

THE CENTURY MAGAZINE

VOL. LXI.

NOVEMBER, 1900.

No. 1.



MY MIDWINTER GARDEN.

BY MAURICE THOMPSON.

WITH PICTURES BY HARRY FENN.

A BREEZY headland curving parallel with the line of a fair horizon; some cat-boats and luggers leaning against the sky; a smell of acacia whisked along in broken puffs; a wandering sound of uncertain quality passing between the white-capped sea and the dusky pine-woods afar; roses tossed about on emerald sprays; great sea-birds winging aloft—and I in the midst of this my Midwinter Garden, loafing under a yapon-tree.

Two days ago, at the hour of noon, a snow-storm, an Eskimo wind, the earth frozen to granite solidity, and icicles clinking on the boughs of my Indiana apple-orchard, when our southward flight was begun. We left the blue jays, muffled and ill-tempered, jeering in the bare hedge of *bois d'arc* at Sherwood Place, where but lately the grackles and robins made a great din on the eve of migration. Two days ago, bear in mind, wrapped to the eyes in fur of otter and seal, gasping against the ringing, frost-spiked strokes of a norther, we gave chase to the migrating thrushes; and now I loll drowsily by the gulf-side, making note of some gray pelicans striking mullet in the tepid surf-waves five rods from the beach. Beside a wall of shell concrete, crumbling and vine-matted, great rusty yellow oranges still hang

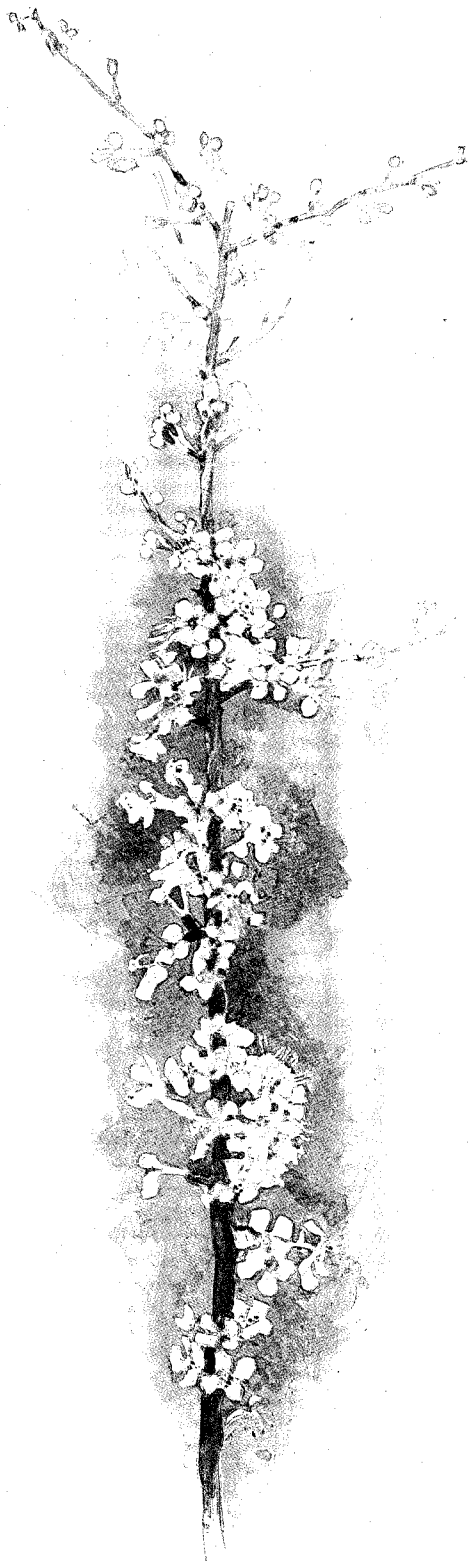
on a tree. In the yapon overhead are masses of scarlet berries, temptingly fresh and luscious in appearance, but as bitter as disappointment can be.

The season is winter; a weather report in the morning paper tells of five degrees below zero at some point in Wisconsin, and of a blizzard spinning down from Canada across country to the Wabash and the Kankakee; and yet my nostrils realize what the violets spill and the roses loose in the open air—sweets rarer than summer's best.

Skirting the indefinite area called the semi-tropics, a thermal dream hangs in the air. You enter it when, on your southward flight, your railway-train whisks round a sharp curve by the gulf shore. The first hint of it is a dash of salt in the air; then you catch the shimmer flung from rollicking whitecaps; and presently, far away, in a turquoise film, an island comes to view, with a lighthouse, a clump of palmettos, and some mossy live-oaks behind its dazzling sand-spit, which cuts the haze and seems obtrusively real in the midst of a dream. The change is so easy and so sudden that it gives the fine surprise of a new rhyme in a song.

Doubtless our migrant birds have an obscure sense of the beauty which even we

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WILD-PLUM BLOSSOM.

cannot fully realize—the dreamy, elusive display of formless and tenuous substance hovering along the line where summer is a perpetually resident spirit. The first thing I note, on arriving at my Midwinter Garden each year, is the apparent wondering curiosity with which the birds, just dropping down from the North, go about in the golden weather, silently flitting from tree to tree, peering askance amid the dusky foliage, evidently affected by the change of surroundings. They behave much as do the human tourists who come a little later on their limited railway-tickets. Everything is theirs for the time being. They chatter when they meet, invade all private closes, and presently disappear, going still farther southward, even beyond the great gulf.

It would probably be best to make the journey into the South a desultory, hesitating flight, lingering by the way in all the attractive places, thus softly stealing through the climatic change; but there is something exhilarating in a sudden plunge from boreal cold to an atmosphere of balm and bloom-dust. Some people, who flock and flutter hurriedly round the swift loop of a winter tour, find the warm weather enervating. It has the effect of a light yet heady wine on me. No sooner have I passed through the palmetto-shaded gate of my Midwinter Garden than my blood bubbles, as it did when in boyhood I climbed to the top of Yonah, and swung my hunting-cap for joy, stimulated beyond silent endurance by the upper streams of air. The strong tipples freely wasted by the bucaners have made this Caribbean breeze deliciously intoxicating. All nature blinks, nods, drowns in its fitful current. Yet nothing seems to sleep. The long moss moves warily; the oleanders never quite close their eyes; the palmettos wag their bayonets at the shrinking and swaying roses; nor at any time do the great pines and stately magnolias fall silent.

While early midwinter is not the season of flowers, even on the Creole coast, we frequently have a swell of precocious springtide in December and January, which lifts the sap from root to tip in the plants and trees, greening the twigs and freshening the bark and leaves. A pear-orchard will fling out tender vernal banners, with a dash of snowy petals among the sprays, affording a certain fruity effluence bandied about by the gusts. Beside a wall, or in the warmest angle of a cot, the lush banana-stalks, clumpered picturesquely against a hedge of Cherokee rose-vines, suddenly renew their upper leaves;

and scattered here and yonder some gnarled peach-trees blow wavering whiffs of tender pink from their bare branches.

It may be that early in February, or even late in January, a mulberry-tree begins to show fruit. Once I saw the ripe berries "cooked to a turn" by a singeing frost on the second day of March; but that was a memorably unusual freak of weather. The mocking-birds were beginning to build, the brave males in full feather and song, when the norther swooped upon us, and it was pitiful to see how dazed they looked. It was as if the blast from Michigan or Kansas had blown their frozen songs in choking crystals back down their throats.

The Midwinter Garden is a shifting and elastic domain; for in the low country of the South no such thing as a boundary is seriously considered. All the adjoining lands are yours; what you can see you hold. I claim as my heronry a marsh-meadow of an extent unknown. So vast is it that schooners and luggers and lumber-tugs go through it along many bayous. Sportsmen have shooting-boxes in lonely spots on these waterways, where wild fowl congregate temptingly. I hear the far booming of guns, and with my glass see puffs of pale smoke jet suddenly and then drift away.

Coming from our thick-walled Northern house at Sherwood Place to the typical cottage of the Creole is a change as sharp as that of climate. The rooms have been duly aired against our arrival, but there hangs all about a musty odor; the beds threaten us with mildew; the ceiling and wainscoting exhale a chill; the halls and chambers seem atrociously drafty from all directions. Every year we experience the same discomfort; every year we duly find out that it means nothing dangerous; yet, all the same, every year we feel mortally aggrieved that our advent has not been specially prepared for by the genius of the semi-tropics, and the opportunity to grumble is flooded with appreciatory acceptance. To be sure, a little later, when the tourists mutter and complain at everything and everybody, we console them with self-satisfied promptness, saying that it is all a delusion, that in fact the beds are not musty, the halls not drafty, and that a fire on the hearth would be an insult to a climate so balmy. What! toast your shins indoors, while in the open air great beds of violets are ablow, roses flaunting, jonquils flaming, and an oleander hedge is winking full-flowered at the sun?

Sometime I shall have to thank a meteo-

rologist, the Weather Bureau, or whomsoever can explain to me why it is that up yonder in my Northern home in winter if the thermometer in a room registers as low as sixty-four there must be a good fire built at once, while down South we sit out of doors at the same temperature without a shiver. Moreover, why does one from the North, freshly released out of a zero blizzard, have to muffle up in storm furs and fleece-lined overshoes when first dropping into weather just below seventy in a low latitude? Man, bird, every migrant, knows of these curious contradictions of temperature and feeling. The experience doubtless has a dry and perfectly wooden explanation fit for works of science and dusty brains; but you and I, being subject to our senses, cannot comprehend it. Let us, therefore, drop the subject as the slow-footed half breed passing yonder drops the rind of a grape-fruit orange, because really it has no further interest, and go in to luncheon of oyster gumbo and broiled flounder. After that, if you smoke, here is the veranda facing the dancing sea, beyond which loom two or three gulf-caps against the daintiest sky that ever curved over a world. A few sips of black coffee add something to your comprehension of the garden spreading far and fair around you. Coffee in the open air,



"A SMELL OF ACACIA."



"AN ISLAND COMES TO VIEW, WITH A LIGHTHOUSE, A CLUMP OF PALMETTOS."

holding its heat, testifies to winter's good character, as likewise does the chameleon on the leaf of sago-palm yonder. A lizard never mistakes the weather, no matter what blunders are on the thermometer's record; and of all lizards this little blotch of changeable color is most sensitive to his atmospheric and substantial environment. Riley's tree-frog may have more power over the rain-clouds than my gay imitation of a three-inch saurian—he may have told the whole truth when he squeaked:

"I fetched her, oh, I fetched her!"

and maybe, in sheer despair, the cloud did cry downward:

"If you 'll quit, I 'll rain!"

But our modest chameleon has no quarrel with the sun, being content to take the warm shine in lazy, basking silence, or in creeping with many a shift of color, snapping the insects unaware as they hum and dance amid the leaves. If a norther fall suddenly he will scurry down into the nest he knows of in the palm's frowzy crown, and patiently await the return of pleasant warmth.

Many birds also have a barometric and thermometric faculty, knowing some time beforehand of a change in the pressure and

temperature of the atmosphere. We sit on the veranda facing the gulf, and can fore-say a stiff blow from the southward by the coming in of shore-birds off those dim and treacherous islands far away yonder. Instinct assures the killdees and sandpipers of a great dash which will submerge all the spits and marshes where they feed; so here they come flickering to our headland where the beach-line is sheltered. I see them first just this side of the horizon, a low, swinging and loitering rank of silvery wings, winking like pale flames above the blue water. Gradually they seem to rise, growing more and more distinct, and a few minutes later they arrive. Next day a storm is sure to be on. The curve of islands has disappeared under a tremendous splash of sea; gulls, pelicans, teal, and other wild aquatic things have joined the plovers; our beach looks as if a winged army had suddenly landed upon it.

The house commanding our garden is a rude structure into which not the least architectural art has ever entered, not even by stealth. It spreads out its body and wings widely, like those of a chicken in the sun, having an air decidedly self-complacent, its low and disproportionately broad verandas smothered in vines.



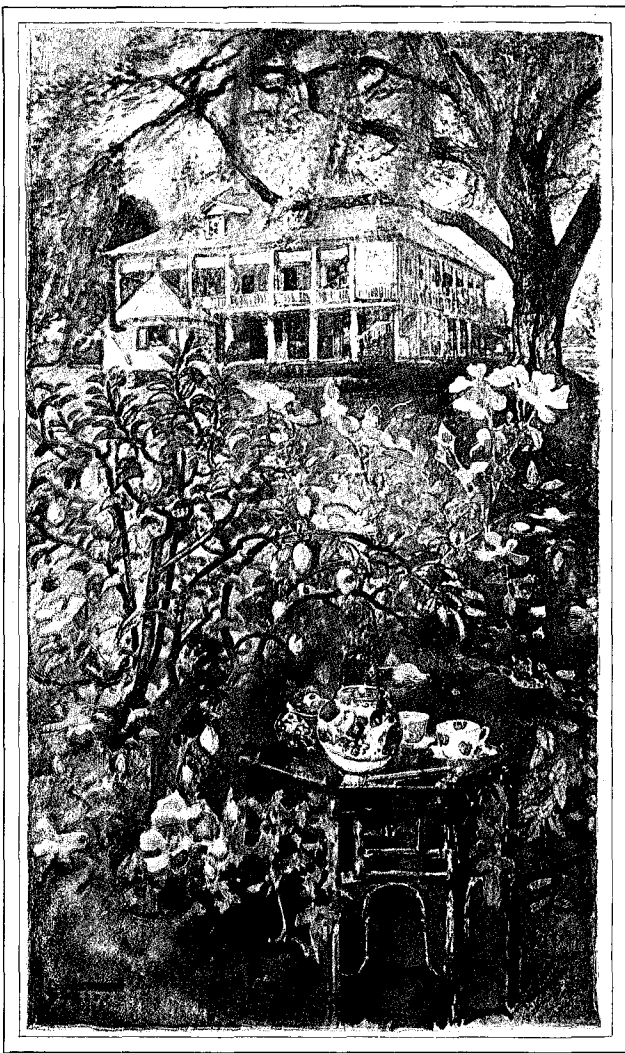
"AGAINST A HEDGE OF CHEROKEE ROSE-VINES."

Great live-oaks embower it, letting fall a beard of Spanish moss to dangle on the roof-slopes. Loopholes are made in the vines, so as to give a full view of every space and vista, while out in an area, beside a huge century-plant, stands a sun-dial brought here a hundred and thirty years ago by a seafaring Frenchman, whose name, François Victor de Montmartin, is cut in the base. I could tell you a story, as told to me, of this same François, but you would not care for it—a story of almost ancient flavor, about a young wife he brought here from San Domingo or some other distant land, and housed in a cabin, or rather a spacious log pen thatched with palms. He loved her madly, surrounded her with rich things from all climes, clothed her in queenly splendors, and watched her by day and by night, as if he feared she would vanish upon first exposure to solitude.

As for the lady, she seemed neither greatly interested nor wholly indifferent. Her beauty of face and form suited well her priceless finery of dress and jewels; but she did not show pride or haughtiness. Every one loved her. In that strange sylvan home, amid the palms, cacti, and roses, she lived nearly two years, and meantime bore a child which was gloriously beautiful. The dark husband beamed with passionate joy, scarcely ever passing an hour out of sight of his wife and babe.

It was all a great mystery, however, and the people somehow got ear of a rumor, vague enough to be romantic, which hinted that the young wife was not happy and that the husband feared lest she should escape from him.

Rarely is a story so crisp and short when love and mystery combine, but this one ended in an explosion, as it were; for on a fine day in April a fleet and beautiful vessel sailed into this light of ours. A boat was lowered, manned by six stalwart sailors armed to the teeth, and directed by a grand-looking old man, whose white beard fell in ripples to his waistband. The ship, the sailors, and the



A HOME IN THE DREAM-COUNTRY.

venerable, gigantesque commander had every mark of wealth and power about them.

Now, when M. François Victor de Montmartin saw the vessel, which had actually come to anchor close inshore before he observed it, he uttered a great cry, and rushed to the chamber of his wife and babe; but they were not there, and when he looked out of a window he saw a gloriously robed form with a child in its arms flying down the head-land slope to the beach. Again he let go that terrible cry of anguish, dashed out in furious pursuit, and was shot dead, midway between the house and the beach.

Away sailed the superb vessel, with the young woman and her child on board, and that was all ever known about them. A clump of acacia is said to mark the spot on

the highest swell of our bluff where François Victor de Montmartin was buried. But then, to say the whole truth, every angle and curve of this Creole coast, from Tampa around to Bay St. Louis, has its story of strange arrivals and romantic disappearances—a current of picturesque legend doubtless strongly tinged with truth.

One feature of our domain, rarely observable elsewhere, is the blending of savage nature with the most advanced results of landscape culture. Two hundred years have slipped back into shadow since civilized man first appeared hereabout; but before that, possibly for many centuries, Indians had the good taste to regard our airy white bluffs with favor, coming in summer to camp all around under the live-oaks, magnolias, and liquidambar trees, and to bathe in the salt surf. Numerous plants not native to the spot have been brought by white man and red from afar and planted. Since then, during periods throughout which the whole coast was abandoned, these representatives of an alien flora have slipped out of the closes and crept away year by year into the woods, across glade and marsh, adapting themselves to soil and climate, thus becoming, after a long lapse of time, as indigenous as the Creoles themselves. I have seen acacia in full flower scenting an apparently primitive nook in a forest; but there I have also noted long, well-defined cotton-ridges, with pine-trees eighteen inches through the bole growing thick upon them and between, indicating a time when the slave plowmen worked and sang there in vast open fields given to the operations of that strange system of agriculture generated by a civilization the most picturesque ever wiped out by relentless Progress.

Sojourning in such a region, one has a sense of vague records upon records stamped in the soil, making it a sort of palimpsest where the old-time roving Spaniard, the daring Frenchman, the bucanier, the early colonist, and the lordly mid-century planter have each traced his aspirations, his deeds, and finally his characteristic sign manual to attest his good faith or his reckless defiance. The women, too, have sketched many a touching paragraph in this curious history. The pansies they lovingly tended so long ago are now found blowing in waste places, dwindled to mere specks of purple and yellow, hardy yet pathetic descendants of a royal ancestry. Nor should it be offensive to remark that somehow the Creoles themselves seem more beholden to the past than

to the present for a certain fine charm of spirit and manner. There is, indeed, a medieval bouquet haunting the air in the vicinity of every French cottage in the warm low country. Time works a truly artistic deception by touching with lines of age the roof and walls, the rude fences, and the rickety scuppernong arbors. Surely, you will think, this place, with its gnarled fig-trees and its moss-tapestried orange-orchard, dates back into the days of chain-armor and carven crossbows. It would hardly surprise one to see Friar Tuck fill up the cabin's low front door with his massive body and genially truculent face.

The little lady who presides in the Midwinter Garden has a theory assuming that whatever is old is precious, and that whatever is faded, discolored, moldy, or dilapidated is old. She it is who has enriched the library with dog-eared French volumes from the second-hand book-stores in a street named Royal, but smelling distinctly plebeian. Thence, too, she fetches Venetian bottles and glasses, squat brass candlesticks, and grim little claw-footed tables to match an Empire desk of the same smoky mahogany, much patched and reglued. Like a busy, self-satisfied bird building a nest out of faded shreds of last year's autumn leaves and bark, with a few bits of snake-skin and two or three bright feathers, she has woven a charm against the rough walls and above the gaping fireplace. Such is the magnetic allurements of this shelved and book-dusty and archaic den that when a norther comes, giving practical excuse for a pile of burning logs on the hearth, a steaming kettle on the crane, and a semi-circle of complacent sitters in the glow, we all forget our low-country environment, and behave as true Northerners, one of us reading aloud, the rest listening, not more to the literary mouthing than to the loud boom of wind in the chimney-top. Strangely distinct at intervals, cutting sharply, yet not shrilly, down through night's tumult, comes the cry of a wandering sea-fowl from far aloft, where bird and storm-cloud career wing and wing against a dusky sky. It is an hour for one of those ample romances written before the ink-pots of genius, running dry of magic fluid, were refilled with a gross solution of raw realism. Come, Ivanhoe, come, D'Artagnan, come, any hero of the mighty ages, and make us forget the story of debauching innuendo and ill-favored love. Better coarse deeds of arms than flabby and unsound domestic morals set in a frame of unholy suggestion.



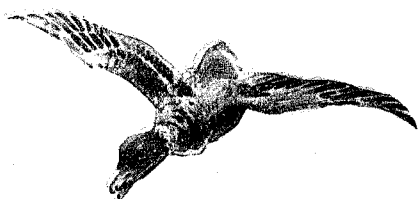
On the very next morning after the night of storm a twittering of small birds in the mossy tangles round about calls up the sun from a swaying sea, out of which he flares gloriously, like a tremendous fire-lily blossoming against the sky. It is well worth the effort to rise early and see this. Moreover, the oyster fleet goes out betimes, a straggling line of bellying sails drawing away with the stately grace of wild fowl, each smack trailing behind it a tow-line at the end of which bobs a dark little boat wherefrom the oystermen will let down their tongs to grapple the shells in the muddy sea-floor. A twinge of chilliness, a nipping edge on the air, suggests frost; but there is none. All this shivering does no more than brace one's appetite for breakfast—that fragrant



WHERE WILD FOWL CONGREGATE.

morning function of our fat black cook, who speaks gumbo French, and brews a coffee delightful beyond praise. If you are educated to the altitude of taste which brooks a Bordelais steak piping hot and overtopped with onion, garlic, red pepper, and bacon-drip, move lively when the bell rings, or you may have but a savory and fragrant bone to pick for your share, which would be a notable loss in our climate, where trencher delights seem more vivid than in colder surroundings.

Speaking of mensal attractions, a part of our garden, lying far in the rear, is given over to an Italian master who knows all the secrets of vegetable-growing. With a short-handled hoe he goes about, digging industriously about the roots of things, his back





"THE OYSTER FLEET GOES OUT BETIMES."

arched like a furious cat's, his nose almost touching the ground. It is he who brings in the great heads of cauliflower, the young red radishes, the silver-tipped onion-shoots, the spinach, the crisp lettuce, the bur-artichokes, and the strawberries. Everything, indeed, which can be coaxed or forced to grow into edible bulb, leaf, stalk, flower, or fruit he wrestles with. All sorts of phosphates, cotton-seed meal, bone-dust, leaf-mold, and swamp-muck are lavished to fertilize the sand withal. He feeds his plants as if they were his children, talking to them in a queer monotone while pruning, weeding, and watering them. It is from his area of cultivation that comes all this pungency which now and again loads the air. A whiff of garlic even strays into the flower-plats,

and makes an inartistic foil for the perfume of rose and the aroma of acacia.

Our neighbors, scattered hither and yon in the vast pine wood, come and go along the white sand-paths leading from house to house amid well-kept pear-orchards and dusky fig-clumps. They nearly all have the Latin volatility we expect in Creoles, singing on their way, not infrequently with a joyous timbre and a bird-like carelessness in their voices. The young girls are sweet, after a fashion, and the youths have a certain debonair cast of face and a lightness of bearing which somehow cannot be quite reconciled with the main features of their decidedly limited lives. A few, better to do than the rest, are educated, have been to Paris for some years of school and gaiety; but even they bear about them a something like a drapery of the long ago—their personal atmosphere attending them always, giving a very romantic effect of hazy distance and dim perspective.

In looking over our garden paling at the little world abutting us, we witness many things which impress our lives with memorable light sketches. These delicious people—the phrase comes nearest the true description—these delicious people are not only lovable, but they love. Nowhere else, probably, does the thought of marriage so insistently betray itself in man and maid; wherefore we naturally take a silent part in many a pretty little romance. Love-passages so simple and sincere that they scarcely seem a part of real life, iridescent bubbles of frank passion we might call them, shining a moment in this Southern sunlight, then bursting to nothingness with a twitter of girlish laughter and the half-sullen yet always flippant jocundity of a baffled boy, are as frequent as the billing of birds. But coquetry finally yields to such seriousness as matrimony demands, and the bell of our village church is kept busy ringing for weddings. Nor does this lavish marrying, with

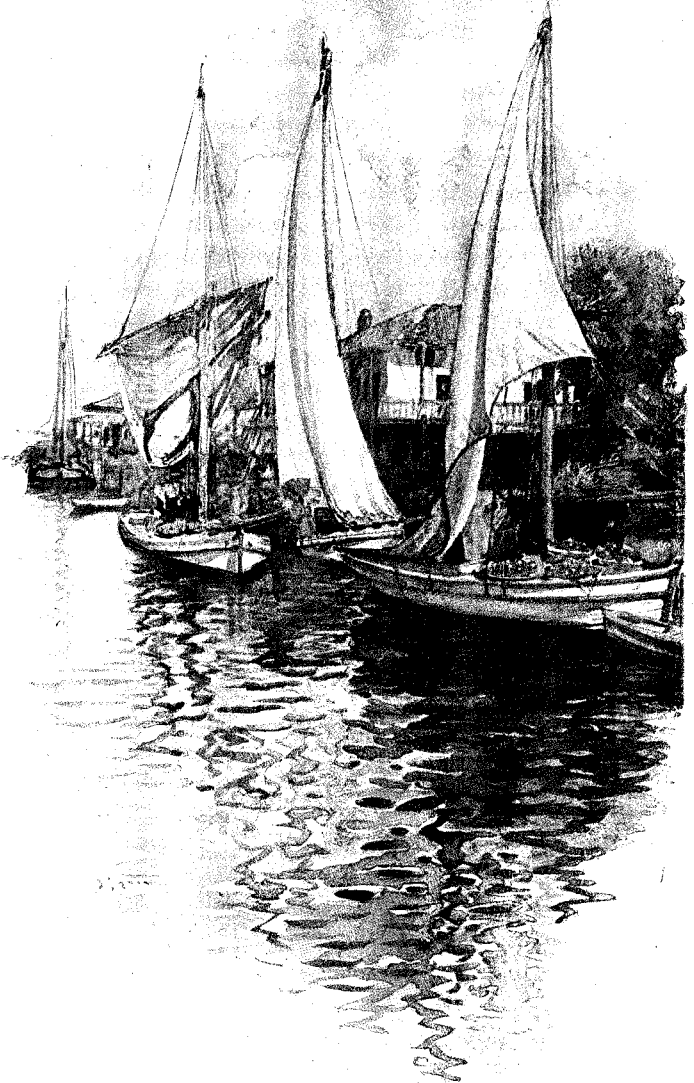


"VENETIAN BOTTLES AND GLASSES."

its swift and generous result in progeny, bring appreciable hardships to the daring twain, who usually have but their love and two pairs of somewhat indolent hands for means of livelihood. Nature takes care of her own in the low country, where life can flaunt a gorgeous banner of luxury on no capital beyond a mullet-net, a potato-patch, and some pigs in a pen. We have a neighbor who congratulates himself as a man of substance, having a wife and eleven children, the eldest not yet eighteen. His estate consists of a little sandy plat of ten acres, with a cabin in the middle. He has six large pecan-trees, three fig-trees, a scuppernong-vine, a dozen pear-trees, an acre of cabbages, potatoes, and carrots, a horse, two cows, and six pigs. Ah, but he rubs his hands together to relieve his oppressive sense of prosperity!

After a few spiteful flurries, winter in our low country lays aside all make-believe of frost and bleakness. The weather-god puffs his sunburnt jowls and blows a flute of spring. All about in haw and yapon the mocking-birds begin to show signs of vernal lustiness. Here and there one tries a bar of his love-tune, which sounds as if the notes, although as liquid as water, clogged his syrinx. A sparkling twit-ter soon follows, however, and then the rapture of May fills the February hedges and orchards. Thrush and bluebird join in, a vireo wanders by, the voices of jay and woodpecker take on a soft and tender shade of meaning, the delicate innuendo of resurgent love suiting the mood apparent in sky, sea, boscage, and air. Tomorrow we may hear the dropping-song, that wonderful ecstasy of the mocking-bird's love.

In this land of leisure there is no hurrying through the season of nest-building and melody. The birds devote two or three weeks to sketching in the careless foundation of



ORANGE BOATS.

twigs upon which will sometime rest the cleverly woven cup of avian domestic bliss; meantime they wander, the cock singing passionately, the demure little hen coquetting with every ball of animated feathers in sight. It all comes to a brisk and harmless

fight between jealous males here and there. The war-cries ring fiercely at intervals, and out of prickly thickets rush the combatants, clashing their wings together, and mayhap losing a bright feather or two. One would think they had just returned from a peace congress, were their battles a trifle more viciously stubborn.

Spring extends from the middle of January to an indefinite point, which sometimes touches June. Day after day the temperature is monotonously even; night after night a wonderful sky, profoundly deep between its stars, loops a dusky blend of Milky Way and empyrean over the warm sea and wavering islands. All of the most interesting plants, shrubs, vines, trees in our garden now rise to the highest achievement and spread abroad such bewildering splendors of leaf, spike, bud, flower, and painted stalk as only the favored spots of earth ever yield. Rich colors seem to imbue every natural object, vegetable and animal; even the snakes in the grass, basking or gliding, betray their kinship with the birds by a fine glow on their variegated scales. Doubtless the master serpent himself, who tempted the mistress of Eden, is lurking somewhere in my

domain, a gorgeously pied skin of fire-opals mailing his back, and a dazing fascination in his eyes. But let him shine; I am not an ophiologist.

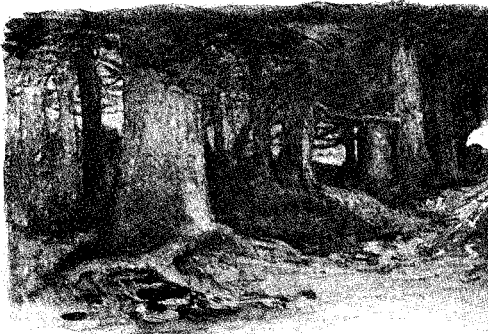
With spring arrive the crab, the flounder, and the pompano, a trio of luscious significance. Perhaps the allusion just made to Satan in his first form has led directly to deviled crab; but the soft-shelled little backsliders, the earliest caught, we do not devil; they are fried brown, while the fish are broiled and buttered to nestle in a greenery of cress—a bouquet more influential with a hungry man than a queen's vase of roses! Still, we never desert the banner of Flora in a garden land. Not only roses, but pots foaming high with magnificent wild violets from a distant glade, sweeten the morning's board, and reflect soft hues upon the plates round about. Indeed, violet-hunting is one of our recreations. It goes along with bird-study and sylvan archery, a sort of decorative interlude flashing blue as the sky between science and sport. Certain spaces in the pine forest, open to the sun, are fairly painted with these large odorless violets, the stems of which are sometimes almost a foot tall. We gather lupines, too; and in a few



"IN A FEW MARSHY PLOTS THE GLORIOUS FLOWERS OF IRIS."

marshy plots the glorious flowers of iris and pitcher-plant gleam in scattered array, the latter showing both a yellow and a purple species. Along the swales, where little half-hidden streams trickle darkling among the roots of magnolia and sweet-gum, we find gay fringes of azalea, with dogwood-trees

Nor can any degree of precaution reduce the risk to the line of safety. Nature has not built us for such violent strains upon our most delicate organs—the eyes, ears,



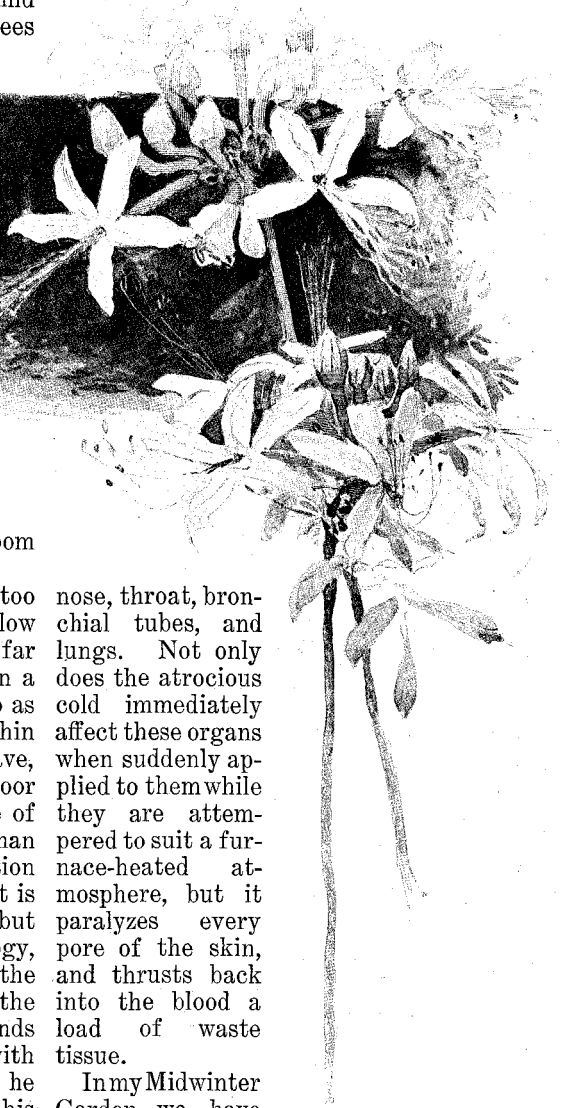
"HALF-HIDDEN STREAMS TRICKLE DARKLING."

spreading above them wide sprays of bloom as white as snow.

But all play and no work would be too great a stress of luxury, even in the low country. I have found literary labor far more easy and satisfactory here than in a higher latitude. By shifting my home so as to be throughout the year virtually within the periphery of summer, I am able to have, almost every day, my full measure of outdoor exercise and free access to the solitude of wild nature. To the sedentary craftsman this means a great deal, in both recreation of mind and refreshment of body. What is food for one may be poison for another; but there is a general rule, a law of biology, which cannot be dodged by any of us—the law known to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field; namely, that life depends upon waste and renewal. He who labors with the brain wastes vitality without stint; he sows with the sack; and he must renew his fund of energy just as generously and frequently as he gives it out. This he cannot do in a boreal climate. Bitter cold weather is mightily stimulating to him who habitually lives out in it; but the desk-man, the sedentary artist, must work in a warm air. During our Northern winter our libraries and studios are necessarily superheated; therefore, when we go forth from their atmosphere directly into air forty degrees below freezing temperature, the change is too sudden and extreme for recreational effect.

nose, throat, bronchial tubes, and lungs. Not only does the atrocious cold immediately affect these organs when suddenly applied to them while they are attempted to suit a furnace-heated atmosphere, but it paralyzes every pore of the skin, and thrusts back into the blood a load of waste tissue.

In my Midwinter Garden we have no such plunges from heat to cold. During the chilliest weather I write by an open fire, and when I fling aside the pen for the bow or the fishing-rod, the change from the atmosphere of the study to the open air is but a sweetly tonic experience, which goes through my brain like a gust of song. No swaddling in furs, no gasping, no icy inhalations, no numbing feet or fleece-gloved hands; we hold our shoulders back and breathe as if the



draught were something to make one greedy beyond reserve.

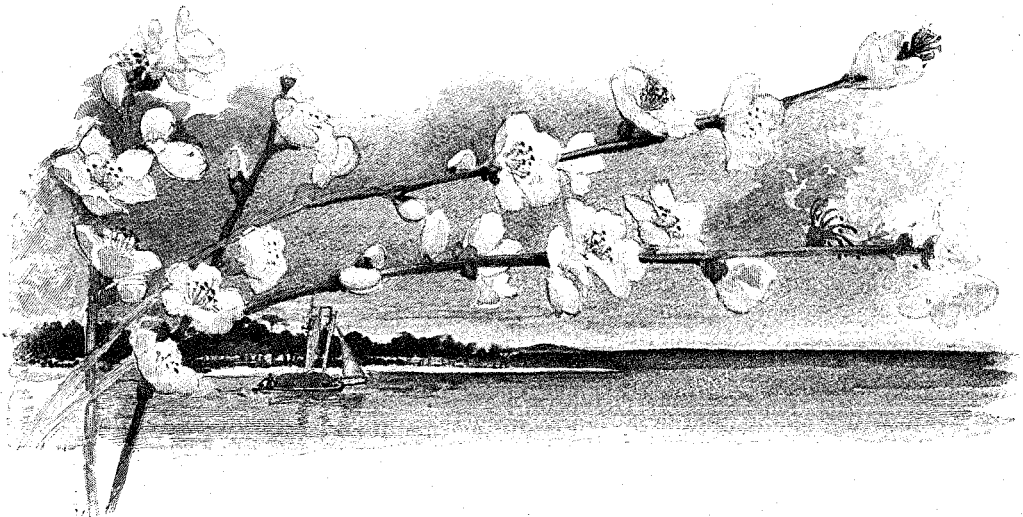
Doubtless the Southern summer added to the Southern winter would enervate us; but the birds found out eons ago that a swinging life, alternating summer in a high latitude with winter in the warm South, afforded just the climatic influences necessary to perfect health. I have studied wild birds with persistence and with every facility at hand, in all seasons and under all conditions, between Canada and the islands of the Gulf of Mexico; but I never yet knew of one that died of old age, never killed one that, when dissected, appeared in the least affected with senile decay. I do not say that birds never die of old age—domesticated birds certainly do; and it may be all right for men of science to make eyes at me when I do roundly deny the existence of any evidence, worth serious attention, tending to prove that wild birds, in their natural habitat, with plenty of their natural food to eat, ever die, save when stricken by disease or accident.

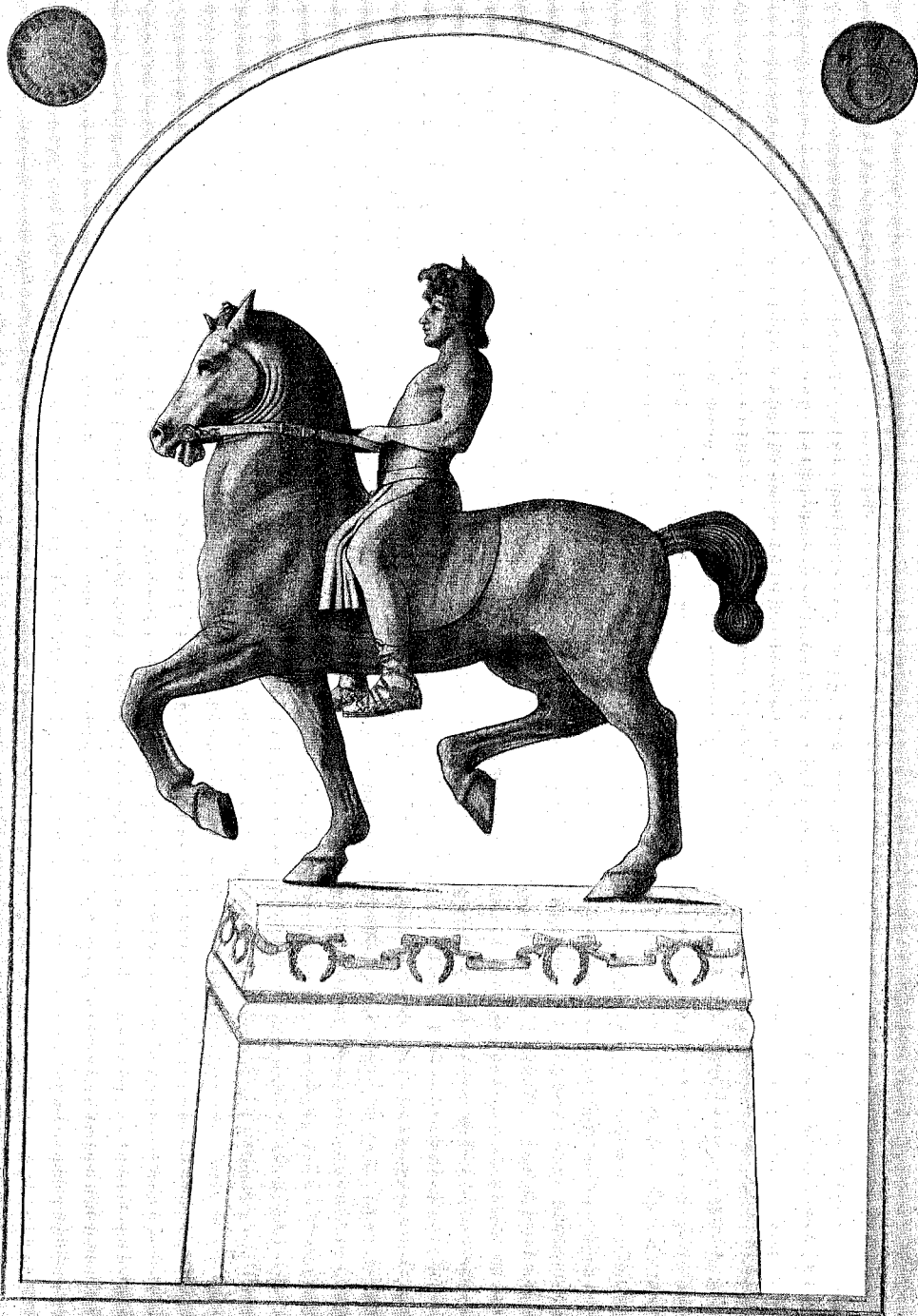
Breaking away from a fascinating question like this of bird immortality—a question to which I am bound sometime to return with plenty of facts to uphold my theory—reminds me that the time for northward migration is at hand. This morning there was a redoubled clamor of voices circulating through the garden tree-tops and a fresh rustle of wings round about. I awoke with a longing softly astir in my blood, while in my nostrils the far-off spring fragrance of the Wabash country and of the banks of Rock River made me understand that winter was no more. A tide of migrating birds had overlapped my garden at sunrise, and was

flowing on, tumultuously vocal, toward the land of blue-grass, vast fertile farms, and blooming apple-orchards.

At breakfast some one of the circle hints a desire to feel a brisk waft of Hoosier air off the Wea plains, and I venture a remark or two upon the fine spring weather reported from the Indianapolis station. As if through leagues upon leagues of golden haze, I see the hyacinths purpling a slope at Sherwood Place. Like the mere trickle of water which pierces a Mississippi levee, our desultory mouthing grows firmer and stronger all in one direction, until presently it fairly roars, sweeping away every remnant of a barrier; and before we comprehend fully what possesses us, lo! we are packing our bags and trunks, actually trembling meantime, and breathless with delight at thought of flying northward.

An intoxicating sense of moving apace with one of the ancient universal impulses fills us during our passage over mountain and valley; for by day we see the song-birds on each side of us, and at night, high above us, the wild geese honk assuringly, heading for the Tippecanoe and the Kankakee. In Alabama we see the foot-hills of Sand Mountain blotched pink and blue with flowers not known to the lowlanders. Farmers are planting corn in Tennessee. We rush across Kentucky by night, and when the sunshine again falls into our swaying berth we look out upon apple-orchards fair with bloom reeling past us as if hurrying into the vast dream-country from which we are so joyously taking our farewell flight. And far behind us we hear a soft, melodious stroke, the gate of my Midwinter Garden closing to shut in our abandoned dreams.





EQUESTRIAN STATUE. BY HENDRICK CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

(SEE PAGE 17.)



A PORTRAIT BUST. BY HENDRICK CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

A NEW SCULPTOR.

BY MRS. SCHUYLER VAN RENSSELAER.

I WISH that the little lady of the frontispiece could show us more than her profile. Of course she ought not to turn her head; that would disturb the childish dignity of the pose. But when we see her as the artist made her—not in a picture, but in a colored terra-cotta bust—and look at her from different points of view, we appreciate even her pose more fully. No other could have been as characteristic. The proud demureness, the naïve self-possession, shown by the way in which the head is poised on the slender neck and sloping shoulders, speak also from the drooping eyelids, from the serious mouth compressed beneath the long upper lip. And the quaint costume does not seem a wilful device to increase picturesqueness. It seems an appropriate setting for a definite and peculiar little personality.

It is this personality that first attracts us when we see the bust, and gives it a lasting, growing interest like that of a living human head. Naturally, we delight in the skill that could thus vitalize a bit of clay. But the sculptor's result seems more important than his method, and the chief element in the charm of the result is the expression of character.

Mr. Andersen was very young—he had just begun his studies in Paris—when he made this portrait of the daughter of his concierge. Very different are some of his most recent works—the colossal equestrian statue shown here, and two large groups, each of two nude figures, called "Serenity" and "Fellowship." If we know these we understand that idealistic art chiefly attracts him. But for this very reason his portraits, beginning with the bust of the strange little French girl, are doubly interesting. They show that he possesses that keen love for the real, for prosaic and personal natural facts, which alone can give truth and vitality to idealistic work; and, on the other hand, they prove that his idealism is genuine, because, while faithful as portraits, they are not mere bald, photographic transcripts from life.

All Mr. Andersen's works, of whatever kind, tell us that his main concern is the expression of character. He does not fall

into an error too common among modern artists and identify character with physical ugliness or eccentricity. But he does not think, with the great bulk of the modern public, that an insipid, meaningless portrayal of academically correct forms and features can have artistic value. He knows that art can draw beauty of some sort from almost any source, but he believes that to reach its highest level it must appeal as strongly as possible to both the mind and the eye. To quote some of his own words, the noblest art is that which "most successfully unites physical and mental nobility." A sculptor should "symbolize the finest qualities of the human form," should infuse the shapes he creates with "the highest intellectual expressiveness of which they are capable." Even in portraiture he cannot use his chances well unless he perceives, interprets, and accentuates the best that the model offers. And in idealistic work his opportunities are limited only by his own power to conceive fine ideals and to realize them clearly. To cultivate this power he must be sympathetically alive to every mental and physical impression he receives from the world around him, studying each and all with his intelligence as well as his eyesight, and searching for those most worthy of artistic record. He must feel, Mr. Andersen says, that "a head is not interesting in itself, but only in so far as it interprets interesting qualities, that a form is not fine unless it reaches or approaches some ideal that will elevate as well as animate the mind that perceives it."

I need hardly explain that a sculptor who looks at his art from this point of view does not value technical brilliancy for its own sake. He knows that nothing can be well expressed in any art unless its language has been mastered, and that beautiful conceptions need to be elucidated by beautiful workmanship. But the handiwork, the technical style, is merely the voice of the idea. It is not valuable in itself; its excellence, its charm, depend in every case upon its fitness to reveal the special characteristics that the artist wished to show.

My allotted space is almost filled. I cannot speak, as I should like to, about the



A PORTRAIT. BY HENDRICK CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

technical methods Mr. Andersen has employed, or dwell upon the love for color—common among sculptors of earlier times, but rare to-day—that has led him to experiment with many materials. I cannot praise as they deserve the drawings which show that in studying to be a sculptor he did not think it wise to confine himself to a

sculptor's tools. I must leave the pictures on these pages to suggest the interest of their originals, merely adding that we do not very often find a young artist who is determined to work with mind and heart as well as with eyes and fingers, to speak to the intellect and the higher emotions as well as to the physical sense. One who does cherish



A PORTRAIT. BY HENDRICK CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN.

these desires, and who has studied long and hard to fit himself to realize them, deserves the sympathetic attention of all who care for the higher forms of art.

Hendrick Christian Andersen was born, in 1872, in the town of Bergen, Norway. While he was still very young his family came to America and settled at Newport,

Rhode Island. His efforts to educate himself in art took him first to Boston and then to Paris (where he worked in the École des Beaux-Arts and in other schools), to Florence, Rome, and Naples. A year ago he returned to America and opened a studio in New York.

Mr. Andersen's most conspicuous works

—his equestrian statue and the two groups called "Serenity" and "Fellowship"—were executed in Rome. All are intended for casting in bronze, but only the "Serenity" has yet been seen in this form. It was shown during the spring of 1900 at the annual exhibition of the Society of American Artists in New York, and is now in the Metropolitan Museum, where it will probably be seen in the autumn, when the new wing of the building is finished. In the same collection were busts, both in marble, of Mrs. Howe and Miss Brice; also a bust in red terra-cotta of a young Italian, and one in bronze of Mr. Andersen's brother.

TIOBA.

BY ARTHUR COLTON.

FROM among the birches and pines, where we pitched our moving tent, you looked over the flat meadow-lands; and through these went a river, slow and almost noiseless, wandering in the valley as if there were no necessity of arriving anywhere at appointed times. "What is the necessity?" it said softly to any that would listen. And there was none; so that for many days the white tent stood among the trees, overlooking the haycocks in the meadows. It was enough business in hand to study the philosophy and the subtle rhetoric of Still River.

Opposite rose a strangely ruined mountain-side. There was a nobly poised head and plenteous chest, the head three thousand feet nearer the stars—which was little enough from their point of view, no doubt, but to us it seemed a symbol of something higher than the stars, something beyond them forever waiting and watching.

From its feet upward half a mile the mountain was one raw wound. The shivered roots and tree-trunks stuck out helplessly from reddish soil, boulders were crushed and piled in angry heaps, veins of granite ripped open—the skin and flesh of the mountain torn off with a curse, and the bones made a mockery. The wall of the precipice rose far above this desolation, and, beyond, the hazy forests went up a mile or more clear to the sky-line. The peak stood over all, not with triumph or with shame, but with the clouds and stars.

It was a cloudy day, with rifts of sunlight. An acre of light crept down the mountain, as you have seen, on the river-boats at night, the search-light feeling, fingering along the shore.

In the evening an Arcadian, an elderly

man and garrulous, came up to see what it might be that glimmered among his pulp-trees. He was a surprise, and not as Arcadian as at first one might presume, for he sold milk and eggs and blueberries at a price to make one suddenly rich. His name was Fargus, and he it was whose hay-cutter clicked like a locust all day in the meadow-lands. He came and made himself amiable beside us, and confided anything we might care to know which experience had left with him.

"That 's Tioba," he said. "That 's the name of that mountain." And he told us the story of one whom he called "Jim Hawks," and of the fall of Tioba:

SHE 's a skinned mountain [he said]. She got wet inside and slid. Still River used to run ten rods in further, and there was a cemetery, too, and Jim Hawks's place; and the cemetery 's there yet, six rods underground, but the creek shied off and went through my plow-land scandalous.

Now, Jim Hawks was a get-there kind, with a clawed face—by a wildcat, yes, sir. Tioba got there; and Jim he was a wicked one. I 've been forty years in this valley, with the Petersons and the Storrses and the Merimys at Canada Center, all good, quiet folk. And nothing happened to us, for we did nothing to blame, till Jim came, and Tioba ups and drops on him.

Now look at it, this valley! There 've been landslides over beyond in Helder's valley, but there 's only one in mine. Looks as if the devil gone spit on it. It 's Jim Hawks's trail.

He come one day with a buckboard and a yellow horse, and he says: