



ELECTIONEERING IN MISSISSIPPI.

ROUGH RIDING DOWN SOUTH.

A LONG the Gulf of Mexico, or what the United States Coast Survey styles the Mississippi Sound, extending across the State of Mississippi, with a depth in the interior of about one hundred miles, there lies a region of country usually denominated the Pine Woods. The soil is sandy and thin, producing small crops of rice, potatoes, and corn, a little cotton, indigo, and sugar-cane, for home consumption. But it sustains a magnificent pine forest, capable of supplying for centuries to come the navies of the world. The people are of primitive habits, and are chiefly lumbermen or herdsmen. Exempt from swamps and inundation, from the vegetable decomposition incidental to large agricultural districts, fanned by the sea-breeze and perfumed by the balsamic exhalations of the pine, it is one of the healthiest regions in the world. If the miraculous fountain, in search of

which the brave old Ponce de Leon met his death in the lagoons of Florida in 1512, may be found any where, it will be in the district I am now wandering over. I have never seen so happy a people. Not afflicted with sickness or harassed by litigation; not demoralized by vice or tormented with the California fever; living in a state of equality, where none are rich and none in want; where the soil is too thin to accumulate wealth, and yet sufficiently productive to reward industry; manufacturing all that they wear; producing all they consume; and preserving, with primitive simplicity of manners, the domestic virtues of their sires. Early marriages are universal. Fathers yet infants in law, and happy grandams yet in the vigor of womanhood, may be found in every settlement; and numerous are the firesides around which cluster ten or a dozen children, with mothers still lovely and buoyant as in the days of their maiden bloom.

Leaving the Gulf shore at Pascagoula for the interior, in a couple of hours the traveler finds himself on the banks of a broad, deep, beautiful river, the Escatawba, curving gently down to mingle with the

ocean. It flows through a forest of colossal growth. Many of these hoary Titans were overthrown by the great hurricane of '52, which began at 10 A.M., August 24, and blew with increasing fury until 12 M. next day, raging with undiminished violence until 12 at night, when it began to abate. It tore away whole masses of bluff on the sea-shore, dug up the earth from the roots of trees, blew down the potato hills as it swooped along the surface, and prostrated forests in its mad career.

Here, at what is now called Elder's Ferry, once stood the lodge of the last chieftain of the Pascagoulas. His warriors had all perished in the fatal wars with the Muscogees of Alabama. Sole survivor of the last conflict, the enemy still upon his trail, he led the women and children from the Escatawba to the sea, preferring death in its much loved waters to captivity and slavery. You have heard of the mysterious music which at midnight chimes along these shores; a low,



THE LONELY GRAVE.

lute-like strain, sometimes a vesper hymn, sometimes like a harp-string breaking. When the winds and surges sleep, in the still hours of night, I have often heard this plaintive anthem; and tradition says it is the death-chant of the Pascagoulas that wails along the sea.

The Indian village stood on a picturesque bluff, the gentle river, flowing through prairies of verdure, margined by aged oaks that lift their heads among the clouds and bathe their mossy beards in the silver spray beneath. The country spreads out into a continuous meadow of boundless extent, on every side dotted with little islets of palm-like trees. At intervals a serpentine line of ravine comes sweeping along, fringed with dwarf laurel, myrtle, jasmine, and other parasites, and the whole plain around is embroidered with flowers of every hue. Ah! it is pleasant to bivouac in these solitary plains, the quiet stars smiling upon you, and the fragrant winds singing in the trees around. There is a charm in these grand old woods—in these laughing wa-

ters—in these remote retreats, where only an echo of the storms of life is heard. No wonder the imaginative ancients peopled them with divinities: for here, at every step, one can but feel the presence of a God; and the feeling chastens and refines the heart. It is not in your gorgeous temples, with coquettish eyes and Shylock countenances around, and vanity peeping out even from the pulpit, that one truly feels the sentiment of religion in its humanizing and exalting influences.

By the road-side, near the ruins of a rude country meeting-house, long since deserted, may be seen a solitary grave. Years ago a wanderer, once favored by fortune, high in the profession of the law, died near this spot, the wretched victim of a debasing vice. His body, his bottle, and the last lines he ever penned were found near where he now sleeps:

Pilgrim, wheresoe'er thou stray,
Pause here upon thy weary way.
Take this relic if thou may,
And for its thirsty owner pray.
Fatal gift, when overflowing!
Oh, that man should ever know-
ing,
Servant be to liquor's spell,
Sorcery from the caves of hell!

Touch not—'tis poisonous to thee;
Taste not—alas, it ruined me!
The unclean thing forever shun,
Or thou, O pilgrim, art undone!

In this silent house of grace
Seek thy Maker, face to face:
Ask thy conscience, if thou wilt,
Dost thou good, or dost thou ill?

Lonely now my way I go,
Lingering through my life of woe;
Stranger, for the lost one pray,
And God will bless thee every day.
On thy hearth-stone he will fling
Countless blessings following,
In thy spring time, in thy age,
Every day of life's brief page;
In thy health, and in thy store,
Grace and goodness evermore!

Crossing the Chickasawha River I took refuge from the noonday sun in the hospitable dwelling of Mr. R——. It is perched on an elevated bluff. Far down in a field below, on the river-side, his servants had been at work, and might now be seen winding up a zigzag path toward the house, to get the mid-day meal. A group of tiny darkeys were sitting under the trees in the yard awaiting their mothers. Suddenly a

little cloud gathered on the horizon—there was a single burst of thunder—a single flash that blinded me for a moment—and then, oh what a shriek of agony from the wretched mothers! Three of the children had been killed by the fatal bolt. Never, ah never shall I forget that sight of sorrow, and the wailings of those broken hearts! I have seen the strong man crushed; the fond mother swooning over the loss of her first-born; the young and beautiful, just stepping into life on a pathway of flowers, stung by the serpent, and snatched away, leaving for the survivors, in the dim future, only a long despair; but never had I witnessed the intense grief of these simple slaves. All that they had to live for was wrapped up in the stricken infants that now, all lifeless, they pressed to their distracted bosoms.

Leaving the scene of sorrow, I entered the great pine forest that leads to the town of Augusta. The woods were on fire. The road lies on a high ridge or backbone, and at short intervals on each side there are lateral ridges running down into deep reed-brakes below. Along one of these vertebræ, on my left, a mighty volume of smoke and flame and eddying leaves came rolling rapidly toward me. The road itself, but rarely traveled at this season of the year, was covered several inches deep with pine straw, which was soon in a blaze. There was literally "a fire in my rear." Dashing forward, I meant to drive down a ridge on my right until the road should be cleared, but the flames, swept by the whirling winds, had by this time burst out there, and came surging into the sea of fire just behind me. I had no choice but to run for it. Though noonday, it was as black as midnight. The smoke of one hundred thousand acres of combustibles was around me. The roar of the devouring element, like the boom of a tremendous surf, was above me. The flames were protruding, like the tongues of boa constrictors, on each side of me, melting the varnish of my buggy and crisping my whiskers; and, ever and anon, the crash of a falling pine, uprooted by the fire, seemed to be discharging minute-guns in token of

my distress. On rushed the fiery torrent—flank and rear—up hill and down—and on I drove, at a killing gait, only ten paces in advance; my carpet-bag smoking, my hat and coat singed, my face and hands charred, when suddenly the wind shifted, and the flaming dragon plunged away to the left, hissing through the crackling reed-brakes, and shaking his terrible crest among the lofty trees.

Exhausted by this frightful contention, I was glad to find shelter at the wayside inn of my worthy friend, Mr. Hiram Breeland, of Greene County. He is famous for peach and honey; for river trout, venison steaks, and fried chicken, and indeed for every thing that a weary traveler covets. His wife is a model in her way. They have had eighteen children, and are yet a young and handsome couple. Far and near this is known as "the musical family." Six daughters in the bloom of life, richly dowered with those perfections that men sigh for and never forget, possess rare musical gifts; and



THE BEREAVED NEGROES.



THE WOODS ON FIRE.

their concerts with voice and violins are really enchanting. Excited and nervous after the fiery ordeal I had passed, they soothed my soul with melody, and my slumbers with charming dreams. Long after the witching hour of night, in the delicious delirium between sleeping and waking, the tinkle of the guitar and a sweet voice, softer than a sigh, mingled with the lullaby of the winds in the tops of the aged pines.

Their names are in harmony with their music. What can be more melodious than Elizabeth Amanda, Priscilla Brunetta, Louvena Anneta, Martha Miranda, Zelphi Emmeline, and Sophronie Angelina?

This house has been a favorite stopping-place for candidates for many years, and Breeland is pretty well posted up with anecdotes.

When Harry Cage and Franklin E. Plummer were canvassing for Congress they came here together, and Cage began to joke and sport with the children, much to the mother's delight. But

Plummer soon won her heart. He picked up the little wee one, just then toddling about, placed it across his lap, turned up its little petticoats, and began to search for *red bugs*!

Next morning Cage stole out before day, went to the wood-pile, cut a turn of wood, determined to win the "old lady's" favor by making her fire, while Plummer, as he fancied, lay snoring in bed. While toiling up the hill with his load, what was his astonishment to see the old 'un milking her cow, and Plummer *holding off the calf by the tail*!

A day or two after this, said Squire B., Cage made a tip-top speech at Greene Court House. It was hard to beat, and Plummer knew it. So when he got up he said: "Fellow-citizens, I would answer the gentleman's argument if there was any argument to answer. It reminds me of an honest couple down in my county who are troubled with a very small specimen of a child that cries all night. The husband, much tormented, complained that he could not get a moment's sleep. "Spank it, then," says the wife. He fumbled about, but the child continued to cry. "Well, why don't you spank it?" says she. "Because," said he, "*I*

can't find any thing to spank!"

It is hardly necessary to say that Cage "incontinently caved in," and refused to travel any farther with the Yankee wagon-boy.

"Plummer was hard pressed sometime after this, being charged with sundry matters affecting his integrity. He deliberately sat down and wrote an account of his visit to my house, charging that he had attempted to swindle me, had behaved with gross indecorum to my family, and had been kicked out of doors. This he contrived to have published, and it went the round of the papers, creating great excitement. He called on me for my certificate, which, of course, was promptly given, for I was surprised and indignant at such a slander. The reaction was tremendous; and after this nobody in this section would believe any thing against Plummer."

When the Hon. Powhatan Ellis, a very finished gentleman, was traveling through this district electioneering for some office, he lost his

portmanteau in attempting to ford a creek. Plummer immediately advertised its contents: "6 ruffled shirts, 6 cambric handkerchiefs, 1 hair-brush, 1 tooth-brush, 1 nail-brush, 1 pair curling tongs, 2 sticks pomatum, 1 box pearl-powder, 1 bottle Cologne, 1 do. rose-water, 4 pairs silk stockings, and 2 pairs kid gloves." This defeated the Judge. He was set down as a born aristocrat and "swelled head."

Plummer was a poor young lawyer, boarding, or loafing, at a tavern in Westville, when he announced himself for Congress. He hadn't a single "red" in his pocket. He opened the canvass in Benton, put up at the best hotel, dined a dozen friends every day, and opened a very liberal account at the bar. On the third day, when about to depart, he cried out to the crowd, "Gentlemen, I wish to make my public acknowledgments to our generous landlord. He has treated me like a prince; he has feasted my friends; his tippie has run freely. Sir," said he, turning to the landlord, "if you ever come to my town don't go to a hotel: put up with me; I shall be proud to reciprocate your hospitality!" With these words he vaulted on his horse, and was out of sight before the astonished Boniface could "say turkey" about his bill.

While sojourning at this pleasant retreat it was agreed, one day, that we should go out on a deer-drive. I was wrapping up a lunch to put in my pocket, and said to my boy Tom, "Well, Tom, how about this butter? I can't put it in my pocket." "No, massa," said Tom, "him run away. But you kin eat him *fore you go!*"

On a deer-drive in the South one man follows the hounds in the thickets or reed brakes where the herds usually feed, while three or four others take their stands at various points which they are expected to cross in their flight. The dogs soon broke cover; a noble doe came bounding by me. I fired and missed; but passing on, the Squire, who is a noted shot, brought her down. The outcries of the huntsman soon called us down to the brake, and there we saw a most extraordinary spectacle. Two bucks of the largest size in deadly combat, their branching antlers so interlocked that neither could use them against the other. The ground was torn up all around; their sides were dripping blood; and they had evidently fought long before this singular union of their weapons terminated the combat. Their furious struggles at our approach only united them more closely; and thus they would have perished. The hunters shot them, and informed me that they had often found the skeletons of bucks that had thus died, their horns so locked that no ingenuity could undo them.

The buck is a timid animal until wounded. He then stands at bay, and is dangerous to approach. He is the sworn enemy of the rattlesnake. When he perceives one, he walks around it until it throws itself into a coil, and then the buck vaults into the air and comes down upon it with his pointed hoofs. Not content with killing it, he stamps it into shreds. Those noxious reptiles always multiply as the deer diminish.

Speaking of rattlesnakes, my friend Colonel Wilkins, of Green Court House, tells me that he was once rolling logs in a piece of new ground on the Bigbee River, near Bladen Springs, when one of his men cried out, "Here's a rattlesnake!" Presently another sung out; and all round the "clearing" they kept up the cry, until the Colonel, quite angry, cried out, "*Let the logs alone, and all of you go to snaking!*" They piled up fifty-three in the course of the evening.

I once went to purchase a country seat on the bayou of St. John, in the vicinity of New Orleans, belonging to Mr. Michel, who had gone to France. It was occupied by Mr. Creecy, an old Vicksburg editor. Strolling into the garden, I was about to step toward an orange hedge to gather a few leaves, when he said "Look out for snakes!" "What," said I, "have you snakes here?"

"Walk this way," said Creecy. He led me to a point where three or four ditches, communicating with the bayou and with the swamp, intersected, and I counted a dozen dead moccasins lying about, and some twenty navigating the different ditches. "This is our only game," said he. "I shoot moccasins every afternoon!"

Mr. Michel lost an excellent purchaser for his place, and my brother editor held on until the snakes fairly run him out of the house.

There was once a man by the name of Gallendee living in Hancock county, who was, perhaps, rather unjustly suspected of hog stealing. He came running in from the woods one day shouting murder, the shirt fairly whipped off his back. He assured me it had been done by a coach-whip snake that had wrapped itself round his leg and thrashed him over the shoulders; but uncharitable people suspected it had been done by Judge Lynch!

The same man went to the late Judge Daniel to complain of these accusations, and to ask his advice. "Well," said the Judge, "I will tell you what to do. If you feel innocent, face these charges like a man. But if you are guilty, get into Louisiana as soon as you can." That evening his client crossed Pearl River, and became a citizen of our sister State.

Having recruited at this pleasant anchorage, I bid adieu to my friend Breeland, and set out for the village of Augusta, bowling merrily along in my blood-red buggy. The road is beautiful, roofed over with trees and tendrils, and the air fragrant with the breath of flowers. There was, however, one drawback to my comfort—myriads of flies of every species, that swarmed around and ravenously cupped the blood from my horse. It was what is appropriately termed here "fly time"—that is to say, the period when this numerous family of scourges have it all their own way, and neither man nor beast can sojourn in the woods without much suffering. Now the deer plunge into deep pools and lakes, leaving only their heads exposed, and browse only during a portion of the night while these insects sleep. The cattle from a thousand hills seek the abodes of man, and huddle around some

'smoking pine or in some open field to escape their tormentors.

On a sudden curve of the road I found myself near one of these "stamping grounds," and a simultaneous roar from five hundred infuriated animals gave notice of my danger. It is well known that the Spanish matadores provoke the wounded bulls in the arena by flaunting the *moleta* or blood-red flag in their faces. It was the vermillion of my buggy that excited this bellowing herd. They snuffed the air, planted their heads near the ground, tore it up with their hoofs and horns, and glared at me with savage eyes. The fierce phalanx blocked the road, and it was the "better part of valor" to retreat. The instant I wheeled the pursuit commenced. A cloud of dust enveloped them, and the trampling of their feet was like the roll of thunder. My horse dashed forward frantic with terror, and on they plunged on every side, crushing down the brush-wood in their course, goring and tumbling over each other, filling the forest with their dreadful cries, and gathering nearer and nearer in the fearful chase. The struggle now became desperate. In five minutes we should have been overturned and trampled to death; but at this juncture Tom threw out my overcoat, and with an awful clamor they paused to fight over it, and to tear it into shreds. Driving at full speed, I directed Tom to toss out the cushion. The infuriated devils trampled it into atoms, and came charging on, their horns clashing against the buggy, and ripping up the ribs of my horse. At this fearful moment we were providentially saved. A huge oak, with a forked top, had fallen by the wayside, and into this I plunged my horse breast-high, and he was safe, the back of the buggy being then the only assailable point. At this the whole column made a dash, but I met the foremost with six discharges from my revolver; two bottles of Cognac were shivered on their foreheads; next a cold turkey; and, finally, a bottle of Scotch snuff—the last shot in the locker! This did the business. Such a sneezing and bellowing was never heard before; and the one that got the most of it put out with the whole troop at his heels, circling round, scenting the blood of the wounded, and shaking the earth with their thundering tramp.

I was now fairly in for it, and made up my mind to remain until night, when I knew they would disperse. I was relieved, however, by the approach of some cattle-drivers, who, galloping up on shaggy but muscular horses, with whips twenty feet long, which they manage with surprising dexterity, soon drove the belligerent herd to their cow-pens, for the purpose of marking and branding. This is done every year in "fly time." The cattle ranging over an area of thirty square miles are now easily collected, driven to a common pen or pound, when the respective owners put their mark and brand on the increase of the season. Thus this Egyptian plague is turned to a useful purpose.

I was now approaching the ancient village of Augusta, once the stamping-ground of the fa-

mous Coon Morris. Being advised to take a near cut when within three miles, I turned to the right and drove ahead through leafy by-paths and across deserted fields grown over with stunted pines. For three hours I drove about, describing three segments of a circle, and finally got back to the point I started from. [*Nota bene:* Let all travelers stick to the beaten road, for in this country one may travel twenty miles without meeting a traveler or a finger-board.] The country through which I passed was poor, the population sparse, and no indications of the proximity of a town that I had heard of for twenty-five years. I drove on, however, expectation on tip-toe, the sun pouring down vertically, and my flagging steed sinking above his fetlocks in the sand, when, lo! the ancient village stood before me—an extensive parallelogram, garnished round with twelve or fifteen crumbling tenements, the wrecks of by-gone years! Not a tree stood in the gaping square for the eye to rest upon; the grass was all withered up; the burning sun fell on the white and barren sand as on a huge mirror, and was reflected back until your cheeks scorched and your eyes filled with tears. Even of these dilapidated houses several were unoccupied, and we drove round two-thirds of the square before we could find a human being to direct us to the tavern. It was a log-cabin, with one room, a deal table, some benches and cots, and a back shed for kitchen. Stable there was none, nor bar, nor servant, nor landlord visible. I turned my horse on the public square and took peaceable possession of the establishment. Nobody was to be seen. I was hungry and fatigued. The idea of a town once famous, and its hundred-and-one little comforts for the traveler, had buoyed me up during the morning drive, and fancy had diagramed something very different from what I was then realizing. In a few hours, however, the bachelor landlord came in. Not expecting company he had gone out on a foraging expedition. He feasted us on delicious venison, and, being a Virginian, soon concocted an ample julep. The mint grew near the grave of a jolly lawyer, a son of the "Old Dominion," who died there a few years before. No man can live in such a place without losing his energies. The mind stagnates, and in six months one would go completely asleep. I never saw such a picture of desolation. All was silence and solitude. In reply to my inquiry, my old friend, Colonel Mixon, said that times were dull; there was a little activity in one line only; and hobbling off he soon returned with a pair of babies in his arms—twin gems, plump, blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked, hanging around his neck like flowers on the stump of a storm-battered oak. Counselor Barrett, who seemed thoroughly posted in this branch of statistics, informed me that, during the last twelve months, thirteen matrons of that vicinity had produced doublets! The Colonel said that any disconsolate pair who would board with him six months, and drink from a peculiar spring on the premises, without having their expectations realized, should have

a free ticket at his table for sixty days to try it again.

These infant phenomena, however, are by no means confined to Perry County. East Mississippi every where is equally prolific. In the *Pawdling Clarion* I read the following, from the Rev. Marmaduke Gardiner, of Clarke County:

"FALLING SPRING, Feb. 2.

"More than one hundred persons have visited my house since Saturday last, for the purpose of seeing three beautiful boy babies which my wife gave birth to on the 28th ult. One weighs $7\frac{1}{2}$, the others $6\frac{1}{2}$ each, and are perfectly formed. We have named them Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I married my wife twenty years ago, and she has given me nine sons and nine daughters, but no triplicates until the last."

Married couples in search of heirs often cross the Atlantic, or drug themselves with nostrums and stinking mineral waters, when a single summer in these pine-woods would accomplish what they desire without extraordinary efforts, and at one-twentieth of the expense.

The old town next day presented a more lively scene. That certain premonitory of a piny-woods' gathering, the beer and ginger-bread cart, came rumbling into the square.—Rickety vehicles, of odd shapes, laden with melons, trundled along behind. A corner shanty displayed several suspicious-looking jugs and kegs. Buck negroes, dressed in their holiday suits, strode in, looking about for the candidates as one would for the giraffe. No candidate except the Hon. Robert J. Walker had visited the defunct town for years. It was quite an event. Finally, the stout sovereigns from the country came in, and the comedy commenced. The largest portion of the crowd was in the court-house to hear the orators, but a pretty considerable group was posted about the doggery. A number were playing "old sledge" on the heads of empty whisky barrels, and others were discussing the preliminaries of a quarter race.

Three of the candidates had spoken, when the late Judge Mitchell (formerly a well-known Member of Congress from Tennessee) rose. After an elaborate reply to the arguments of two of them, he turned to the third, and laying his hand on his head, said, "I

have only one word to say in answer to my young friend. He has a leetle soft spot right here, and it is mushy all round it."

When R. J. Walker was canvassing against George Poindexter for the Senate, he was accompanied, said Colonel Mixon, by a queer fish, one Isaac M'Farren, a fellow of infinite jest, and whose countenance was a comedy of itself. On a certain occasion they put up with a new settler, and had to sleep on the floor, while the man and his wife occupied a bunk in the same room. A very buxom damsel slept in a small kitchen near by. Mac had cast sheep's-eyes at her, and being uncomfortable on the floor, concluded to go and whisper a few soft nothings in her ear. He slipped out very quietly; but it being a crispy and frosty night, the door of the kitchen creaked upon its hinges, and the woman exclaimed, "Husband! husband! one of them men's arter Sally!" He sprang up, seized his rifle, and was rushing out, when Mr. Walker seized his arm. M'Farren hearing the



THE HURRICANE.



BARRETT AND THE BOAR.

noise, appeared at the other door rather *en désahillé*. "Je-men-y!" cried the man, and cocked his rifle. Mr. Walker threw it up, and Mac, running forward, seized him by the hand, exclaiming, "Sir, it is only a frolic and an indiscretion; I am a man of honor, incapable of injuring sleeping innocence. Sir, I throw myself on your generosity. I see that you belong to the honorable fraternity of free and accepted masons. Brother, I give you the *right hand of fellowship*!" The man was overwhelmed with this volubility, and flattered at the notion of being mistaken for a mason. He accompanied the party over the county, but finally voted the Poindexter ticket, because Walker would persist in running when M'Farren was the proper man for the place!

"I was in —," said Counselor Barrett, "when Governor —, who was a candidate for re-election, came there. The county had been recently organized, and few of the people had been there long enough to vote under the Constitu-

tional provision which requires six months' residence in the county and twelve in the State. They were anxious to vote, and got up a petition to the Board of Police (which has the supervision of elections) to dispense with the requisitions of the Constitution."

"Did the Board comply with the petition?"

"I can't exactly say," said the Counselor; "but as they all voted, I presume the order was duly made. The best of the joke was, the Governor signed the petition!"

Next day the Counselor accompanied me a few miles on my way. Showing me a road running down toward the swamp, he inquired if I knew how that road came to be made. On replying that I did not, he said: "Some years ago I was down in that swamp with some fellows after wild hogs. I was standing on the edge of it hallooing on the hounds, my gun resting against a tree, when out rushed an enormous boar and charged right at me. I could only straddle my legs to escape his furious onset; but as he passed under, being rather low in the crotch, I found myself astride of him. Almost unconscious from terror, I involuntarily seized his tail,

and stuck my heels under his shoulders. At every stride he took my spurs goaded him on. Thus he ran some three miles through the brushwood, making a clean sweep as he went, but finally fell exhausted, when I dispatched the monster with my bowie-knife. The road is now used for hauling timber from Leaf River swamp, and is called Barrett's trail."

The country through which I am journeying is sparsely settled, and is only adapted to grazing. Its surface undulates like the roll of the ocean, and hill and valley are covered with luxuriant grass and with flowers of every hue. Herds of cattle stand in the plashy brooks. Red deer troop along the glades; wild turkeys run before you along your road, and the partridge rises from every thicket. But for these the solitude would be painful. Settlements are often twenty miles apart; the cheering mile-post and gossiping wayfarer are rarely met with. The gaunt pines have a spectral aspect, and their long shadows fall sadly upon the path. At

nightfall, when the flowers have faded away, no fire-flies gem the road; one hears no tinkling bell; the robber owl skims lazily by; fantastic shades chase each other into deeper gloom; and instead of "the watch-dog's cheerful cry," the "wolf's long howl" comes from the reed-brakes, and is echoed by its prowling mate on the neighboring hills.

The day was dark and lowering. For weeks nor rain nor gentle dews had refreshed the calcined earth. A heavy cloud hung overhead, and its pent-up fury burst upon the forest. The few birds that tenant these silent woods flew screaming to their eyries; some cattle dashed across the hills for shelter. The whole wilderness was in motion. The pines swayed their lofty heads, and the winds shrieked and moaned among the gnarled and aged limbs. A few old ones fell thundering down, casting their broken fragments around; and then the hurricane rushed madly on, tearing up the largest trees, and hurling them like javelins through the air. The sky was covered as with a pall; and lurid flashes, like sepulchral lights, streamed and blazed athwart it. The earthquake voice of nature trembled along the ground, and, ere its running echoes died away, came again, crash after crash thundering forth. But at length, as though weary of the agony, it paused, and the phantom clouds scudded away. The scene around was appalling! Hundreds of trees lay prostrate, while, here and there, others stood shivered by the bolt of heaven and smoking with its fires. God preserve me from another ride through these giant pines in such a tempest!

MADELEINE SCHAEFFER.

I.

AT twenty years old Madeleine Schaeffer found herself three against Fate, as Descartes against the murderous sailors: God, I, and my sword—the last a weapon whose fine edge the dull armor of her opponent had already partly turned. In other parlance, she had not a friend in the world, and had forgotten how to make one. Born in the faith that the race of Schaeffer crowned humanity, and that, owing to their rare condescension, the rest of creation shared sunlight and starlight, dew and rain, it was a stern teacher that wrought a new creed. In her native village her father ruled supreme, and art and wealth had done their best to make his daughter worthy of her blood; culture and accomplishment could hardly go further. When at length he looked upon his work, and saw that it was good, there came a great gap into his life—he had met with fulfillment. It was then that a malevolent deity whispered at his ear. His daughter's fortune—was it at all equal to what such a creature had the right to demand? Were there not flocks of golden fleece rambling about the earth, whose rightful shepherds were Schaeffers? And so the simple old country-born-and-bred aristocrat plunged into the vortex of speculation. An excellent nut for Wall

Street to crack, and they found the meat sweet! One day he came home to Madeleine with Ruin as plainly lettered on his face as Dante's Omo. It was impossible for him to stay and front the vassals of his little burgh, and so they fled before the sheriff to the city; and there, after two years of hard struggle and much want, the old man died. What little remained in the purse Madeleine spent in conveying the dear form to its rest—that last in the long row of ancestral graves whose sunken stones, wreathed with wild-brier vines and wrought with lichens, slanted and crumbled before the sun and wind of two centuries. Then the coach deposited her at the station once more just as the great, panting train came in. Her foot was on the step before thought struck her, and she paused to ask herself what was to be sought in the city—what but blanker ruin faced her in those swarming lanes? Madeleine drew her shawl about her and moved away. As well die here as there; at least the autumn leaves would drift and mound above her—and the train thundered by. She turned under the late, dull sky, and once more mechanically sought her father's grave. But she did not enter the inclosure, only sat on the low gate-stone, like a sad sphinx to question the passers-by, while twilight hastened up to wrap her in its shadows.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment," she sighed through the stillness.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation," said another voice.

Madeleine started; she did not know that she had spoken; and looking up through the gray dampness she saw the old clergyman standing above her. He took her home with him, and had her put to bed and to sleep, and allowed her the refuge of torpor and grief. A friend of his knew of some gay Southern travelers who, at the North in the summer, had desired a governess. A letter came and went with its swift white wings, and Madeleine was checked and ticketed on her way to the Carolinian coast—kindness which the good, glad-giving man could ill afford since the generous Schaeffer tithe had failed him.

A weary journey both by nights and days—clattering over leagues of pine barrens—coaching through everglades that were sloughs of despond—skirting luxury, unthrift, and squalor—at length they plunged into an almost unbroken forest, hung with long veils of bleached moss, and Madeleine found herself the solitary female on the deck of a crazy little steamer bound down river. She drew her veil over her face, and sat apart on the deck, for there remained no great distance before her. Approaching it, her future, that she had kept resolutely out of mind, now rose and refused to be dwarfed. It was an ugly sight to her; her sensitive pride, her inborn hauteur recoiled: yet it was work, and to meet it she summoned endurance. Sitting there, she watched the banks of the narrow channel down