth. "Shut the door,"—a good rule. "No reading before breakfast, nor by firelight, nor by lamp-light, nor between daylight and dark,"—an indispensable rule for such book-devouring children as we were. But on the question of rules it is to be observed, that the thing to be desired is to train a child to understand or feel a principle, and to apply it, not merely to remember and obey a rule. The reason and the moral nature should be enlisted in support of the law. The theory of American mental and moral education is, Minimum, of formal law and brute force, maximum of intelligent self-control and kindly adaptation. Mere codes of rules, whether at home or at school, set the children at work, with all their sharp, unregenerate little wits, to pick flaws, draw distinctions, and quibble on interpretations. They become abominably shrewd in a degrading, casuistical

strict-constructionism. In spite of everything, the little, cunning, irresponsible, non-moral beings will be successfully appealing to the letter of the law against the spirit, and warping and drying up all their tenderness of conscience, all their capability of broad and generous applications of right and noble principle.

I disliked fat meat and fat people. I used to like to be with the hired girls in the kitchen. I was entirely untouched by the often-repeated expositions made to me of the vulgarity of such habits, and of the low esteem in which I should be held in consequence. What is vulgarity to a child? Spontaneity, unconscious existence, has no vulgarities. Vulgarity comes of restraints and distortions; and a child's life is commonly for a time untouched by the girdling and compression of forms and conventionalities. Besides, to a child of positive traits, those persuasions are utterly forceless which, instead of being addressed to the prominent faculties, are directed to those comparatively deficient. It is no matter how well such considerations are suited to the character of the persuader, to a conventional human nature, to the *a priori* child. Thus, in the matter of kitchen-haunting, the appeal was made to my regard for the opinions of others. As I was naturally disregardful of the opinions of others, the appeal did not affect me.

Besides, we used to have hired girls as superior to the Biddies of to-day as a patriarch is to a *laquais de place*. Possibly hereditary friendly relations with a few individuals may have made us more fortunate than some other families. From

whatever cause, we enjoyed through most of my childhood the ministrations of two or three women of American race, of intelligence, character, and self-respect. It is scarcely possible that the vulgarity which my parents apprehended was anything worse than colloquial New England provincialism. It is possible that they may have feared lest in time the kitchen-door should introduce me to that Devil's school for boys, the city street.

These domestics were themselves competent housekeepers, and could have maintained good repute and creditable hospitality, had they possessed the means, even among the far-renowned "old-fashioned H– housekeepers." My remembrances of them are scanty. There were Lois and Hannah, tall, thin, angular Yankee women, grave, trustworthy, and efficient. There was Emily, a dignified personage, portly and composed, an excellent and faithful woman and a good manager, unfailingly kind to us little folks, a wondrously skilful compounder of pies, cakes, and gingerbreads. She was wont to wear a white turban or similar head-dress of wreathed draperies; and often, with serious face, she puzzled me, and silenced my childish inquiries about the nature or purpose of ingredient or process, by saying that it was "Laro for meddlers." In those days I speculated deeply as to whether there did exist any such real substance as "Laro." In this mystic and apparently underived term, the *a* is broad, as in "ah!" It may be spelled "Lahro," for what I know.

I do remember, in particular, a tidy, laborious, parsimonious, pragmatical little Scotchwoman, Christiana. Once upon a time,

in the days of allopathic rule, my mother compounded a mighty pitcher of senna mixture. This—its actual deglutition, by some blessed chance, not becoming necessary—she set up, with a housekeeper's saving instinct, on the pantry shelf, instead of pouring it into the gutter. So Christiana, thrifty soul, and still more saving, could not endure the wasting of so much virtue, and set herself stoutly to utilize the decoction by consuming it to her own sole use and behoof, which she accomplished by way of relaxation, so to speak, in single doses, at leisure times, within a few days. Her own and her employer's respective economies were fitly rewarded by an illness, through which my mother had to take care of her.

One morning, so early that it was not quite light, I hung about the kitchen table, slyly securing little lumps of the cold hasty-pudding which was being sliced in order to be fried for breakfast. Having snapped up a very nice one, as big as a walnut, lo and behold! when I chewed, it was lard. There was direful retching and hasty ejection. The disagreeable, cold, soft, greasy rankness of the morsel is extreme: if you don't believe it, try it. I think this affair may have been a cold-blooded scheme of the hired-girl. But it was years before I became so suspicious as to place this sad construction upon the occurrence, though I often remembered it.

Like all children, I was fond of candy, sweetmeats, and spices. Yet not of allspice or nutmeg, nor of mace, which tastes of soap. I have known of cases where parents claimed that their children were not fond of such things. Believe them not. I liked pie,

but not pudding; the rich, heavy fruit-cake of weddings, good, honest gingerbread, the brisk, crispy heat of the brittle ginger-snap, but not "plain cake,"—absurd viand! It is of the essence of cake not to be plain. As well say, acid sweetness. Nor did I like the hereditary election-cake of my ancient State and city. Fat pork I could not swallow; nor onions nor cabbage,—gross, indelicate vegetables! And even now, as well present upon my table that other diabolic cabbage of the New England swamps,—in old legend said to have been conjured up out of the ground by the Indian pow-wows, to beautify and perfume the dank and gloomy resorts where Satan was wont to drill them in their hellish exercises,—as its grandchild, the big booby of the garden. For is it not deservedly, if disrespectfully, named a cabbage-head? That is because it is the Vegetable Booby.

Naturally, I did not like that concoction so dear to the heart of good old-fashioned Connecticut folks, a biled-dish (accent on *biled*). This, O vast majority of ignoramuses, is corned beef and cabbage boiled together. As for onions, if I could not escape them in any other way, I would organize a party on the Great Wethersfield Question, and lead it, a Connecticut Cato, with the motto, "Censeo Wethersfieldiam delendam esse." Nor would I rest until that alliaceous metropolis was fairly tipped over into Connecticut River, and sent drowning down to Long Island Sound.

There is yet another cell in the cavern of memory,—a gloomy and horrid one,—the torture-chamber. It is the remembrance

of sickness and its attendant pharmaceutic devils. O ye witch's oils, hell-broths red and black, pills, and electuaries! the unsuccessful experiments—instrumentalities of death too slow for the occasion, but masterly in their kind—of the Pandemoniac host in those Miltonian, infernal chemics which resulted in gunpowder and cannon-balls! What agonies from horrific stench and flavor, in close, dreary rooms, under hot, unwelcome blankets, do ye recall!

It is not that I complain of all those inexplicable diseases, *opprobria medicinæ*, so pusillanimously submitted to by civilized humanity and its physicians,—chicken-pox, measles, whooping-cough, mumps. I complain, indeed, of no diseases, but of their treatment. But let me not delay longer than is needful amid such distressful recollections. Three hateful decoctions were known to me by the phonetics, Lixipro, Lixaslutis, and Lixusmatic. I don't know what they were, and I don't want to know. Devil's elixirs were they all. Rubbub and magnesia,—endless imprecations rest upon that obnoxious red mixture! And chiefest of them all—Arimanes of the whole bad crew, though Agag is the only really suitable royal name I can think of—is that slow, greasy horror, whose superhuman excess of unutterable abomination no words can express, and even inarticulate ejaculations made on purpose cannot at all show forth,—as urk! huk! agh!—chiefest among them all, castor oil!

I hurry away from the awful scene. Let me be thankful that I swallowed but little calomel. Let me be thankful that, after a

time, I could not swallow castor oil. Spasmodic regurgitations, as if one had attempted to load a gun having a live coal at the far end, closed perforce that chapter of torments. And soon thereafter arose the benign genius of homœopathy, with healing in its neat little white-paper wings. Beautiful Homœopathy, the real Angel in the House, if Mr. Coventry Patmore had only known it! Hast thou not long ago appeared, veiled in an allegory, before an unrecognizing world? Surely, what but homœopathic medicine was that wondrous talisman with which Adonbec El Hakim cured the Melech Ric? To be taken in a tumbler about two thirds full of water, as now; but in those early times, and for such a very large man, at one gulp, instead of by hourly teaspoonfuls. Or perhaps the manuscripts may have been corrupted in that passage by unscrupulous mediæval physicians of the school of Salerno, or other regular institutions.

I suppose I must have played a good deal; but there are reasons why this may not have been the case. The chief of them is, that whereas I have subsequently commonly attained a fair degree of excellence in what I have learned, I did not in the staple games of my childhood do so. In marbles, spinning top, and ball I was inferior,—indeed, scarcely at home in the technics of some of them. The games of marbles which I see now-a-days seem to centre upon the projection of the missile into a hole in the ground. In my day we used to play upon the surface of the earth; sometimes "in the big ring," where each combatant fired at the marbles grouped in the centre, from any point upon the

external orbit; sometimes "in the little ring," where the shot was made from the place where the projectile lodged last; sometimes "at chasings," where the players fired alternately, each at the marble of his adversary. Concerning this last game, I remember the following terms: "ebs," which, seasonably vociferated, that is, when it is the speaker's turn to play and before his adversary can say anything, serves as an incantation authorizing the speaker to deliver his fire from any point other than that where his marble lies, equally distant from the objective point; "clearings," in like manner, authorizing the preparation of a reasonably unobstructed line of fire; and "fen ebs," "fen clearings," and "fen everythings," to be pronounced before the other player speaks, and which, by virtue of the prohibitory syllable "fen" (*défendre*, Fr.), prevent respectively ebs, clearings, and everything,—that is to say, any elusion or amelioration of the existing conditions of fire.

In games of ball, to confess the truth, I was but feeble. Scarce, indeed, was I of average skill in any of them except the simplest two,—"bung-ends," and "one old cat." In the first of these, one boy throws the ball against the side of a house, or other perpendicular unelastic plane, while the other smites it with his club at the rebound. In the second, played as a trio, boy A throws the ball at boy B, standing opposite, whose duty is to smite, while boy C, behind B, catches B out in case of a miss.

I was pretty good at "tag" and "catch," games of running and dodging. In these, one boy is called "it," i. e. leader, or victim. He

pursues the rest; and the games are alike, except that in "catch" he who is to be made "it" must be caught and held by him who is "it," whereas in "tag" a touch is sufficient to transfer the responsibility, and inaugurate the new choragus.

There. Such quaint scraps are all that is left me of my existence as a little child. I know men who say, that, within their own consciousness and memories, they have the witness and knowledge of a life even before that of this humanity. But, for my own part, I should never know, by anything in my own memory, that I had been a baby,—that I was or did anything before that first school where the ferocious little girl was handcuffed in unbleached-cotton bags, for scratching.

"The child is father of the man," saith the great poet of dry sentimentalizing. Therefore the man's endeavor to remember about his childhood might reasonably be expected to bring him into *limbo patrum*. But it is a dim and narrow field to grope in. It is not wandering in a darkened world,—it is feeling in a dark closet.

It was an unconscious brief advance from nothing to very little. Yes, but still there must have been some dim features of the dawning character. No doubt. The heedless, complying, unjudging benevolence, for instance, that gave away *all* my gingerbread to the young Anakim of Parade Street, was one. It was liable afterwards to invert, by reacting from such over-operation as that, into an equally unjudging disregard of the wants and needs of others.

And now, What was it? This is no foolish nor unimportant inquiry. If I could answer it sufficiently, I should at once supply the basis of whole systems of mental and moral art and science. Such whole systems indeed—for instance, the muddy distractions of the Scotch metaphysicians—have already been based upon the phantasms of wiggy old doctors who dived backward into themselves,—jumping down their own throats, as it were, in their search after knowledge, as did the seventh Arabian Brother in the Spectator (is it not?) "with seven candles in each hand, lighted at both ends,"—and said, "When I began to think, I must necessarily have thought thus and thus." This was all very scientific. But for usefulness it would have been better to inquire, not what they must have thought, but what they did think.

Indeed, hitherto the history of mental philosophy is the history of the ignorance of man about himself; and since science must be built upon induction, and since phrenology has now established a classification—approximately correct and sufficient for working purposes—of the mental faculties, it is now quite in order to review the old inductions from the history of the individual, and to accumulate new ones. Even the mere trifles of these recollections of mine, some of them at least, must have an actual philosophical value, if only they are true and well enough stated.

Thank goodness, that, at any rate, I was not a remarkable child! It is the average record which has most value. The remarkable child is not a magnified child, but a distorted one;

not a young giant, but a young monster.

No tract or little 24mo. would have been published about me by the American Sunday-School Union, if I had died young. No brilliant repartees by me are on record. No sweet remembrance is in blossom about me of a grim, unchildish pleasure in preferring the convenience or enjoyment of others to my own. In an instance where I remember to have tried to do as the good boys do in the story-books, by giving away my one cooky, the quick reaction into common sense sent me in grief to my mother, making use of natural tears and a specious plea of what I had done to get me another cooky, or perchance two. It was a dead failure. My mother knew too well the importance of the great moral lesson to let me reap material advantage from my good deed. She relegated me to the unfailing good dry bread, explaining how I could find abundant satisfaction within my own breast for doing a kind action,—how virtue was to be its own reward. I looked for the said reward, but could not see it. It was not satisfaction within my breast that I wanted, but within my stomach and on my palate. Benevolence will not supplement alimentiveness in the small boy. If I gathered any reward at all, it was in the hard wisdom of my resolve not to be caught in any such nonsense again.

I had not, as had a little monster of misplaced piety whose case is recorded in the good children's books, "at the early age of six made up my mind on all the great questions of the day." Yet I think I can remember yelling out "Hurra for Jackson!" because it was a good easy shout, although my father was a strong, steady

Whig. There is practical democracy in that. First choice of shouts is much toward winning the battle.

I was not remarkable for early piety, sweetness of disposition, wit, beauty (I must certainly have been, as a child, skinny), or helpful kindness (except that irrational benevolence of mine).

I have been told that I learned to read, nobody knew how, all by myself, by the time I was four years old. How that may be I don't know; but I do know that I did not know how to read when I was twenty years old.

I was a "natural speller." It is no joke, but one of the proverbial fools' truths, which Dogberry enounces when he says that "reading and writing come by nature." They do. And so does spelling. Abundance of well-educated people never escape from occasional perturbations in orthography, just as they never learn a desirable handwriting, nor how to read silently fast and well, or well aloud. It is because they cannot; because they have not what Nature gave Neighbor Seacoal; because spelling and reading and writing are "gifts,"—they come by nature.

What I learned at school in those first ten years I do not know. Almost nothing. I have utterly forgotten what. I might have been much better taught. I might have been instructed in thinking. I do not mean that a child of eight or nine years old can or should be made to see, judge, and conclude upon new matters with the discovering and advancing power of a philosopher. But he may be made to perform his own proper little mental operations, no matter how small they are, on the same principle,

—on the principle of actual understanding, instead of mere sole memorizing.

All my instructors, whether they meant to do so or not, did in fact proceed as if they believed children's minds to be, not live fountains, but empty cisterns; not to be capable of thought; like an empty house, to be furnished for a tenant; needing to be fitted up with a store of lifeless forms, which the adult life, when it came, was to breathe vitality into and turn to living uses. I learned rules. "Here, little boy," they said, "swallow these oyster-shells. They will lie naturally and easily in your stomach until you grow up, because little boys' stomachs are adapted for the storage of oyster-shells; and when you are a man, and want oysters, put some in there." But does it stand to reason that children, who manipulate words and figures, and produce results without understanding the rules they apply,—just as a wizard's apprentice could evoke his master's demons without knowing the meaning of the awful syllables he recited, so that Southey's arcanum of Aballiboozobanganorribo might respectably serve as one of them,—does it stand to reason that these unhappy young jugglers will the better learn to do the same work intelligently afterwards? No; for they have to dislodge the bad habit which has pre-empted, before they can install the good one. As well undertake to train a new Mozart by making the bright little music-loving boy grind ten years on a barrel-organ with *La ci darem* in its bowels.

I remember a fondness for long, large, grown-up words;

doubtless, in some measure, a result of my constant practice of reading grown-up people's books. It was a mere verbal memory, the driest of all the intellectual faculties. Scarcely a faint perfume of meaning lingered about the rattling piles of husks that I could say and spell.

What I learned at Sunday school and church was to be inexpressibly weary of them. What I learned at home I can perhaps define but little better. I gained no important result from any direct instruction. I gained something of good-boy behavior and decent manners, diligently trained into me. But what was most valuable in my home education was unconscious infiltration from a good home-atmosphere. This is an influence of incalculable importance, a thousand times outweighing all the schools. It is that for which God established the family; the one single possible real and efficient means of well bringing up the young. And whatever shades of repression, misunderstanding, ungeniality, restraint, may have sometimes troubled me, still I constantly feel and fully know that that pure, calm, quiet, bright, loving, intelligent, refined atmosphere of my home silently and unconsciously penetrated and vivified all my being. If now I should be told, "You are no very splendid exemplar of the results of such influences," I should still say, "Most true, unfortunately true; but what should I have been without them?"

I had brothers and sisters,—a few playmates; but neither they, nor any other human beings, not even my parents, seem to have been during those years, to any important extent, directly

operative within or upon the sphere and character of my own real conscious existence. That life figures itself in my memory much like a magic circle, within which I was alone, and did my scanty little thinkings and imaginings alone. The rest of the living were outside, unreal,—phantoms moving to and fro, around and without, but never coming within that limit,—never entering into living communion with me. This constitutional solitude of mind has a useful office, perhaps not to be easily explained, but sometimes not otherwise to be performed.

This isolation was, in part, unnecessary. To a certain extent the necessity for it still remains. But in part it was artificial,—my unconscious reaction against an ill-adapted influence,—the resisting force of a trait which, like all those other early traits, has become visible to me, like the blind paths over bogs, now that I am a long way off. This trait I have already spoken of. It was an insensibility to a certain motive, rather prominent among those commonly proposed to me for my own government of myself. This was variously framed thus:—It is not usual to do this; it is usual to do that; if you proceed so and so, it will seem singular; people will talk about it; you will offend people's usages and habits; you will seem singular and odd. Against such cautions I rebelled with a mute, indignant impulse, which I was not old enough to enounce or to argue. It was, however, the result of two characteristics;—one, the natural lack of instinctive desire for the good opinion of others; and the other, a corresponding instinct for living out my own life fully and freely, not so as to infringe

upon the just rights of others, but not stinting or distorting or amputating myself, even though others set the example. It was the old fable reversed,—the fox disinclined to cut off his tail, even though all the other foxes had cut off theirs. And the fact that people older than I, and several of them, and for year after year, urged upon me the considerations I have spoken of, never availed. That key would not move the mechanism of my mind. It did not fit.

My childhood seems to me far more memorable for what it had not, was not, than for what it had and was. I do not believe this is because mine was an especially unfortunate or unhappy childhood. As I have hinted before, it was because childhood is empty,—an unconscious, imperfect life,—almost animal,—germinal,—a life in the egg, in the jelly, in the sap. The experiences of childhood are seed-leaves. They drop quickly away and utterly disappear, and even the scars where they grew cease to show on the stem. Probably I seemed to myself to enjoy life when I was a child. Children whom I see daily seem to do so. But thought is life. Mere enjoyment is dreaming. It may seem to cover hours or days or years of experience, but when we awake it has been only a point of time. But this pleasure-dream is worse than a sleep-dream. Over its costly actuality of time, cut out and dropped down out of life, the hither and thither ends of the shortened thread of existence must be knotted together into a cord of diminished length, strength, and value.

In sum: This child which I was was a semi-embryonic

creature, mostly unconscious, whose ten years' career, now chiefly faded into entire blankness, showed not many mental traits. The chief were quick and retentive verbal memory, quick, undiscriminating, impulsive, unreasonable kind-heartedness, and an insensibility, even an instinctive opposition, to the approvings or disapprovings of others. Or the child might be stated thus: Nervous and sensitive organization, intellect predominant; in the intellect the perceptive faculties most active, and of these chiefly that which notices and compares exteriors; beside the intellect, a kind-heartedness without balance, and therefore too great; too little caution, and too little love of approbation. Around these features others have grown up, of course; but these were, so to speak, the primary strata of the formation, underlying the other elements, determining their tendencies, and cropping out through them.

This child was all but empty, unsubstantial, imperfect; incapable, then, of much life from within itself, little helped by thoughts or other aid from without. The efforts made by others to operate on it were faithful, kindly, well meant, but not adapted to its individuality. The fact is, that, so far as they had any supposed basis on system, it was on the Scotch empirical analysis of perception, conception, reason, will; a Procrustean mental philosophy which absolutely ignores individuality, and assumes that all human beings are alike. It is as good as the little boys' conventional system of portraiture. A round O, two dots, a perpendicular line between them, and a horizontal one across

below, displays every face. Such was Christ and such was Judas; such was Messalina and such was Florence Nightingale. But there is a better philosophy of the mind.

HER PILGRIMAGE

In Memoriam, January 12, 1866

The snow-flakes floated many a star
To earth, from pale December's skies,
When a fair spirit from afar
Smiled through an infant's violet eyes.

And as she sweetly breathed, the hours
Wove, like a robe of gossamer,
All grace about her, while the flowers
Their tints and perfumes gave to her.

In after time, when violets grew,
And pale anemones veiled the land,
She drooped her modest eyes of blue,
And gave to Love her maiden hand.

Four times the holy angels came,
To greet her with a dear unrest;
And, in a mother's saintly name,
Left a young angel on her breast.

Eight lustrums pure celestial eyes

Beamed through her tender, loving gaze,
Commingling all the sweet surprise
Of heavenly with the earthly rays.

At last, her gentle face grew pale
As the anemones of spring;
And whiter than her bridal veil
Was that in which she took her wing.

And than that fixed despair more white,
Softly the stars, in feathery snows,
Came, covering with serener light
Her folded hands, her meek repose.

Pale stars, through which the Night looked down,
Until they wept away in showers
On those dear hands, which clasped the crown,
And closer still the cross, of flowers.

The snow-flakes melt on earth in tears;
The eternal stars in glory shine;
While in the shroud of desolate years
Dead Love awaits the immortal sign.

FARMER HILL'S DIARY

In looking over the papers of our deceased friend, the following diary was discovered. It being too lengthy to copy in full, we omit many of the incidents, as well as the "Account of the Ohio Prophetess," and some religious discussions, chiefly on doctrinal points.—J. S.

DIARY

April 13, 18—.—Captain Welles was here this morning, advising daddy to buy a horse-cart. Frederic favors it; but daddy doesn't approve of newfangled contrivances. He says we can do as we always have done, viz., carry the grain to mill on horseback, or, when there's a heavy load, take the oxen.

Captain Welles's kindness to me is wonderful, considering that I can in no way favor him, being poor, and without knowledge, and wellnigh friendless. He talked with me to-day, while I was working on the fences, about my mind and my soul, and also about getting along in the world. He counselled me to keep a diary, mentioning many advantages arising therefrom. As what I write is only for my own eye, I will put down that he warned me against being vain of a comely face.

He was a sailor in the ship that brought over Mr. Murray, the preacher of that belief which daddy says is a sin to speak of. But Captain Welles has told me of many things he said on board the vessel, which sound heavenly; also of sermons he preached to the crew, that seem in no way blasphemous, as Aunt Bethiah says the new doctrines are.

They were shipwrecked on the Jersey coast, and experienced great suffering. Shortly after they gained the shore, a man came along, who cried out, as soon as he saw the preacher: "Why, you are the very man I've waited for so long! I have built a meeting-

house on purpose for you!" This is very wonderful, when we think that Mr. Murray was never in our country before, and that the man was never out of it.

May 1.—Twenty years old to-day! Just ten years since daddy took me out of the poor-house! How kind they've all been to me! Frederic and Elinor and mammy, and, for the most part, Aunt Bethiah, though she is very precise. If I could only forget where I came from. Captain Welles says it is false pride; but that doesn't hinder its plaguing me. When a thorn pricks, it pricks, whether of a rose-bush or a bramble.

As long as I went to school the boys called me "Poor'us," "Poor'us," only when Frederic was by they didn't dare, for fear of his thrashing them, he was so stout and tall; and he has been growing ever since. Aunt Bethiah says it is reaching and tiptoeing up to the high shelves after company-cake, that makes him so tall. I heard her telling mammy that she fairly laid awake nights, contriving places where to hide things.

"Poor Freddy," says mammy, "he don't have no great of an appetite to eat."

"News to me," says Aunt Bethiah.

She's always on the look-out for him; but, with the whole house on her shoulders, she can't be everywhere. Last fall, while the shoemaker was here making up our winter shoes, Frederic got him to put squeaking leather into one of hers, and not into the mate of it. Then he could tell her step, for she would go "squeak," "–," "squeak," "–." Mammy knew, for her arm-chair wasn't a

great ways off from the shoe-bench; but then Frederic's her idol, and all he does is right. Many's the nice bit she has tucked away for him, when Aunt Bethiah's back was turned; and does yet, for all he's a man grown.

He laughs at his grandmother about her plasters and medicines; but he is as full of feeling as he is of fun. Gets up the coldest nights in winter, when she's taken worse, to run for the neighbors, crying, when he thinks nobody sees. Who would think, to see him in his capers, he could ever shed a tear? Nights, when the chores are done, he sits down close to mammy, till the candles are lit. When he was little, 't would be on a cricket, with his head in her lap, and saying his verses; and she would tell him of his pious mother, who had a lovely countenance, and who died young, being willing to go; or of his father, who mourned himself into the grave, for the loss of his dear young wife.

But now he has grown up, he relates to her whatever has happened through the day, if it is only the finding of a hen's nest. This serves to take up her mind, and gives her something to look forward to. After that he reads, or does odd jobs of mending; and, two nights a week, brushes up and goes a-courting. And he's only a year older than I am! I shall never go a-courting. "Poor'us," "Poor'us." Who would want a "poor'us?"

In a few weeks, Elinor will come home for good. Her father's relations have done well by her, and would be glad to keep her always. People say she has bad great advantages, and Hope she will not be spoiled; but that can't be. She was always good, and

always will be.

May 5.—'T was just about such a day as this, ten years ago, that Aunt Bethiah came out into the porch, and found me leaning up against the meal-chest. Daddy had just brought me home. He wasn't blind then, though he wore a green shade. How scared I was at Aunt Bethiah!—she looked so tall, and dark, and—hard, like Greatheart's wife, if he ever had one. It doesn't seem possible that she can be mammy's own sister.

Daddy said, "Mammy, suppose we keep him?" And she made answer, that mebby I might save poor Freddy some steps. Then Aunt Bethiah said, "More men folks, more work," and that Frederic knew how to save his own steps. But I stayed, for daddy's mind was made up beforehand, and daddy always has his will, though it is in a gentle way.

Elinor was a little girl then. She sat down with me in the window-seat, and showed me her new primer, and whispered softly that Aunt Bethiah would like me, if I wiped my feet.

Poor mammy! How long she has been sick! She sits in the same chair and in the same corner that she did the night I was brought. Some women wouldn't think of anybody but themselves; but she has a care over the whole neighborhood. She's always steeping up herbs or spreading plasters for somebody. Should like to know how many weight of Burgundy pitch and Dr. Oliver's salve I've run to the doctor's for. I remember how I coughed that first night.

"What a dreadful cough that poor child's got!" said she.

"Elinor, reach me the bellows, and hold the blade o' the knife to the fire, and warm it warm. He must have a plaster between his shoulders."

So she laid the bellows across her lap, and spread a plaster, and told me not to tear it off as soon as it began to tickle me, but to rub my back against the door. And there were doors enough, I thought, set round that big kitchen. Nine poor boys, with dreadful coughs, could have found room.

I remember how we used to climb up to the easterly room door, which had squares of glass set in the top, and look through at the best things that were kept shut up there. And how every Sunday night we used to go into the westerly room, and watch for the sun to go down, before we could step out of doors.

May 8.—Helped Frederic to-day to weed out mammy's herb-garden. He keeps it neat as a pin, but has his fun out of it all the same. It is right under the window, where she can see growing her saffron and sage, peppermint, cumfrey, and all the rest. I don't know the names of half. Frederic calls them "health-root," "lullaby-root," "doctor's defiances," "step-quickeners," or whatever comes into his head.

Besides these, which he calls the regular practics, there are all the wild herbs to be gathered in. Mullein, motherwort, thoroughwort, golden-rod, everlasting, burdock-leaves, may-weed, must all be dried and hung up in the garret. Aunt Bethiah groans, but grabs them up with her long fingers, and has them out of the way in less than no time. Daddy calls it mammy's harvest.

Poor old man! How pitiful it is to see him groping about so, with his white face and silvery hair! Yet, to look at his countenance, nobody would say he was blind; for, though his eyes are closed, he seems to see with his whole face. I don't know how to write it down; but I mean, that the look which most people have only in their eyes seems to be spread over his whole countenance, and lights it up and makes it beautiful. Sometimes I turn my eyes away, for it seems as if I were looking at his soul,—and the soul is so mysterious!

May 12.—Frederic's great-uncle Frederic has died, and left him a little bag of silver dollars. He sat down on the floor, and made me sit down on the other side, and we rolled them to each other, just like little boys. He has given us one apiece, and put one in the drawer for Elinor. Elinor and I always used to keep our money together. When it is full, the box is to be broken open, and we shall buy the best books there are. Daddy has been asking when she will come back. By the 1st of June certainly. We've heard of several poor people finding a silver dollar under their plates. Frederic never can keep anything to himself.

May 20.—Frederic has been to Boston, and bought cloth for a tail-coat, and had it cut out by a Boston tailor. It is blue, and cost ten dollars a yard. Mary Swift has been here all the week, making it up. The buttons are gilt, and cost six dollars a dozen. A good many of the neighbors have been in to see it. Those who live farther off will have a chance to-morrow, when he goes to meeting.

May 22.—Yesterday was the Sabbath, and Frederic wore his coat to meeting. Aunt Bethiah took extra pains with his ruffles, so as to have everything correspond. He had on his new boots, with tassels on the tops, and they shone like glass bottles. He frizzed his front hair himself. But I had to braid his cue, and tie on the bow. Blue becomes him, on account of his fairness and his fresh color. I was never struck before with the resemblance of brother and sister; only she is more delicate looking.

She will be very proud of him. We all are, but try not to let it be seen. Mammy is, for all she counselled him to fix his attention on the discourse, and think only such thoughts as he would like to remember at the day of judgment. As we walked out of the yard, I caught sight of her twinkling black eyes over the window-curtain. Such a piece of work too as she makes getting up out of her chair! How handsome and noble he looked, fit for an emperor! Dreadful red, though, by the time we got sot down in meeting; for our pew is a good way up, and his boots squeaked, and we'd heard that all the singers were going early, to see him come into meeting, and Lucy sits in the seats.

After sundown took a pleasant walk through the woods, over to the schoolmaster's boarding-place, to carry back the two last books he lent me,—the poems of Burns and of Henry Kirke White.

Aunt Bethiah found one of them amongst the hay, when she was hunting for her setting-hen. She declares that reading is a dreadful waste of time, and poetry-books are worse than all, and

nothing but sing-song.

May 26.—I wish I knew whether there was any merit in me or not. Most people can tell, by the manners of others towards them. But I had such a mean start! No matter how well people treat me, it all, in my estimation, settles down to one thing,—"Poor'us."

It is either, "I will treat you well *because* you came out of the poor-house," or, "I will treat you well *notwithstanding* you came from the poor-house." Captain Welles tells me I can make myself just what I want to be; but Aunt Bethiah says that is dreadful wicked doctrine, and daddy rather agrees with her; but it seems to me there can't be any harm in doing my best.

I am very ignorant, and not only so, but I hardly even know what there is to learn. From the schoolmaster's books I get but scraps of knowledge. Supposing I never saw a flower, and somebody should bring me a leaf of a violet, or a clover-head. What should I know of tulips and pinks, or the smell of roses, or of all the flowers that grow in the fields and gardens? The books speak of music, of pictures, of great authors, of the wonders of the sea, of rocks, of stars. Shall I ever learn about all these?

May 30.—In a week Elinor comes. Mammy thinks she will be all run down, and is steeping up white-oak bark and cherry-tree twigs. Elinor will make up faces, I know; but mammy will make her take it. She didn't see Frederic when he dropped in the red pepper. I wouldn't have him know for anything that I skimmed it out.

Captain Welles has bought a chaise. There are now two in the

place. His is green-bottomed. It has a most agreeable leathery smell, and a gentle creak which is very pleasant. The minister's is dark blue. They are set high, and the tops tip forward, serving to keep out both sun and rain. Poor Mrs. Scott was buried to-day.

June 7.—Elinor came yesterday, late in the afternoon. Frederic brought her from the tavern. The horse shied at an old coat thrown over a fence and came nigh throwing them both.

I expected to be very glad when Elinor got home, but I'm feeling many things besides gladness.

The people she's been staying with are fashionable and polite, and she has caught their ways, and I can't say but they hang prettily about her. Her aunt is a minister's wife, and akin to a judge, so she has seen the very best of company, and heard the talk of educated people.

But she was glad enough to get home, and said pretty things to us all. Aunt Bethiah says she looks very genteel. She has had her gowns altered to the new fashion, and had on her neck a handsome handkerchief which she worked at the boarding-school. She has also worked a long white veil, very rich, and has made a cape of silk-weed. Besides this, she has painted a light-stand. It is made of bird's-eye maple, and has a green silk bag hanging from underneath. They don't speak of these in daddy's hearing.

After supper, he took her up on his knee and stroked her hair, and said, "Now let us sing rock-a-by as we used to." So, with her head on his shoulder, he rocked and sang rock-a-by, while she

laughed. At last she jumped up and ran off to see the bossy.

When she was gone, daddy heaved a deep sigh; but mammy cheered him up, telling how thankful they ought to be for the safe return of their child. 'T was touching to hear them talk, each telling the other how good she was, and how from a child she had followed their wishes.

And to see how tender mammy was of his feelings! Never praising her pretty face, or saying that she looked like her mother, but only speaking of what he could take comfort in too.

Nobody but we three were in the room. At times they would keep silence. Then something long forgotten would come to mind,—some good thing she did, or said, or prayed, when a child,—and they would begin with, "And don't you remember," and so go on with the whole story. Truly pleasant were these memories of the past. Pleasant and sweet as the fragrance which was brought to us by the evening wind from far-off flowery fields.

A time of greater satisfaction I never experienced. Suddenly came in Aunt Bethiah and began to rattle the chairs, and to gather up whatever was lying about. Mammy asked me to shut down the window, for the wind seemed to have changed to the eastward. Frederic's girl came in the evening with some others,—good-looking girls enough. All flowers can't be roses.

In the night, I lay thinking, and thinking, and wishing for I knew not what, and sighing for I knew not what, and looking forwards and backwards till I was all in a whirl.

Is this, I said to myself, the little girl that used to hear me

say my catechism? And then I remembered how we used to sit opposite each other on two crickets, while she put out the questions; and how her little toes peeped out, for it was the spring of the year, and she was wearing off her stockings ready to go barefooted. Her shoes were gone long before.

And I remembered, too, how, ever since we were little children, we had gone of summer mornings after wild roses for Old Becky to still; for mammy never could do without rose-water. She used to start us early, before the dew was off, for they were stronger then.

June 8.—I thought last night that we should never go after roses any more; but this morning, just as I was about to set off with the cows, I heard the house-door shut, and then a light step on the grass. I kept myself hid, and peeped through a knot-hole. She had a basket on her arm, and looked about, and took a few steps softly, this way and that, as if looking for somebody. At last I came out, innocent as a lamb. "Good morning, Elinor," says I. "Have you forgot the roses, Walter?" says she, a little bashful. As if I could forget the roses! The hills were all scattered over with children and young people; for it was a fine morning, and the roses were in their prime.

The sun shone, the children shouted, the birds sang, and the air was cool and fresh. It is good to be with the day at its beginning. Elinor laughed, and chatted, and danced up hill and down hill, and snapped her scissors, and snapped off the roses, and stuck the prettiest in her hair and in her apron-string, till at last I told

her she looked like a rose-bush all in bloom.

June 11.—To-day Elinor and Frederic walked to meeting together. He had on his new things, and she had on a white chip hat with blue inside and outside, and blue ribbons tied under her chin, and a white gown, and a white mantle. Everybody in the meeting-house was looking at them, and several times the minister's eyes appeared to be directed that way. I could hardly tell preaching from praying, and once I let the pew-seat slam down in prayer-time. 'T would be better if they couldn't turn up at all, and then there wouldn't be such a rattling and clattering the minute the minister says, "Amen."

'T was a young preacher. I hope our minister won't exchange with him very often. He is too young to give satisfaction,—under thirty, I should judge.

August 10.—The summer is passing. It has brought me plenty of work and but little pleasure. Elinor has had much out-of-town company,—frolicking girls and sometimes their brothers. They often come out to rake hay or ride in the cart.

My diary has been neglected. I don't believe anybody writes down their unhappiest feelings, especially when they don't know justly what they are unhappy about.

Something about Elinor. And what is it about Elinor? Do I want to become to her what Frederic is to Lucy? Do I want to make her "Mrs. Poor'us"? Do I want to drag her down and keep her plodding all her days, clad in a homespun gown, and she fit to be a lady in her silks and satins? What is it I would be at?

September 3.—Our summer company is gone, and Aunt Bethiah is glad. We are having longer evenings. When the candles are lit Frederic bids mammy good night and goes off. Sometimes she sits up and puts on her spectacles, and reads Watts's hymns loud to daddy. Aunt Bethiah pares apples and slices them, and Elinor strings them up with a darning-needle. I am tired and sit in the chimney-corner to rest.

Yesterday Mr. Colman preached again, and to-day he took supper at our house,—rainy, and out of his way too! He was unmannerly enough to address most of his remarks to a young person when her elders were present. So seldom, too, as daddy has a chance to talk with an out-of-town minister! He is not at all good-looking. His hair is yellowish and stands up stiff on his forehead, and his eyes are no color. I don't see how he can be agreeable to any young girl. But being a minister goes a good ways.

I knew mammy would ask him to stay to tea. As soon as anybody comes, no matter if it is only in the middle of the afternoon, she always says, "Now take your things right off. Come, Bethiah, clap on the tea-kettle, and we'll have tea airly." They say she was always just so about liking to have company.

October 18.—Mr. Scott has begun to come here evenings. He owns a house and farm and wood-lot. His wife left him no children, and he lives in a lonely house all alone; and poor enough company he must find himself.

He comes here and sits all the evening, talking with daddy

and looking at Elinor. Poor hand at talking, though,—so dull and heavy both in looks and words. I wonder what countryman he is. Very dark and thick-set. That doesn't seem like any country in particular. Captain Welles would know; for his father picked him up among the wharves in London, a little ragged boy, running about.

But then who cares what he is? He needn't trouble himself about remembering the heads of the sermon to tell mammy. I always have done it, and can yet. If he's a mind to scratch his hands getting sarsaparilla and snapwood for her off his wood-lot, he may. Have no objection, either, to his bringing Elinor boxberry plums. I never read yet of any maiden losing her heart on boxberry plums; though, to be sure, he might bewitch them. He looks like that.

November 21.—So Winter is coming in earnest. Well, we are all ready for him. Garret and cellar, both barns and the crib, are full. Candy frolic this evening at Lucy's. Had part of the candy stolen coming home. Elinor said she had a good tell for me. What could it be? Made believe I didn't care; but do wish I knew. She said 't wasn't the first one she'd heard, either. Ever since we were children we've come and gone together; but when I was old enough to offer my arm, I didn't dare. If she hadn't been away so much, out of town to school, why I might have been more forward.

November 28.—Frederic seems rather dull of late. Mammy has tried to discover his ailments, so as to know what to steep up.

But daddy, by questioning and guessing, has found out that both he and his girl are ready to be married, but have nowhere to live. Daddy brags now that he can find out more without eyes than we all can with, and asked mammy which of her herbs would suit his case. Mr. Scott is getting very bold in his attention, and goes about with the young people. Last night he walked home on the other side of Elinor.

December 2.—It is all settled. Daddy knows how to manage Aunt Bethiah. Frederic and Lucy are to be published next Sabbath. They are going to housekeeping in our easterly front-room, and have a bedroom and one chamber. Another pair of andirons will be put in the kitchen fireplace, and another crane. Aunt Bethiah is in a great flurry about her dye-pot, and can't tell where to put it. I remember, the night I was brought, how mammy made me sit down on it and heat my feet hot.

Lucy has a few things. Frederic's got a little money laid by, and his folks will see that they have what is comfortable. Daddy is going to send me to buy half a dozen spoked chairs, painted blue, with flowers on the backs. Mammy has ordered me to get also a warming-pan.

Aunt Bethiah called me one side this afternoon and asked me, in a whisper, to buy for them a skillet and a pair of green belluses, with a sprig of flowers painted on them, and a brass nose. Who'd thought of a wedding setting her topsy-turvy!

Frederic is happy as a lord. Ever since he had his new clothes he has stood up at all the weddings, because no other fellow, for

miles around, had a tail-coat. Now he will have a chance to stand up at his own.

December 13.—The schoolmaster called again this evening. He and Elinor converse well together. He brought me Thomson's "Seasons." He is a kind, thoughtful man, very entertaining. Told many stories of the different places where he had kept school. Very accommodating, too; for, our district being short for money, he has agreed to take his pay in spinning-wheels.

'T is a pleasure to listen while a man of knowledge talks, but a pain, afterwards, to feel the difference between us.

Aunt Bethiah was the first one that made me think about learning. "What! don't know his catechise?" said she. That was the first night I was brought here.

"Elinor can learn him that," said daddy. And Elinor was much younger than I. I hope the schoolmaster won't think anything of my telling him that I wouldn't put him to the trouble of bringing books to me, when I could just as well go after them.

December 14.—This afternoon, Frederic came running into the barn, and threw himself down upon the hay, laughing, and rolling over.

"What's the matter," says I.

"O dear," says he, "I've been overhearing Aunt Bethiah exalt Mr. Scott. She and Elinor were in the unfinished room, and the partition's thin.

"Says she: 'Elinor, I wonder at your being so offish with Mr. Scott. Now, he's a nice man, and well off, and why don't you like

him?'

"'O, he don't bring me nigh boxberries enough,' says Elinor, laughing.

"'Laugh now, and cry by and by,' says Aunt B. 'You'll pick over a peck-measure and get a bitter apple at last. You are old enough to have more consideration. There he has got a house all finished off and furnished, English carpet in the spare room, and yellow chairs up chamber, brass andirons and fire-tongs, great wheel and little wheel, rugs braided, quilts quilted, kiverlids wove and counterpanes worked, sheets and piller-cases all made to your hand. Nothing to do, but step right into Mrs. Scott's shoes. Cow in the barn and pig in the sty, cellar all banked up, and knocker on the front door.'

"Elinor laughed so she couldn't speak. I stuffed my mittens into my mouth, and waited.

"'Besides,' she went on, 'he wouldn't be forever under foot, like most men, running in and out all day tracking the floor, and wanting to be waited upon. He eats his breakfast early, goes off with his men to the woods, and you won't see him from morning to night. Nothing to do but snug up, and sit down and take comfort.'

"At this, I gave a great shout and run. But," said Frederic, growing quite serious, "Scott will get her, for all she laughs at him, because he's in earnest; and I never yet knew a man to be dead set upon having a girl, that he didn't get her."

And then he capered off, and left me to consider of his

doctrine, as follows:—

"Because he is in earnest." Well, suppose two are in earnest about the same one. What then? It must depend on the kind, or degree. Captain Welles says Scott is set as the east wind. Let him be the very east wind itself, and welcome; and I'll be the sunshine, or a gentle breeze of May, or the sweet breath of summer. The old fable may come true again. No doubt, a man should be honest, even to his own diary. So I must put down here that these pretty words came out of one of the books the schoolmaster lent me. But the application I made myself.

Afterwards Elinor came out into the barn to find a knitting-core. I mean to make her one, like a beauty I saw Lucy have. 'T was made of light wood, painted white, with a wreath of flowers running round it, and varnished. I shall give it to her on New-Year's Day. What a mean present! I wish I could give her something grand, something gold.

Sunday, December 17.—Mr. Colman preached to-day. I can't deny that his sermon was good. He showed himself very glad to meet Elinor. To-morrow he will be over here. He never comes into the place but what he comes a-visiting at our house.

December 22.—Frederic was married this evening. I was about as happy as he, for Elinor and I stood up. Lucy would have her for bridesmaid; and Frederic made her choose who should be bridesman. 'T was three days ago he told me of it. I was sitting down on the cellar-door, in the sunshine. He came up and clapped me on the shoulder, and said he:—

"Come, Walter, brush up your best clothes, for Elinor has chosen you to stand up, and fuss enough she made about it, too. First, she wouldn't choose anyway. Decided. Then she'd a good deal rather not; then she begged me to pick one out myself; and at last she hung down her head and looked sheepish, and jammed the tongs into the ashes, and said, in a little faint voice, 'I guess I'll have Walter.' Now, you know you're a handsome chap, and I expect you'll look your best."

'T was a great wedding. Everybody was there. Lucy is a little, pale, gentle creature. "The lily and the damask rose," I heard the Squire's wife say to the Squire. Our minister being called away to an ordination, Mr. Colman stayed and performed the ceremony. He hung about long after 't was time for the minister to leave, and let the young folks enjoy themselves.

January 1, 18—.—To-day is New-Year's Day, and I gave Elinor the knitting-core, which I was afterwards sorry I did. She said 't was a beauty, and tucked it in her apron-string.

Mr. Scott sent her a white merino shawl, with a border of red flowers and green leaves. Aunt Bethiah thinks 't wasn't bought new, but was one Mrs. Scott kept laid away, and never wore.

Towards night, the stage-driver brought a small box, very heavy, marked with Elinor's name. It contained beautiful books, with beautiful pictures. She read the note which came with them, then looked at me and blushed.

The box was from Mr. Colman, That present of mine was mean enough.

February 2.—I have been reading in the schoolmaster's books tales setting forth the sentiment of love and its manifestations, by which it appeareth that the modest maiden aimeth to conceal her love, appearing oftentimes cold and unmoved, when the contrary is the case. These are truly most delightful books, and I do esteem the reading of them a great privilege.

As I read, I say, Perhaps so doth Elinor. Just so good, and so sweet, and so fair is Elinor. And at the end I say, And with the same love, I hope will Elinor love me.

But shall I say, My dear love, take me and poverty? When she asks for bread, shall I give her a kiss? or for raiment, looks of tenderness? No. When I speak, it shall be to say, I have everything to make life comfortable; come, let us enjoy it together.

April 4.—Captain Welles talks of going to Ohio, with a few others, to take up land, and wants I should go. This seems a good way to get the money I want so much; though I should, of course, have to wait a few years for it. Daddy is anxious to have me do what is for my advantage. He will have to hire another man to work on the farm; for Frederic can't leave his trade now.

April 10.—It is decided that I shall go to Ohio.

They are all sorry to part with me. Elinor says nothing; but there is a heaviness in her countenance delightful to my soul. This morning she got a scolding from Aunt Bethiah for putting more sand on the floor, when it was on new yesterday, and only wanted to be herring-boned.

I shall leave and say nothing.

April 13.—Last night proved that I have some steadfastness.

After eating dinner at Captain Welles's I took a walk over the hills, thinking to find some Mayflowers. I had found a few, and was scratching away the dry leaves, when I heard a rustling quite near me. Then the bushes parted and showed me a lovely face,—the lovely, rosy face of Elinor, growing lovelier and rosier every minute. She had come to find Mayflowers too.

She wanted some very pink ones, and so we went wandering about, down in deep hollows, where the moss was damp, and by little sheep-paths, and through the woods, until at last I perceived the sun was setting, and we had scarcely any flowers.

Upon climbing a tree to discover whereabouts we were, I saw, a little below us, a scraggly, one-sided cedar-tree, which I knew to be a long way from home. The Beaver Brook road led directly past it.

We gained that road, walking quickly at first, but afterwards, more slowly. Daylight left us, and the stars came out. We walked on and on along the lonely road, walked slow, and scarcely spoke. For my resolution was taken. Elinor should not be bound by any promises or confessions. Only, just as we were stepping over the door-sill, I heard a little sigh, and these few words would blunder out, "When I come back from the West, I shall—want to tell—" But there I left off, and didn't go into the house, but walked about the place till nigh midnight.

Ohio, June 6, 18—.—Two years in the wilderness, and

nothing gained. Gloom gathers around me. No little spot of blue sky can I discover. The hurricane has destroyed everything. I am sick, weak. O the deathly chills, the burning fever! O the lonesomeness, the heart-loneliness, of this dreary place! The lake, the sickening, freshwater lake, I can't endure. If I could but set foot on the hillside at the old place, and look out upon the great sea, and draw one long breath! If I could but stand on White Rock, with the spray dashing over me, and the wind, from across the broad Atlantic, rushing past! All night I dream of blue, sparkling waters, where little white-sailed boats are gliding so gently, gently off from the shore, and away into the distance. If I could but lay me down in one of these, and so float on and on, no matter where!

Why do I never dream of Elinor? Are we so utterly separated that even in visions I may not behold her face? What have I done, that God refuses me all joy? I don't know of being so bad. But I suppose this not knowing is the very badness itself.

Captain Welles and the others don't show me their letters now. But haven't we more than five senses? Else how is it I know that in these letters is the neighborhood talk of her connection with Mr. Colman? She never mentions it; neither does Frederic. But that is because they have very kind hearts.

I will drag myself once more over these hills. Better wearisome motion than wearisome rest.

June 7.—Yesterday I wandered very far away among the hills, knowing well where I wanted to go, and where I should probably

go; but circling round about as if to hide from myself my own intentions. I knew of people who had been there, but had never felt heart to go myself. I crossed a desolate plain, where a fire had passed. Every bush, stump, and tree was blackened. After this came green hills, with woods and grape-vines.

On the side of a hill there stood a hut, built up against a mass of rocks. This hut was what I came to find.

I walked softly up, and looked in at the open door. A dark-looking, beautiful young girl, with long hair, sat crouching in a corner. Close by her was a great shaggy dog.

I had heard of the Prophetess, but thought to find a wrinkled old woman, and this beautiful girl startled me. Startled, but not pleased me; for there was no young look in her face. Such strange eyes I never saw. 'T was as if an old person's face had been smoothed and rounded out, and the expression left there still. By her dress I saw that she was Indian.

The hut was a damp, gloomy place, extending far back into a cavern among the rocks. She arose and beckoned me to follow her farther in,—farther from the light and sunshine. There, in half darkness, half light, she stood, with her terrible eyes fixed upon mine. I longed to step back into the sunshine, for a chill had half taken hold of me; but some power kept me standing there, —neither could I turn my eyes from hers.

Presently I became conscious of a drowsiness. Her face, her whole figure, faded from my sight. Then, in the midst of the darkness, I perceived a spot of light, which soon took unto itself

the semblance of a hand,—a pale hand, which held a damask rose, seemingly just plucked, full of fragrance and wet with dew.

While I gazed upon it, I saw that it faded and drooped, till at last its head hung lifeless upon the stalk. There only remained the pale, crumpled leaves. I wept at the sight, thinking of my own damask rose so far away.

But while I wept, the rose revived. A ray of light streamed in from above. The drooping leaves expanded; their color, even their fragrance, returned; and it sat upright upon its stalk, a perfect flower, wanting nothing save the dew-drops.

The vision passed, and after a pause there came strains of mournful music. O, so mournful, so sad, so hopeless! I seemed to hear in it groans of the dying. Tears streamed from my eyes; I sobbed like a child.

But after a little the chords were swept by a more joyous hand, and gave forth a charming melody,—strains ravishing and delightful beyond description. Again I wept, but now tears of joy. A heavenly rapture pervaded my whole being.

As the last strain melted away, consciousness returned. I was standing alone in the damp, chill cavern. The girl, with that same awful look in her face, was crouching in her corner. I tottered towards the open door, towards the sunshine, and sank, shivering, upon the ground. The girl brought me something in a cup to drink,—something dark and fiery. It put new life in my veins, and strength to my limbs.

August 18.—God be thanked for a sight of the old place once

more. I could hug the very trees. The grass seems too good to walk on.

God be thanked, too, for bringing me once more under the same roof with Elinor. Captain Welles was right. I could never have survived another winter at the West.

They were all glad to see me. As I went in, Elinor burst out crying. Daddy sat shelling beans.

"What are you crying for?" said he.

"Walter has come," she sobbed out.

"And what is that to be crying about?" said he.

But I saw, as he grasped my hand, that he too brushed away a tear.

Frederic and his Lucy cannot do enough for me. He tries to laugh, scold, tease, and coax me into health. Mammy is steeping up gin and mustard, which, they say, is a sure cure for the chills. Dearly beloved friends! They little know how soothingly their kindness falls upon the heart of the lonely one.

Elinor looks troubled.

They tell me of a great revival here, the like of which was never known.

I miss Aunt Bethiah. She has gone away to visit another sister of hers.

Lucy tells me that Mr. Scott has gone to England to discover his relatives, and that his going was hastened by a talk he had with Elinor. Poor fellow! No doubt his heart can ache, as well as other people's. Lucy says that Elinor was very tender of his

feelings when she refused him.

August 2.—There is to be a four days' meeting here. A great many ministers are expected from abroad. Some mighty influence is sweeping over the place. The proud and haughty are bowed low before it. Little children leave their play, and persuade each other to come to Christ. They meet to pray and sing, likewise, very solemn hymns.

August 29.—This is the second day. The meeting-house was crowded full, way up into the galleries and negro seats. Four ministers in the pulpit, besides others in the front pews, and delegates back of them. It is wonderful to hear them tell of the workings of the Spirit in their own churches. The congregation was deeply moved. Many wept. I too feel my sinfulness. I too would come under this mighty influence, but cannot. My heart is like a stone within me. With life and warmth all around, I remain cold and dead.

Elinor rose for prayers. How she can be made any better is what I cannot understand.

September 2.—The meeting is over; but Mr. Colman remains to assist our minister to gather in the abundant harvest. In a few months, he goes to India as a missionary. I must say that his departure will add to my happiness, or at least take from my uneasiness.

Elinor is in great distress, calling herself a monster of iniquity. Mr. Colman labors with her incessantly. She cannot declare it to be the true feeling of her heart, that, for the glory of God, she is

willing all her friends should be forever damned.

September 4.—Last night was spent, nearly the whole of it, in prayer and exhortation. I could plainly hear my dear girl sobbing and crying. Towards morning I heard a shout of joy, and immediately afterwards Elinor's voice, singing, in rapturous tones,

> "I know that my Redeemer lives."

Then she broke forth into prayer. Her voice rose high and sweet. 'T was as if she was conversing with the angels around the throne of God. I trembled lest, in its ecstatic rapture, her soul should burst its fleshly bonds and soar away.

This afternoon she talked most earnestly with me. Her face was radiant with the warmth and joy of her heart.

September 21.—Mr. Colman wishes to marry Elinor, and take her with him to India.

O God, I beseech thee to spare me this great affliction! Remove not my only joy!

But will she do this? Has there not been, without words, an understanding between us two?

September 23.—I open my journal on purpose to write down, while I am calm, that I believe Mr. Colman to be a worthy, sincere man, and truly anxious for the spread of the Gospel. I wish to set this down, because I am sensible that at times my jealous feelings have caused me to misjudge him, and may do

so again. He knows nothing of my hopes and fears. He is not to blame for wishing to brighten his days of exile with the sweetest face that ever smiled. It is natural, when you see a lovely flower, to wish to gather it and have it for your own. He does not know the flower is mine. I speak boldly, but it is only to myself.

September 25.—The Rev. Mr. D–, agent of the Missionary Society, preached last evening a powerful discourse. What a man he is! His soul is all on fire! And what language! There was deep silence in the congregation. They were with him among the heathen. They saw what he had seen. They heard what he had heard. They felt what he had felt. He closed with an earnest appeal for fresh laborers in the vineyard. From a high key he came suddenly down to a low, solemn tone, which suited well with the agitated state of the audience.

"Beware," said he, "of permitting earthly joys, earthly hopes, earthly loves, to come in the way of services due to Christ. Souls are perishing for want of heavenly food, and you withhold it. Thousands, millions, are on the broad road to destruction, and you refuse to extend a helping hand. And why? Because you would enjoy a few short years of earthly happiness. How mean, how worthless, how dearly bought, will appear these few short years, when, at the judgment-day, the souls of these miserable wretches shall cry out against you,—'We might have been saved! We might have been saved!' And still, as the endless ages of eternity roll on, the cry shall come up to you,—'We might have been saved! We might have been saved!'"

Elinor was greatly agitated, weeping often. Sitting next her, I could not help but take her hand in mine, to show my sympathy for her distress. I fear she will consider it a sacred duty to sacrifice herself. O, if she were a little, only a little less good! May God forgive me such a sinful wish! But I love her with an earthly love, and would not have her an angel, lest she soar away and leave me. Still, if I love her truly, ought I not to wish for her the highest holiness? For what shall I wish? For what shall I pray? My mind is perplexed.

I think I will speak to her. She may not have understood my looks, my actions. Yes, I must speak. My pride is gone. I will say: "Elinor, you are all the world to me. I am very poor. But don't leave me alone."

September 26.—This morning Frederic came up to me and clapped me on the shoulder (just in the way he did when he asked me to stand up with him), and said, in a low voice, "Walter, don't you like Elinor?"

The tears rushed to my eyes; I could not speak.

"Come," said he, "let us walk awhile together." And he took my arm in his.

It was very early. We walked miles into the woods. I told him everything.

When I had finished, he said: "Walter, marry Elinor. You must. She shall not leave us. She loves you better than anybody on earth. I guessed it before you went away; and while you were gone, I knew it. No matter about means. You are the same to me

as a brother. All the farm shall be yours. My trade is enough for me. I have some money, too, that you can borrow, and repay at your leisure. I should have spoken of this long ago, if I had only known. Why did you keep so close? Ever since you came back, Lucy and I have watched, and she felt so sure that I ventured to speak. You must speak before it gets fixed in her mind that it is a duty to go. For what she thinks she ought to do she will do, and always would.

"And now," he went on in a lighter tone, for Frederic can never keep serious long, "now that I have offered you my sister, I hope you won't reject her. Lucy and I take so much comfort together, just think what a houseful of happiness there will be when you and Elinor are married!"

"O Frederic," I said, as soon as I could speak, "you are too kind; but I am afraid I am not worthy. Besides being poor, I am not a Christian, and I have had but few advantages. And she—she is pure and lovely, and has a mind that is well informed, and the manners of a lady."

"Well," said he, "you want to be good, don't you? and you want to get learning?"

"Yes."

"And you love her with all your heart?"

"I do."

"Well. Now, Walter, I tell you what I think. If a man knows his ignorance and seeks for knowledge, if he feels his badness, and longs for goodness, and loves with all his heart, he is fit to

marry the king's daughter, and inherit the throne."

September 27.—I went this evening into Lucy's room, and found Elinor there alone. I sat down near her.

She looked up, with a smile on her face, and said: "I have been wanting to see you, Walter, and tell you what a glorious path is opened before me. I believe myself to be a chosen instrument for carrying the Gospel to the heathen. And Mr. Colman" (this lower) "thinks me worthy to labor with him in the vineyard."

"And you will marry him?" I asked in a constrained voice.

"Yes," said she, faintly; "I have promised."

I arose and walked many times across the room. When power of speech came, I said, standing still near her: "Elinor, do you remember, the night before I went away, I wanted so much to tell you something? Let me tell it now. But you know. You must have known—you must have seen—I have been waiting to make myself worth offering. I am almost sure I can make you happy, and—have thought you loved me—a little. If I could only hear you say so!"

"Walter," she replied, "I must not seek for happiness. I have loved you, not a little." Here the bright color spread over her face; for while the woman spoke, the angel blushed. "I have loved you. O God, sustain me in this my trial hour!"

This little prayer dropped softly from her lips. I scarce caught the sound of it. Then she spoke in a firmer tone: "What have I to do with happiness or unhappiness? The path of duty lies straight before me. And therein I must walk, though thorns pierce my

feet."

"But," I asked, "is it right to marry without—Elinor, do you love Mr. Colman?"

"With my soul I do. He was with me in the Valley of the Shadow of Death,—spiritual, not bodily death. With his help I obtained my heavenly joy. My soul is bound to his. I have loved you, Walter, more than"—and again came the bright blushes, speaking more sweetly than her lips—"more than you can ever know. But the greater the love, the greater the glory of crushing it out. The heavier the cross, the brighter will be the crown, and with the greater rapture shall I wake the music of my golden harp through the countless years of eternity. What is this life? A puff, a breath of air. In it we must prepare for the real life, which lies beyond. When the heavens are rolled up like a scroll, what will it avail me that I passed with one whom I loved with an earthly love this brief existence?"

I prayed for calmness to reason with her, but it was not given me. I sat down, and bowed my face upon my hands. Elinor knelt, and offered up a most touching prayer,—beseeching strength for us both. As she finished, Lucy entered, and I went out without speaking.

It is now past midnight. Frederic has been up to see me. Lucy had a long talk with Elinor. It is a comfort, and still it is not a comfort, to know that she spends long solitary hours in self-communion, during which she strives to crush out the love for me, which, as she tells Lucy, fills all her heart. She had loved me

almost from a child. She pined for me in my absence, and wept tears of joy at my return.

What a dear comforter is Frederic! He persuades me that before the time arrives she will grow more calm, and will view all these things differently. He advises me to be constantly near her, that my hold on her affections may not be loosened. Did ever man retire to sleep upon sweeter counsel?

October 5.—How shall I write? What words will express the anguish of my heart? O, how much of misery one short week may bring! My pen moves unguided, burning tears blind my eyes. And one week ago it had not happened. One week ago that pleasant face was still among us. But I cannot write.

October 6.—Since I cannot sleep, let me spend the dragging hours in writing the sad account. Let me sit face to face with my own misery, since only misery can I know.

Just one week ago yesterday it was that a man came hurrying through the place, telling that a ship of war was off Rocky Point Village, and that the British were expected to land in the night, to burn, steal, and may be kill. Help was wanted. Every able man prepared himself to hasten to the spot. Frederic and I got our guns and ammunition ready with all speed.

Lucy put up for us great stores of provisions. She was pale as ashes, but said no discouraging word. I rejoiced in the occasion; for, at the prospect of my life being in peril, Elinor could not hide her tenderness. "O Walter!" she whispered, as I stooped to say good by, "may God keep you safe!"

Just as we were stepping out of the house, mammy, all wrapped up in blankets, came out into the porch,—a thing she had not done before for years. Laying her hand on Frederic's arm, she said, in a trembling voice, "Now, Frederic, be sure and not go into any danger."

He laughed, as young folks do always at the fears of their elders, and then helped her back to her arm-chair.

Rocky Point Village was ten miles off. We were going by water,—that way being the shortest,—about twenty of us in a little pinky. We kept quite close to the land, and arrived there about midnight. The moon was just rising. People were collected from all the villages about. All were watching out for boats from the ship, but none came, and in the morning no ship was to be seen, even from the tall steeple. So it proved a false alarm.

After breakfast, some of the young men proposed going to Pine Island to eat up our good things, and to fill our baskets with beach-plums. This took up all the day.

We had to wait for the tide, so that, by the time we hoisted sail, it was late in the evening. The wind blew fresh, and was dead ahead; and when we had been an hour or two on our course, there was not one aboard but would have been glad to feel the solid land beneath his feet. The little pinky, her sails close reefed, tossed up and down, like an egg-shell. Black clouds spread over the sky, threatening rain and tempest.

Then it was that this terrible calamity took place. I was holding by the rail, comparing in my mind things outward with things

internal. The soul, too, encountered storms and darkness.

All at once I perceived that the boom was swinging over, and sprang to get out of the way. As I sprang, I heard a cry, and caught sight of a man pitching headlong into the water.

"Walter! Walter!" That was the cry, and then I knew it to be Frederic, and took a great leap into the darkness.

I strove to shout, but the water rushed into my mouth and ears, and I could make no sound. Once more I heard that cry, —"Walter! Walter!"—but fainter this time, and by it I knew I should never reach him. Still, when the next wave lifted me high, I gathered all my strength, and shouted, "Frederic, wait!"

The boat had been lowered, and that shout saved my own worthless life. But Frederic's was gone forever. O the dreadful words!

They dragged me into the boat, with scarce the breath of life left in me. The vessel lay to, and boats were kept out till morning. But our Frederic was seen no more. And he was the very best of us all.

O what a night! I was watched. They would not let me come near the rail. No doubt there was reason.

I shall never forget the morning. The wind had gone down; the sun rose bright, and burned into my brain; the waves were to me like live creatures, dancing and laughing around us. They seemed to say, "We've had our victim, and are now at peace with mankind. Pass on. Pass on."

As we neared the shore, I made great efforts to be calm; for

at home were those to whom I must say, "Here I am safe, but Frederic is drowned."

What would they want of me?

It was still early when we landed. I could only creep along the path, holding on by the fence; for my feet were like leaden weights. My form bowed itself like an old man's. The fields, the trees, were not green, but ghastly.

The sumachs prevented my being seen from the house. As I drew near, I saw Lucy standing at the back door, looking down at the vessel.

Frederic had never left home before, since their marriage. Such a happy look as there was on her face!

I crept off to a clump of willows, and from there ran down the hill and across the Little Swamp to the minister's.

They were in the midst of family prayers. All of them started to their feet, asking what had happened. I had just strength enough to gasp out, "You must tell them. I can't. Frederic is drowned,"—and then fell down in a faint.

O what a desolate home is ours! Poor Lucy! Poor heart-broken young thing!

On that same night a strange thing happened here at home. Mammy could not be got off to bed. She was anxious, and would sit up. At length, (this was about midnight,) she leaned her head back, and seemed to fall into a sleep, so quiet that they could scarce hear her breath. Then a beautiful smile spread over her face. Her lips moved, and spoke, as they thought, Frederic's

name. She awoke soon after, but has never since that hour been quite herself,—never seemed conscious of Frederic's loss. She speaks of him as of one gone a journey. Some talk of her exertions the night before, of her anxiety, or of a partial stroke. But I think, and shall always think, that Frederic's angel appeared to her, and, in some way, deadened her mind to the dreadful suffering his loss would occasion.

We have sent for Aunt Bethiah. We need her firmness now.

October 20.—Elinor is in a strange way. I have never seen her either weep, or smile, or work, or read, since that terrible day. I must take back part of that. She does smile, as she sits idle, playing with her fingers,—smiles and moves her lips like—But I cannot bear to write what she is like. I will never believe it. She was in a state of excitement, and this blow has staggered her. But she will recover. God will not deal with us so hardly.

Mr. Colman is away, making his preparations. He surely will not take with him this poor, helpless girl.

November 7.—O, he was so good, so lovely!—noble-looking, and in his very best days. Always was something cheering or lively dropping from his lips. And to think that the last words he uttered were those cries of agony from the dark waters, —"Walter! Walter!"

All night I toss among the dreadful waves, with that cry ringing in my ears; or I strive to clutch at a man's form, as it pitches headlong; or take again that fearful leap, and, at the shock, wake in horror.

Such a dear friend as he was to me! I remember that last night he came to my chamber, so kind, so comforting. And what did I ever do for him? O, if I could only think of anything I ever did for him!

December 12.—The minister talked with me soothingly to-day of the love of God for his children. I feel to-night willing to trust all to Him.

Let the worst happen that can happen, I will bow my head in submission. What matters the few years' sadness of an obscure being? Nothing in the universe stands affected by my grief. Can I not bear what is mine own? Still, even Jesus prayed that the cup might pass.

January 9.—Mr. Colman is in the place. I am sorry. Let me try my best, I have to hate that man—a little. In my secret thoughts I call him my enemy. Did he think, because he was a preacher, that he could pick and choose,—that nothing was too good for him?

I must write down my bad thoughts sometimes. No doubt he is a good man, after all. But he must not meet Elinor now, not if he were a seraph.

January 10.—He came this afternoon, and I met him at the gate. He inquired for Elinor. I asked if he would like to see her, and drew him towards the window of the east room, Lucy's room (Lucy is with her mother). The shutters of this window were partly open. All the others were closed.

Elinor was at the farther end of the room. A little light came

in from the window over the kitchen door, or we could hardly have seen her. She was sitting on a low stool, bending forward a little, her head drooping, her hands loosely clasped, and oh! so thin, so white, so lifeless, so like a blighted, wilted flower! What semblance was there of the rosy, smiling face that had so long brightened the old home?

Once she smiled, and then her lips moved as they do often. He shuddered at the sight. "She mourns for her brother," said he. "I will go in and speak to her some words of consolation."

"No, sir," said I. "What you see is not grief, but almost insanity. Shall I tell you the cause?"

Then I drew him from the house to a wide field near by, and as we walked talked to him mildly, but with some boldness.

I made known my love for her, and her own confession to Lucy. I made it plain to him that, in striving against nature, her mind had become unsettled, and so unable to bear that terrible shock. And, finally, I implored him not to take away so frail a being to perish among strangers.

I was surprised that he made no answer. He left me abruptly and walked towards the minister's. Was he offended?

January 11.—This morning a boy brought a note from Mr. Colman, requesting me to come and see him. I went as soon as I could leave home.

He came down to the door and asked me up into his chamber. After handing me a chair, he seated himself at the table, where he remained for some minutes with his head bowed. When he

looked up, I was startled at the pale and sorrow-stricken look of his face.

"Young man," said he, "I have passed the night in self-examination, and now I wish to confess that I have deceived myself, injured you, and destroyed the peace of one precious to us both. In gaining a laborer for Christ, I hoped also to gain comfort for my own heart. Still," he added, earnestly, "I was not wholly selfish. I really believed that, under God, she might become a mighty instrument for good. Who so fitted to teach the Gospel as the pure-hearted? I hoped to gain her love. She seemed —there was something in her manner that—but let it pass. I was walking in a dream. 'T was surely a dream, or I should have known that such happiness was not for me.

"Love met me once. It was in early youth. As fair, as lovely a being as God ever made yielded up to me her young heart, and then drooped and died. Years passed. I never thought to meet love again.

"It was while preaching here that I first saw Elinor. I was struck with the resemblance to her who once bloomed in just such loveliness. There was the same purity, the same sweetness, the same dewy freshness. Even the dress was similar,—the lovely blue and white, harmonizing so well with that fair beauty.

"My agitation was so great I could scarcely go on with the services. From that day my dead heart became alive again. Fountains of feeling, which I had deemed sealed forever, burst forth afresh. I dreamed I should walk in light, and not in darkness.

"But it is all past. False hopes shall mislead me no more. I will live solely for the glory of God, since such is His will. Was not that will made plain to me in my early youth? I have asked His forgiveness, and now," he added, extending his hand, "I ask yours. She will recover. With her your life will be blest.

"I will not even bid her farewell. But when health and strength return, when she is yours and you are hers, will you not sometimes speak together of me? Shall you be unwilling to cast for a moment a shadow across the brightness of life, by remembering a lonely man passing his days in exile, without one flower of love to cheer him?"

He was deeply agitated, and from the first had grown more and more earnest. I stood like one confounded. A minister of the Gospel was asking my forgiveness. He whom I had thought proud and haughty was shedding tears. The moment he humbled himself, I seemed to sink below him, O so far!

I told him this, and every feeling I had ever had against him. And, sitting there together, we had a long and friendly talk about Elinor and Frederic and the old people. Before I left, he handed me a letter addressed to Elinor, which he requested me, when she should recover, to give to her.

February 27.—To-day, upon going suddenly into Frederic's room, I found Elinor there, weeping. This was a welcome sight. She had found in the drawer a pair of his mittens,—gray, spotted with red; also a little box which he had given her, and a picture, with "To my sister" written on the back.

She was crouched upon the floor, with these spread out before her, weeping bitterly. I raised her up, speaking soothing words, and drew her towards the window, where the sun shone in, bright and warm.

It was long before she grew calm. I judged it best to say but little. But O the joy of knowing she is saved!

March 17.—To-day Elinor did many little things for mammy, who is now very feeble, and requires constant attention. It is long since she has risen from her bed, and she is for the greater part of the time in a sleep or stupor. Sometimes she revives a little, and seeing, perhaps, some neighbors or friends in the room, will say, "Now you must all stay to tea," or, "Is anybody sick in your neighborhood?" and then drop off again.

I watched Elinor, as she bent over the bed, with tears in my eyes, but joy in my heart. When I left the room, she followed me out, and sat down near me, and whispered, "Let us talk about *him*."

And then we spoke freely of our dear Frederic,—spoke of his noble heart, of his goodness, of all his pleasant ways. Many little incidents of his life were remembered.

"Frederic is in heaven," I whispered.

"I know he is," she answered calmly, and as if she knew with a knowledge not of earth.

April 15.—Elinor has been growing more like herself ever since the day I found her crying in Frederic's room. She busies herself about the house, talks cheerfully with her grandfather,

and does much for his comfort. Good old man! He said to me, the other day: "Walter, I am very wicked. I do not mourn for Frederic. My days here are but few; and I rejoice to think that, when I pass over the river, he will welcome me to the other shore. I strive against this happy thought, but it will come. I wanted to tell somebody of my wicked feelings."

"O, don't talk to me so!" I said, "don't call yourself wicked."

I shall always love Aunt Bethiah, she is so kind to him and to us all. She loved Frederic dearly, in her way. I have noticed that she never sets on the table, at meal-times, the things he used to like best.

June 9.—All my anxiety about Elinor is gone. The color and the smiles are coming back to her face, and the light to her eye. She is almost her old self again. Only, when people have suffered a great deal, some sign of it will always remain.

June 12.—Yesterday, I brought in to her a bunch of wild-roses. She put them in a tumbler, and carried them into mammy's room. This morning she came out with her basket. "Let us be children again," she said. "Let us go for some roses."

So we went over the hills; and, as we passed along the pasture-road, we found ourselves walking hand in hand.

Every day I think I will ask her to be my wife, and every day I put it off till another time. The reason is, that I fear to disturb this pleasant season. I don't know what she thinks about Mr. Colman. She has never mentioned his name.

There are more ways of telling things than by word of mouth.

I set my love before her in a thousand ways, and she never throws it back upon me. I shall give her the letter to-morrow.

June 16.—Yesterday, after tea, we sat all together, in mammy's room, till almost dark. She was in an uneasy way, and daddy calmed her down by saying hymns to her,—the very ones she used to read to him. Elinor was making a wreath of oak-leaves for a young girl in the next house, who was going to have a party. I was picking out for her the fairest leaves, equal in size. Daddy said his verses in a sing-song way, so that mammy at last fell quietly asleep, and we spoke to each other softly, so as not to disturb her.

All at once daddy spoke out; and says he, in a slow, quiet way: "Blind folks, you know, hear very quick. I do myself, and sometimes even more than is spoken. For instance, to-night, when Walter says, 'Here is a beautiful leaf for you,' I can hear, 'I love you with all my heart.' And when Elinor says, 'And it will just match this one,' I can hear, 'You can't love me any more than I do you.' Now, children, what are you waiting for?"

Dear old man! I felt like throwing my arms right about his neck, and started up for that purpose. But Elinor came first, and so—

"Never mind me," says daddy, "I'm blind, you know."

Whereupon, I explained that Elinor had taken what was meant for him.

And when we grew a little calm he began to plan plans.

And after that we two took a long walk; and neither of us

knew whither we went, or how long we stayed. But during the walk she confessed to me her belief, that God made the heart, as well as the soul, and would never require one to be crushed for the sake of the other. She gave me Mr. Colman's letter. It was as follows:—

[Omitted.]

About one o'clock, I should think it was, that night, something happened, and, when daylight came, I hardly knew whether it had happened or not.

I had been lying awake some hours, recalling all my past life,—thinking over and over again how a poor, friendless boy had reached a great happiness; and every time I came to the happiness, tears of joy would fill my eyes, and I could not sleep, and did not wish to.

And while I lay in this blissful state, there came floating upon the air strains of the most heavenly music. The whole room was filled with melody. And with the music came the consciousness of its being familiar to me. Where had I heard those sweet strains before? They grew fainter. Raising my head, that no note might escape me, I awoke myself from a sort of trance into which I did not know of having fallen; for I was sure my eyes had not once been closed.

The last, faint sounds died away. Instantly there flashed upon my mind the remembrance of that strange music in the Western wilderness.

THE DARWINIAN THEORY

Great interest has been awakened, of late, by the promulgation of a new "Theory of Creation"; and non-scientific readers have met with numerous controversial articles in the journals, magazines, and newspapers of the day. The name of Darwin, after having been honorably known for a quarter of a century to the scientists of the world, has become familiar to us all as that of the author of this new theory. A word has been added to our vocabulary. "Darwinian" is now a distinctive epithet wherewith to individualize the new school of thought, and an appellation to designate its votaries. Notwithstanding the interest which Mr. Darwin's writings and the replies of his opponents have created, and the constant allusion to them in publications of all kinds; in spite of the active warfare they have incited; in spite of the sneers and sarcasms which have been launched by writers, lecturers, and preachers,—sure means of advertisement among the people,—few really and thoroughly comprehend Mr. Darwin's idea. A lecturer, alluding to it lately, says that it will be worthy of consideration when we see an ape turn into a man; and this is about the extent, we imagine, to which the great mass of people understand a theory which has been received as revelation by many of the first scientific men of the age,—men who have given their lives to patient, profound, untiring, unimpassioned study of nature, and who rank among the foremost thinkers of the world.

Leaving the argumentative detail to those whose learning is the only armory which can supply weapons adequate to the maintenance of the struggle, let us see if we cannot explain the idea which causes it; nor consider its verification to lie in the metamorphosis of an ape into a man.

Darwin's idea is generally conceived to be a new one. This is not strictly the case. The real foundation was laid long ago. It is the law of persistent force, acting on the universe. This is as old as Buddha, and was a dogma of Buddhism. It has been enunciated in some form or other for ages. But Darwin has infused into it a new vital strength, has given it new application, has clearly explained its workings, has been its prophet to the people. To fully understand the history and progress of the Darwinian theory, we must look back many years, and trace the influence which theology has had upon the advance of scientific knowledge.

For centuries the Bible was understood to contain a perfect, exact, undoubted account of the origin of the world. It was believed by everybody that the world was made in six days. The very imperfect acquaintance which the ancients had with geology and physics allowed them to accept this relation unchallenged. Faith was far stronger than reason; and, during the long ages in which the Church ruled supreme, this statement was accepted and implicitly believed by the whole race of Christians. But as men began to grow more enlightened,—as, one by one, the secrets of nature were revealed to the students whose desire

for knowledge overbore their tacit acceptance of tradition,—doubts began to arise as to the possibility of the truth of this long-cherished idea. When the printing-press came, and enabled these ardent explorers to communicate freely the results of their studious labors, the leaven of discredit, thus disseminated, began to work in the mass, and the reason of men began to rise beneath the superincumbent theological pressure which had so long weighed upon it. The multitude of facts gathered together by these careful students became, by and by, so vast, and the conclusions to which they led so indubitable, that the theologians were forced, out of simple common-sense, to revise their expoundings of the sacred writings.

When it was found that the earth was made up of vast depositions of matter which contained the remains of long-extinct creatures, whose fragments were buried in solid rocks, once soft, oozy mud; when it was found that other rocks, hundreds of feet in thickness, were wholly composed of the imperishable remains of other extinct animals, which once lived and died and were gathered together in waters which broke over the very spot where these rocks now rise; when it was found that untold millions of years were necessary for the formation of one single group of these rocks, among many equally vast; when it was found that, in the memory of man, during the lapse of at least five thousand years, the earth had undergone no appreciable change; when it was found that the earth was the result of the action of laws existent in matter,

—an upheaving, a washing away, a hardening, a disintegrating through a period of time beyond the conception of man,—the theologians were forced to substitute *periods* for *days*. When the old walls which had circumscribed man's mind became so crumbled as to allow of egress, individuals broke through them and revelled in the freedom of intelligent thought. When these walls were demolished by those who had themselves erected them, they were leaped, in all directions, by ardent explorers; and naturalists, no longer restrained by tradition, rushed upon voyages of discovery into the teeming world before them.

For a while this emancipation exhausted itself in the contemplation of the physical world, and an inquiry into brute life. Speculations and theories might riot in a past which was a practical eternity. They had unlimited space wherein to project, backward, the structure of the universe. But this long-stretching past was to be peopled only by the lower orders of animal life. The rocks were found to be filled with stony remains of animals who perished when the sandstone, which built old crumbling castles, was sea-shore mud; the chalk hills which bore them were found to be made up of myriads of little creatures. These humble representatives of life might be, must be, credited with a remote antiquity. But man was not an animal. He was a being apart. Although he was liable to heat and cold, disease and death, although his body was made of the same materials as the brute's, and was subject to the same laws of life, he was invested with an individuality which separated him from them. For a while the old

influence of theological rule held even these venturous explorers to the ancient landmarks of human origin. By and by, the same impulse which had before led men to examine the proofs of physical creation induced them to consider the evidence of their own advent upon earth. Certain Scriptural statements did not appear reconcilable with each other. Cain went forth and builded a city; and there were artificers in brass and iron. Now Cain was only one of two men when he went forth. Whence came the citizens of that early settlement, and how did they understand the production of brass, a composite metal? How was it that man always met man wherever he went on the globe? Five thousand years ago the varied races were known to be distinct as now, and yet man was formerly said to be but about six thousand years old. Could one thousand years have produced the changes then evident, while five thousand succeeding years have scarce altered these different races? These and many other difficulties led thinkers to question whether man might not look much farther back into the past for his origin, and whether the same laws which had governed the birth, continuance, and distribution of other animals were not always in action to produce in him kindred results. The old belief, that all men descended from one man, began to be shaken; and good, honest, faithful Christians expressed their doubts of the matter. It was surmised that they were created in numbers. The old idea, that animals were all created in individual pairs, was found to be incompatible with the discovery of animal remains, in profusion, in rocks which

were mud ages before any Adam could have existed to give them Hebrew names. Then, breaking away from the theological bonds, there sprang into active thought men of far-reaching minds, who began a thorough reconstruction of the whole theory of creation. The handwriting on the wall was Natural Law. All creation, man included, was but the result of one undeviating, unceasing, eternal, all-pervading law, and the state of the universe at any given moment was the state of evolution which that universe exhibited. Behind this law was the great inscrutable Spirit-power.

The infinite number of varied, aggregated facts stored up by man's patient study of this universe are irrelevant here, in a sketch of the progressive advance of his knowledge of creation. Those who desire to examine the evidence which has led to this verdict must go over the records themselves, or accept, out of their own convictions, the result of the examination. To entirely comprehend the Darwinian idea, one should be, to a certain extent, familiar with the principles of science. In other words, he should know more or less of what Darwin knows. He should be familiar with the general results of man's study in the different branches of science. He need not be an astronomer, a physicist, a geologist, a zoölogist, a botanist; but he should have a general acquaintance with the results of the labors of those who are such. He should, to a certain extent, understand the workings of Natural Law.

This is the great battle-ground on which the struggle is now taking place. The point at issue is, whether the physical

changes of the material world, the introduction, continuance, and variation of organized beings, are due to the direct, special intervention of Deity, or whether they are the results of primeval laws, inherent in matter, and out of whose workings spring the phenomena of nature. The adherents to the former opinion maintain that the Deity has created all animals individually, or in individual species, by direct action, apart from natural forces, and indeed by an interference therewith. The votaries of the latter deny special creation, and maintain that all animals are, like the rest of the universe, the results of forces acting through all time, producing, by their diverse changing influences, the variations which, as they have widened and strengthened, have resulted in the difference exhibited among animals. The first is the old traditional idea, having its foundation in belief, and drawing its support from the Scriptures. The last is the modern conviction, having its foundation in reason, and drawing its support from the study of nature. How are these differences among animate creatures—these wide contrasts of form, size, and habits—produced, if not by God's special creation? This is the question which Mr. Darwin and his school of thinkers are seeking to answer.

Some half a century ago, M. Lamarck, a French naturalist, propounded a theory which excited the derision of the whole world. He accounted for these variations by suggesting that, as any special want was felt by an animal, the body took on that structure which was required to relieve it. To give a broad

illustration: if men needed to fly for the support of life, wings would gradually grow out from their shoulders. Ridiculous as this may be, it showed that thinkers were at that time endeavoring to account, on purely natural grounds, for what they considered natural, and not supernatural phenomena.

Some twenty years ago, a book made its appearance which startled the whole reading world, and caused as much dispute as Darwin has since done. This was "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation." It was anonymous, and the author has never acknowledged it: to this day he is unknown. This book was learned and lucid. It was received with delight by those who were still looking for some explanation of animal origin on natural grounds; and was derided quite as much as Lamarck's work by the adherents to the old traditional belief. Scouted by the great majority of naturalists, who still clung with tenacity to the notions of their predecessors, stigmatized as atheistic and abominable by theologians, it was first read with eagerness, and then put aside; and though it went through many editions, it is now almost forgotten. But this book was the beginning of Darwinism. It says: —

> "We have seen powerful evidence that the construction of this globe and its associates, and, inferentially, that of all the other globes in space, was the result, not of any immediate or personal exertion on the part of Deity, but of natural laws which are expressions of his will. What is to hinder our supposing that the organic creation is also

the result of natural laws, which are in like manner an expression of his will?"

Referring to the Deity as the great motive-power of all the universe, the author says:—

"To a reasonable mind the Divine attributes must appear, not diminished or reduced in any way, by supposing a creation by law, but infinitely exalted. It is the narrowest of all views of the Deity, and characteristic of a humble class of intellects, to suppose him acting constantly in particular ways for particular occasions. It, for one thing, greatly detracts from his foresight,—the most undeniable of all the attributes of Omnipotence. It lowers him towards the level of our own humble intellects. Much more worthy of him it surely is to suppose that all things have been commissioned by him from the first, though neither is he absent from a particle of the current of natural affairs in one sense, seeing that the whole system is continually supported by his providence.... When all is seen to be the result of law, the idea of an Almighty author becomes irresistible, for the creation of a law for an endless series of phenomena—an act of intelligence above all else we can conceive—could have no other imaginable source, and tells, moreover, as powerfully for a sustaining as for an originating power."

He sums up the hypothesis which he seeks to sustain thus:—

"I suggest, then, as an hypothesis already countenanced by much that is ascertained, and likely to be further sanctioned by much that remains to be known, that

the first step was *an advance, under favor of peculiar circumstances, from the simplest forms of being to the next more complicated, and this through the medium, of the ordinary process of generation.*"

And further:—

"*That the simplest and most primitive type, under a law to which that of like production is subordinate, gave birth to the type next above it; that this again produced the next higher, and so on to the very highest*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.