

SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

PART II.

CONTINUED.

ECONOMY.

WHILE we were at Detroit, we were most strongly urged to return thither by the Lakes, instead of by either of the Michigan roads. From place to place, in my previous travelling, I had been told of the charms of the Lakes, and especially of the Island of Mackinaw. Every officer's lady who has been in garrison there, is eloquent upon the delights of Mackinaw. As our whole party, however, could not spare time to make so wide a circuit, we had not intended to indulge ourselves with a further variation in our travels than to take the upper road back to Detroit; having left it by the lower. On Sunday, June 27th, news

arrived at Chicago that this upper road had been rendered impassable by the rains. A sailing vessel, the only one on the Lakes, and now on her first trip, was to leave Chicago for Detroit and Buffalo, the next day. The case was clear: the party must divide. Those who were obliged to hasten home must return by the road we came: the rest must proceed by water. On Charley's account, the change of plan was desirable; as the heats were beginning to be so oppressive as to render travelling in open wagons unsafe for a child. It was painful to break up our party at the extreme point of our journey; but it was clearly right. So Mr. and Mrs. L. took their chance by land; and the rest of us went on board the Milwaukee, at two o'clock on the afternoon of the 28th.

Mrs. F. and I were the only ladies on board; and there was no stewardess. The steward was obliging, and the ladies' cabin was clean and capacious; and we took possession of it with a feeling of comfort. Our pleasant impressions, however, were not of long duration. The vessel was crowded with persons who had come to the land sales at Chicago, and were taking their passage back to Milwaukee; a settlement on the western shore of the lake, about eighty miles from Chicago. Till we should reach Milwaukee, we could have the ladies' cabin only during a part of the day. I say

a part of the day, because some of the gentry did not leave our cabin till near nine in the morning; and others chose to come down, and go to bed, as early as seven in the evening, without troubling themselves to give us five minutes' notice, or to wait till we could put up our needles, or wipe our pens. This ship was the only place in America where I saw a prevalence of bad manners. It was the place of all others to select for the study of such; and no reasonable person would look for anything better among land-speculators, and settlers in regions so new as to be almost without women. None of us had ever before seen, in America, a disregard of women. The swearing was incessant; and the spitting such as to amaze my American companions as much as myself.

Supper was announced presently after we had sailed; and when we came to the table, it was full, and no one offered to stir, to make room for us. The captain, who was very careful of our comfort, arranged that we should be better served henceforth; and no difficulty afterwards occurred. At dinner, the next day, we had a specimen of how such personages as we had on board are managed on an emergency. The captain gave notice, from the head of the table, that he did not choose our party to be intruded on in the cabin; and that any one who did not behave with civility at table should

be turned out. He spoke with decision and good-humour; and the effect was remarkable. Everything on the table was handed to us; and no more of the gentry came down into our cabin to smoke, or throw themselves on the cushions to sleep, while we sat at work.

Our fare was what might be expected on Lake Michigan. Salt beef and pork, and sea-biscuit; tea without milk, bread, and potatoes. Charley throve upon potatoes and bread; and we all had the best results of food,—health and strength.

A little schooner which left Chicago at the same time with ourselves, and reached Milwaukee first, was a pretty object. On the 29th, we were only twenty-five miles from the settlement; but the wind was so unfavourable that it was doubtful whether we should reach it that day. Some of the passengers amused themselves by gaming, down in the hold; others by parodying a methodist sermon, and singing a mock hymn. We did not get rid of them till noon on the 30th, when we had the pleasure of seeing our ship disgorge twenty-five into one boat, and two into another. The atmosphere was so transparent as to make the whole scene appear as if viewed through an opera-glass; the still, green waters, the dark boats with their busy oars, the moving passengers, and the struggles of one to recover his hat, which had fallen overboard. We

were yet five miles from Milwaukee; but we could see the bright, wooded coast, with a few white dots of houses.

While Dr. F. went on shore, to see what was to be seen, we had the cabin cleaned out, and took, once more, complete possession of it, for both day and night. As soon as this was done, seven young women came down the companion-way, seated themselves round the cabin, and began to question us. They were the total female population of Milwaukee; which settlement now contains four hundred souls. We were glad to see these ladies; for it was natural enough that the seven women should wish to behold two more, when such a chance offered. A gentleman of the place, who came on board this afternoon, told me that a printing-press had arrived a few hours before; and that a newspaper would speedily appear. He was kind enough to forward the first number to me a few weeks afterwards; and I was amused to see how pathetic an appeal to the ladies of more thickly-settled districts it contained; imploring them to cast a favourable eye on Milwaukee, and its hundreds of bachelors. Milwaukee had been settled since the preceding November. It had good stores; (to judge by the nature and quantity of goods sent ashore from our ship;) it had a printing-press and newspaper, before the settlers had had time to get

wives. I heard these new settlements sometimes called “patriarchal:” but what would the patriarchs have said to such an order of affairs?

Dr. F. returned from the town, with apple-pies, cheese, and ale, wherewith to vary our ship diet. With him arrived such a number of towns-people, that the steward wanted to turn us out of our cabin once more: but we were sturdy, appealed to the captain, and were confirmed in possession. From this time, began the delights of our voyage. The moon, with her long train of glory, was magnificent to-night; the vast body of waters on which she shone being as calm as if the winds were dead.

The navigation of these lakes is, at present, a mystery. They have not yet been properly surveyed. Our captain had gone to and fro on Lake Huron, but had never before been on Lake Michigan; and this was rather an anxious voyage to him. We had got aground on the sand-bar before Milwaukee harbour; and on the 1st of July, all hands were busy in unshipping the cargo, to lighten the vessel, instead of carrying her up to the town. An elegant little schooner was riding at anchor near us; and we were well amused in admiring her, and in watching the bustle on deck, till some New-England youths, and our Milwaukee acquaintance, brought us, from the shore, two newspapers, some pebbles, flowers, and a pitcher of fine strawberries.

As soon as we were off the bar, the vessel hove round, and we cast anchor in deeper water. Charley was called to see the sailors work the windlass, and to have a ride thereon. The sailors were very kind to the boy. They dressed up their dog for him in sheep-skins and a man's hat; a sight to make older people than Charley laugh. They took him down into the fore-castle to show him prints that were pasted up there. They asked him to drink rum and water with them: to which Charley answered that he should be happy to drink water with them, but had rather not have any rum. While we were watching the red sunset over the leaden waters, betokening a change of weather, the steamer "New York" came ploughing the bay, three weeks after her time; such is the uncertainty in the navigation of these stormy lakes. She got aground on the sand-bank, as we had done; and boats were going from her to the shore and back, as long as we could see.

The next day there was rain and some wind. The captain and steward went off to make final purchases: but the fresh meat which had been bespoken for us had been bought up by somebody else; and no milk was to be had; only two cows being visible in all the place. Ale was the only luxury we could obtain. When the captain returned, he brought with him a stout gentleman, one of the proprietors of the vessel, who must have

a berth in our cabin as far as Mackinaw; those elsewhere being too small for him. Under the circumstances, we had no right to complain; so we helped the steward to partition off a portion of the cabin with a counterpane, fastened with four forks. This gentleman, Mr. D., was engaged in the fur trade at Mackinaw, and had a farm there, to which he kindly invited us.

On Sunday, the 3rd, there was much speculation as to whether we should be at Mackinaw in time to witness the celebration of the great day. All desired it; but I was afraid of missing the Manitou Isles in the dark. There was much fog; the wind was nearly fair; the question was whether it would last. Towards evening, the fog thickened, and the wind freshened. The mate would not believe we were in the middle of the lake, as every one else supposed. He said the fog was too warm not to come from near land. Charley caught something of the spirit of uncertainty, and came to me in high, joyous excitement, to drag me to the side of the ship, that I might see how fast we cut through the waves, and how steadily we leaned over the water, till Charley almost thought he could touch it. He burst out about the "kind of a feeling" that it was "not to see a bit of land," and not to know where we were; and to think "*if* we should upset!" and that we never did upset:—it was "a good and a bad feeling at once;" and he should never be able to

tell people at home what it was like. The boy had no fear : he was roused, as the brave man loves to be. Just as the dim light of the sunset was fading from the fog, it opened, and disclosed to us, just at hand, the high, sandy shore of Michigan. It was well that this happened before dark. The captain hastened up to the mast-head, and reported that we were off Cape Sable, forty miles from the Manitou Isles.

Three bats and several butterflies were seen to-day, clinging to the mainsail,—blown over from the shore. The sailors set their dog at a bat, of which it was evidently afraid. A flock of pretty pigeons flew round and over the ship; of which six were shot. Four fell into the water; and the other two were reserved for the mate's breakfast; he being an invalid.

We were up before five, on the morning of the 4th of July, to see the Manitou Isles, which were then just coming in sight. They are the Sacred Isles of the Indians, to whom they belong. Manitou is the name of their Great Spirit, and of everything sacred. It is said that they believe these islands to be the resort of the spirits of the departed. They are two: sandy and precipitous at the south end; and clothed with wood, from the crest of the cliffs to the north extremity, which slopes down gradually to the water. It was a cool, sunny morning, and these dark islands lay still,

and apparently deserted, on the bright green waters. Far behind, to the south, were two glittering white sails, on the horizon. They remained in sight all day, and lessened the feeling of loneliness which the navigators of these vast lakes cannot but have, while careering among the solemn islands and shores. On our right lay the Michigan shore, high and sandy, with the dark eminence, called the Sleeping Bear, conspicuous on the ridge. No land speculators have set foot here yet. A few Indian dwellings, with evergreen woods and sandy cliffs, are all. Just here, Mr. D. pointed out to us a schooner of his which was wrecked, in a snow-storm, the preceding November. She looked pretty and forlorn, lying on her side in that desolate place, seeming a mere plaything thrown in among the cliffs. "Ah!" said her owner, with a sigh, "she was a lovely creature, and as stiff as a church." Two lives were lost. Two young Germans, stout lads, could not comprehend the orders given them to put on all their clothing, and keep themselves warm. They only half-dressed themselves: "the cold took them," and they died. The rest tried to make fire by friction of wood: but got only smoke. Some one found traces of a dog in the snow. These were followed for three miles, and ended at an Indian lodge, where the sailors were warmed, and kindly treated.