

# GOOD COMPANY.



VOL. VII.—JULY, 1881.—NO. XXIII.

## THE CUMBERLAND TABLE-LAND AND ITS PEOPLE.

THE many attractive features of the Appalachian mountain region of the Southern States have long been generally known. Washington was familiar with them and pictured them in a letter to an English gentleman seeking information to guide his selection of a spot suitable for a home. General Sherman has predicted that the time will come when a large and thrifty population will occupy this territory, embracing in its extensive area West Virginia, western North Carolina, northern Georgia, northern Alabama, east Kentucky and east Tennessee. No part of this region offers greater charms of climate than the Cumberland table-land of Tennessee. This table-land extends from the Kentucky line into Alabama; is, upon an average, from sixty to seventy miles from east to west, extending across the state from north-east to south-west, and being the second of the five grand divisions of Tennessee, the third being the "rim-lands" to the west, the fourth embracing middle Tennessee, and the fifth and last the Mississippi river lands.

These table-lands of Tennessee cover 5,100 square miles—about the area of Connecticut. Sixteen hundred feet above sea-level, they are from six hundred to eight hundred feet above the valleys to their east and west. They are traversed for fifty miles by the Cincinnati Southern Railway, which then skirts their base for seventy-five miles; their southerly portion is made accessible by the Nashville, Chattanooga

and St. Louis R. R. and its branch roads, and other lines are projected, some to be built, in all probability at an early day.

As a *sanitarium*, competent authority pronounces this region to be unsurpassed. Free from malarial influences, above the possible reach of yellow-fever, exempt from intestinal and pulmonary diseases, with short winters, cool summers, the purest of air and water, for a sanitarium, what more can be demanded? For the New Englander, whose lungs demand change of residence, the air of Florida is too humid and depressing, that of Minnesota too sharp and cold in its long winters, and that of Colorado too rare and bracing to make either of these states comparable to the Cumberland mountain for this purpose. The climate is not a southern climate. The summer here is far more agreeable than the New England summer, nor is there a day when the heat of the sun is not tempered by the cool mountain breeze, and the nights are always cool.

The supply of water is bountiful, and its quality pure and delicious. As there is no limestone in the upper strata of the geological formation of this mountain, the disagreeable features incident to the water of limestone countries are unknown. The water most commonly found is the free-stone water, not very hard, flowing copiously from innumerable springs, and always clear, cold and pure. Notwithstanding the elevation, wells of small depth, sunk very cheaply, rarely fail to meet water anywhere.

Springs of water, with greater or less trace of iron or sulphur, and frequently of both, are abundant, and springs, valuable for other medicinal properties, are found with surprising frequency. In a description of this country, exaggeration is impossible when describing air, climate and water.

Of minerals, coal is found of excellent quality, and inexhaustible supplies. Hitherto, owing to lack of facilities for its shipment out of the country, little attention has been bestowed upon it; but since the opening of the Cincinnati Southern Railway, eighteen months ago, large amounts of capital have been invested for the speedy development of coal beds as valuable, accessible and extensive as can be found elsewhere. Iron, too, abounds. Very large investments have been made, and others are contemplated in the manufacture of iron. An invaluable advantage possessed by many locations in East Tennessee is the contiguity of iron ore, coal and material for flux, by which freighting is saved, largely reducing the usual cost of manufacture. Other valuable minerals abound, but not in such quantities as the above. It is thought by many experts that petroleum will be got here in quantities sufficient to create an important source of wealth. It is said that all indications point in this direction.

The Cumberland table-land is covered with virgin forests. Several varieties of oak abound; though on the level areas, the oak timber does not attain the size of the largest oaks in some other parts of the United States. Walnut, chestnut, pine, hickory, poplar, and many other kinds of timber are to be found, and tracts of valuable timber-lands can be purchased for almost nominal prices. As a rule, the finest timber is seen on the mountains and in the ravines rather than on the level lands, making the cost of getting it to railroad higher than if the case were otherwise. For all farming and domestic purposes, however, timber everywhere is amply abundant, and will be for years to come, even under the most extravagant treatment.

The inhabitants of this country are few in number, and their education, habits and needs of the most primitive description.

The inaccessibility of the region hitherto, is largely the reason of this, the roads having been poor and steep and communication difficult, there was no market beyond the farmer's own household, and the inducement to farm intelligently and for profit, therefore, did not exist. Consequently, shiftlessness and slackness of method, poverty and indifference. As an old native phrased it, "We could n't sell nothing, and so we got poorer and poorer, and at last we got so poor *we did n't care.*" The people have no lack of natural intelligence, are honest and truthful, brave, kind-hearted and hospitable. As a rule, they espoused the Union side at the time of the war, and their sympathies are with the North and the northerners rather than with the South and the southerners.

This description of the people must make it apparent that their farming is not of a quality suitable for a model. In determining the advantages of the region for farming and grazing, little light can be got from the experience of the native population and the appearance of their farms and herds. They have been utterly ignorant of fertilizers, taking no pains to utilize even barnyard manures, which have been allowed to go to waste. The practice has been for the settler to clear himself a piece of ground—as small as possible to save labor—then to plant it year after year, constantly perhaps in corn—rotation of crops being unheard of. Under such a lack of system it is surprising to find the land capable of affording any support. The soil is not to be compared to the soil of Illinois or Arkansas bottoms or the Kansas prairies. In the river bottoms and valleys it is fertile and rich, and in depth from six to eight and twelve inches. The sub-soil is clay, and this land holds manure wonderfully well. On the mountain and on the large level areas the soil is neither so deep nor so rich. It responds quickly and well to fertilizers, and will well repay all labor bestowed upon it. It is light in color. The Commissioner of Agriculture and Immigration in classifying the soils of this section, says that there is a class of lands that will *not* hold manure, the sub-soil absorbing it and letting it sink out

of sight. Extensive inquiries have led the writer to doubt the existence of this class of lands, and this doubt is confirmed by many competent to speak authoritatively. The land, under the most efficient cultivation, can never produce such quantities of wheat to the acre as can be raised in some other parts of the United States. It is, however, most admirably adapted for mixed farming. It will raise the finest of fruits and vegetables in great variety, and the equable climate, short winters and immunity from droughts make such a calamity as a total failure of crops unknown. If the farmer must be content to figure for a smaller profit than in some other places, he does not have to contemplate the chances of failure that have brought ruin on so many in Kansas and other highly favored states. As a grazing country, this region is unsurpassed east of the Mississippi River. Sheep and cattle subsist for ten months of the year on the extensive ranges which comprise almost the entire territory. The range is free to all, and the proximity to market is an item of profit of the highest consequence. This nearness to both northern and southern markets is an important factor for the consideration of the general farmer. He can take his early lamb to Cincinnati and his early apples and potatoes to Chattanooga, with the certainty of high prices and prompt sales.

Lands are very cheap here, though the time cannot be far distant when this will be changed. It is thought by many that the limit of western immigration is nearly reached; that the drawbacks of droughts, long, cold winters, hot summers, poor and scarce water, monotony of landscape,—prominent features in many parts of the west, that have never been dwelt upon in the publications inspired by the large railroads having lands to sell,—will, before long, check the universal tendency westward, and turn part of the tide of immigration to these regions, characterized long ago by Andrew Jackson, who knew them well, as destined to be the "future garden of America."

It is in the heart of this region that Thomas Hughes has founded Rugby, of which so much has been said within the past

year. Rugby, however, is not the first foreign colony that has been attracted to this beautiful spot. Thirty years ago, George F. Gerding, a German of intelligence and education, who had found his way hither, induced to follow him a colony of thrifty and intelligent North Germans, who, Lutherans all, gave the name of Wartburg to what is now the county seat of Morgan county, and where the little Lutheran chapel in which the service is conducted Sunday after Sunday in the German language before a congregation of the serious-minded colonists and their descendants, makes the visitor feel as though he had been translated from the primitiveness of the Methodist service, preacher and congregation of the type so well known as that of the wilder parts of the south-west, to the altogether opposite, but no less primitive German country village of the last generation. To the south of Wartburg and Rugby is Gruetli, the most attractive little village of the mountain. Gruetli is Swiss, on the poorest of the thin mountain land, chosen for its cheapness by the industrious and hardy colonists, who with true Swiss thrift have developed everything about them, as far as development, with their small means, has been possible. Their houses are small, but quaint and tasteful, white, with green blinds, a cheerful contrast to the houses so frequently found in the southern village, and indoors and out everything is as clean and neat as in the Shaker villages of Canterbury and Lebanon, which impressed the writer, when a boy, as being *painfully* neat and clean.

A residence on the mountain under circumstances of somewhat familiar intercourse with the native population, suggested the idea of a short sketch of some of the picturesque phases of their life, which will very soon have faded away and have been forgotten, for the reason that the isolation of the country has made it *terra incognita*, and the customs and singularities of its people have been unobserved by those who are in the habit of recording their impressions upon paper. The change is now rapidly going on. When the writer first visited the country, seventy-five miles from a railroad station,

and accessible only by the roughest of horse-back rides, the natives invariably wore clothing manufactured in each household, from the wool grown, carded and spun by themselves. Now, the women wear calicos, and not infrequently woollen dresses from the goods brought into the country by the enterprising merchants, while the men affect the cheap, ready-made suits, which neither in durability nor in picturesqueness compare with the blue or brown home-made garments of ante-railroad days.

The houses are of logs, from necessity, the country not having had saw-mills. They are of two classes, those of one room and those of two rooms. The latter are in fact, two cabins, unconnected by a door, one being reached by stepping out of doors from the other, though the intermediate space of perhaps ten feet is generally roofed, and sometimes, though rarely, a covered piazza extends the length of both buildings. More frequently, the single cabin serves for all the purposes of a dwelling for a family seldom small, from ten to fifteen children being the rule and not the exception. Beds, three or four in number, occupy the space next the walls, and farthest from the enormous fire-place, in which the fire, like the sacred fire at Rome, never goes out. The bed-clothing consists of blankets and woollen coverings—no sheets—and on shelves are piled extra blankets and quilts, some of the latter being quite elaborate in their finish. Hospitality is characteristic and invariable. A stranger, after a wearisome ride of miles, reaches one of these abodes, calls out before dismounting, when somebody appears, welcomes him politely, a boy is told to take his horse, which is led away, unsaddled, watered and fed as of course, and the traveler is seated by the fire, over which, without a word, preparations are at once made to give him something to eat, it being taken for granted that he is hungry and has had no dinner, or supper, as the case may be. The preparations for the meal are very simple, consisting of a journey to the smoke-house, hard by, for a piece of bacon, which is cut from one of the many sides which comprise the year's provision of the household, a batch of corn-meal is kneaded up, and

placed to bake in a covered oven, large enough to hold three or five loaves, and which is put upon hot embers, raked forward from the fire to the hearth, coffee is ground, and put into the coffee-pot on more hot embers, and with the frying-pan upon a third pile of embers, the traveler watches the cooking of his dinner, with the knowledge that if he remained here for a year, this would be his dinner, supper and breakfast, only varied occasionally by a piece of fried venison, or fried mutton or a fried squirrel or rabbit or a fried chicken or some fried eggs, and with an occasional mess of "sass," under which comprehensive word is included apple sauce, fried potatoes, green peas, sauerkraut, or anything bearing any similarity to either of these edibles; "sass," in short, being anything except bread, meat and coffee. Supper over, a circle is formed around the fire and conversation succeeds. The traveler is expected to state the business that brings him to the country, to say whether he is married or single; if the former, how many children he has, if the latter, how it happens that he has never married; where he comes from,—all non-residents of Tennessee being known generally as foreigners, whether from Ohio or from England,—how he likes the country and whether he thinks of remaining in it, and if it chances that he is known to be negotiating for a horse or a farm or a tract of timber-land, he is expected to state the present condition of the trade, how much he has offered, and how much more he would be willing to give, etc., etc., etc. All this information is required, not from a vulgar curiosity on the part of his questioners, but as the legitimate and ordinary matter of conversation. As darkness draws on, pine-knobs, a pile of which lies under the table, are thrown on the fire, the children disappear one by one up a ladder into the loft overhead, and finally the stranger is told that when he is ready "to lie down, he may take that bed over thar." Etiquette requires that he shall first retire, and if he is new to the country he proceeds to do so with considerable embarrassment, of which his entertainers have no conception. In the morning he is very early awakened by

the smell of the coffee and bacon, and as he lies in bed, watches the preparations for the morning meal, for which he is ready, after having made a toilet with the aid of a tin wash-basin and no looking-glass, on a bench out of doors. For his entertainment and that of his horse, remuneration is rarely accepted, and he goes his way with his entertainer's wishes for his success, and a hearty invitation to return and stay a week, and hunt venison and wild turkey with the male members of the family.

Hunting is the business of the mountaineer. His ancestors pursued it in the old North State, and hearing of a fine hunting country to the west, his grandfather traversed the pathless mountains and unbridged rivers—how he got his cattle and family and household goods over, heaven only knows—and throwing himself up the rudest of houses, in some cases no house at all, but utilizing the “rock-house,”—as the caves and shelters under the cliffs are called,—he fairly reveled in hunting, the supply of game being unlimited. In times farther back, the mountain was a famous Indian hunting-ground, though the Indians, it is said, did not live here, only making hunting pilgrimages for a season. Flint arrow-heads and Indian relics are not infrequently found, while innumerable Indian traditions appeal to one's love of the romantic and marvelous. The mountaineers have sought for fifty years a wonderful silver-mine that they say the Indians knew of in the heart of the mountains, but which, like Captain Kidd's buried treasure, no one can find. The writer had the pleasure of a personal friendship with the most famous wolf-hunter on the mountain, whose father came in from North Carolina to hunt, and stayed and hunted, he and his descendants, to this day. Eighty-seven years old was my friend, and though he can sleep out of nights without catching cold, and tramp farther after a deer than most men forty years younger, it strikes him with surprise that he is not so strong and vigorous as he used to be. It is a matter of regret to him, this building of railroads and towns. His little farm adjoins the Rugby town-site, and the managers of that enterprise wanted it, and

would willingly have paid ten times its value for it, but the old man remains deaf to all appeals to sell, and is looking forward to the time when the “foreigners” shall pull up stakes and go away and leave him in peace. He has a grand contempt for the young English swells, who scour the woods with their fine London guns and outfits, shooting at and frightening the deer, which they never hit, he says, nor never will. The mountaineers look up with great respect to Uncle Dempsey, whose surname is a fine old name with a French Huguenot ring to it, though he can tell me nothing of his ancestors before his grandfather's time in North Carolina. The mode of catching wolves, on whose scalps there was a large bounty, was to go into a likely neighborhood and imitate the bark of the she-wolf, to which the cubs would respond from their cave, thus giving knowledge of their whereabouts. A neighbor of Uncle Dempsey's, in sounding the old man's praises, said to me, “Why, he can bark so like a wolf, as to make the wolf *ashamed of herself*.” The old man remembers when a boy, having to catch up and run with two younger children of the family, to keep a hungry bear from devouring them. So, as I say, they are hunters and the children of hunters. Riding through the woods, you never meet one without his gun, which he carries religiously with him to church, to the store or to a funeral. If you happen by one of the country stores, kept in a small way by a native with a turn for barter, in a corner of his cabin in the woods, the chances are that you will find half a dozen or more mountaineers passing the afternoon in shooting at a mark, at which they are wondrously expert, as well they may be with the amount of time that they devote to it.

Fine manners these people have. Not valuing time, they never hurry or bustle or get into a flurry. They are deliberate in their movements and dignified in their address. They are critical, too, on the subject of manners. Some of Thomas Hughes' young Londoners were disposed to accost them, at first, a little unceremoniously, and I have frequently had the latter tell me, with a fine scorn, “Those English have no manners.”

Had they lived, surrounded by men of wealth and culture, they might have become servile, but a hundred years of the free life of the woods and mountains is a promoter of independence, and of class distinctions they have no conception, nor would familiarity with the refinements and luxuries of metropolitan centers impress them otherwise than as the Indian is impressed, with a feeling that it is all very different, but not to be desired. Their features show them to be of good stock, too, though their complexions are, of course, spoiled by their diet. The girls and boys are handsome, but the former lose their fresh look by the time they are seventeen, not infrequently beginning to rear families at from twelve to fourteen, for the system of early marriages is in vogue here, of all places. They are not immoral, though I have sometimes thought of them as "unmoral," if such a distinction may be allowed. They have no care for the conventional. They are high tempered when aroused, and not free from vindictiveness. Human life is not regarded by them with the sacredness in which it is held in more highly civilized communities, and that a neighbor has served two years in the penitentiary for having had the misfortune to kill a man in a difficulty growing out of too heated a discussion over an election, does not detract from his social standing upon his return home. A candidate for the office of sheriff, who had been acquitted upon a trial for homicide, his plea being "done in self-defense," and who, though popular, was known to be a pretty positive character in his way, is said to have urged his claims to the suffrages of his neighbors on the ground "that you want a man for sheriff, boys, who can whip any man in the county, and you all know that I'm the man who can do that, and that I'm the man for sheriff." He was elected. They have a way of talking of homicide which rather chills one. I met the cleverest and best natured of young fellows one day, much excited in the pursuit of a Rugby colonist, who had innocently picked up a log-chain in the woods, supposing it to have been abandoned, when in fact, it belonged to my friend, who had no idea that he had left it in an unsuitable place. "When

I find him," said he grimly, "if he don't give it up I shall kill him." "Why," said I, "you surely would n't kill a man for an old log-chain!" But he only shook his head ominously and continued his pursuit of the Rugby man, whom he was tracking by his horses' hoof-prints in the snow. I am happy to say that the Rugbeian gave up the chain without demur when he was caught up with, so that no blood was shed. At another time, the mildest mannered of old men, a church elder, too, was telling war reminiscences, and how, fearing that the rebels would get his horses, he hid them away in the woods, and their hiding-place was betrayed by a neighbor of rebel proclivities, so that the horses furnished a mount to rebel soldiers after all. Neither age nor religion could soften the feelings of the narrator, as he told of how his horses were taken off, and he added, with an earnestness that was intense,—“I may meet that man yet, sometime, and if I should, *I should have to kill him*,”—as though the hand of destiny pointed the way. One more illustration. I happened to hear that a certain mountaineer, named H—, had served a term of two years in the penitentiary, and curiosity led me to ask a neighbor the cause. "Well," said he, "a man named — here in Scott, had a grudge against a man over in Fentress, and so he told H— and another young man that he would give them ten dollars and a quart of brandy to go to Fentress and 'run that man out,'"—that is force him to go away,—“and,” said he, “he gave them the quart of brandy in advance, and as they went along they drank the brandy, and that *changed their minds*, so that when they got to Fentress they burned the man's house and killed him, and that is why H— had to go to the penitentiary.” The experiences of the war had much to do in bringing about this indifference to life. The war as conducted in these mountains was simply robbery and murder, and some of the stories told me are too terrible to repeat. The great majority of the mountaineers were Unionists, and the minority were obliged to forsake their homes, and, embittered, when opportunity offered for retaliation, the form that it took was often terrible. It has been usual, always, to ascribe the

position of East Tennessee during the war to intense love of the Union. I think that this is a mistake, and that indifference to the ambitions of the slave-holding South, rather than a positive feeling of loyalty to the government, accounts for the position at first taken, after which, the treatment received at the hands of the South turned the feeling of indifference to one of animosity and hatred, that to this day has in no wise died away. At the house of one of the best-to-do of the mountaineers—a man who had acquired some property, and whose house was large and comfortable to a degree seldom found on the mountain, and who had been an officer and a prisoner during the war,—a conversation was carried on one evening, in which two gentlemen from middle Tennessee took part, they having been on “the other side.” The conversation took a broad range, and the war and reconstruction were discussed dispassionately and philosophically rather than from a partisan stand-point. Mr. R—, the host, listened for some time in silence, and then rose and left the room. I followed him, later, into another room, in which he sat, alone. He burst out,—“I cannot talk about these things with a rebel nor listen to him. My boy was starved to death in a southern prison, my constitution was broken down there, and my life shortened by twenty years. I got away once, and got up into the North Carolina mountains, and was taken and carried back. I wish them no harm, but I can’t talk with them nor listen to them.”

In estimating the feelings of the South at the present day, feelings which it is to be hoped are not as bitter with all as those disclosed in Jefferson Davis’ recently published book, but which are still intense to a degree that seems strange to us at the North, perhaps we do not make sufficient allowance for the reasons which make the war seem to them an affair of yesterday, while with us, and particularly in our large cities and among our youth, it is rather thought of as an event of history. There is so little activity and variety in the life of the South as compared with life at the North, that impressions retain their hold and are ever-present in a manner impossible in,—for in-

stance,—New York, where one excitement succeeds another with a rapidity that leaves no time for brooding. However this may be, it is a curious fact that the *Knoxville Republican*, the newspaper which is almost exclusively read in the houses of those of the mountaineers who were Unionists, is stalwart in its republicanism to a degree rarely seen north of Mason and Dixon’s line.

One thing, however, has shaken pretty strongly the hold of the republican administration upon the affections of the mountaineers, and that is, the interference of the government with illicit distilling. Throughout the Appalachian mountains, as all know, for years has raged a chronic war between moonshiners and revenue officers. When I first went into the country, of course I carried with me the conservative opinions of the law-abiding citizen regarding the wickedness of distilling and evading the payment of the revenue tax, but I am free to say that, first enduring, I afterwards pitied and at last nearly embraced the unorthodox views universally held throughout that territory upon the subject. Without a market, the natives of these mountains have been cut off from every possibility of cash income from the sources that farmers depend upon, and it is a fact that many a family has not had, in money, ten dollars during a year. To get the corn over the mountains, as corn was impossible from its bulk, but in the form of whiskey, distilled from a little improvised arrangement that any mountaineer could fit up in a hollow back of his house, a few dollars could always be realized at the county town, enough to buy coffee and shoes; and when the natives were told that this could be done no longer, they felt outraged and aggrieved beyond measure, and not one of them can be made to believe but that the enforcement of such a law is tyrannical and unjust to a degree justifying revolution. And revolution it has been, practically, for years, though the government has now pretty well crushed out the operation of illicit stills. Resistance, not submission, suggested itself to them, and the revenue officers have had some pretty stirring experiences. I well remember, through an accident, finding myself with

two elderly northern gentlemen, applying for admission, one midnight, at a little hostelry near the Kentucky line, which did not bear a very savory reputation. It had been formerly the headquarters of the famous Crabtre forgery gang, and the rendezvous of as desperate a lot of men as could be found on the continent at one time. We did not very well like to go there, but the night was cold, and our only alternation was to sleep in the woods, which for one of my companions would have been dangerous. So we filed up to the dark building, and pounded and shouted loud enough to wake the dead, it would seem. After the longest time a light appeared, and a girl opened a door, to whom we made known our need of shelter. She appeared to hesitate, but finally told us to go to another door, which she pointed out, and that there were beds in there in which we could sleep. The damsel retired, and we attacked the other door. The girl told us that there was one man in there. It was an equally long time before this door was opened about a foot, and there stood a heavily-built, red-shirted man with a large revolver, cocked and pointed at us. We addressed him in a fault-finding, off-hand way, supposing him to be timid, and pushed our way past him into the room. The door-keeper closed the door behind us, and by the light of a few nearly burnt-out embers on the hearth, we could see six or seven heavy, determined-looking men, armed to the teeth with rifles, knives and pistols. It accorded more with one's ideas of an Italian or Greek brigand's headquarters, than of a hotel in the United States. After we got breath, we tried to apologize in a nonchalant manner for our intrusion under the belief that there were accommodations for us, which we saw clearly, we told them, that there were not,—and so we backed out as politely as possible, our hosts staring grimly at us, with their hands on their weapons. Upon reflection, we well understood that we had been supposed to be revenue officers, probably with warrants for the arrest of some of these very men, and we felt thankful to them that they had refrained from shooting at us before inspecting us, and

satisfying themselves, as they probably did, at a glance, that we were not their enemies. However, we passed the rest of the night in the woods over a fire, and had no hotel bill to pay in the morning.

A railroad engineer was tramping down the grade of the railway before its cars began running, and at a point where the road and railway crossed he saw a man with a wagon, whom he begged for a ride. The wagoner looked him over deliberately before telling him to get in, and the engineer in disposing of his feet discovered two rifles in the straw, and continuing his investigations noticed that the man carried a small arsenal of side-arms in a belt, and that a suspicious looking heap of something covered made the load. "Carrying a barrel of moonshine to Hunstville, I suppose, my friend?" suggested the engineer. "Yes," shortly replied the other. "I should judge from your appearance that you did n't intend to have it taken away from you?" further queried the engineer. "*You're right, I don't,*" was the solemn response of the earnest-minded moonshiner. After that they rode along pleasantly enough, the engineer sometimes wondering what his status would be in the event of meeting the officers of the revenue.

The vocabulary of these people is limited and their language simple. With them, I learned to avoid the use of certain words, common with us, but with which I found them to be unfamiliar. The word "fort-night," they never use. An unknown distance is "a right smart piece," or "a right smart bit." An able man is a "master man," a fine horse is a "master horse," or a "royal good horse." A disreputable person, man or woman, is a "mean" man or a "mean" woman.

There are Baptists and Methodists, and the Baptists are of different shades of belief. I was told by an Ohio man, of rather a satirical turn of mind, that there were seventy kinds of Baptists on the mountain. For the truth of this, I do not vouch. It reminded me of the story of the Frenchman who visited America, and after his return pronounced it a singular country, with a hundred different religions and only one



kind of gravy. Preachers are few, and services, lasting over Saturday and Sunday, are conducted at irregular intervals in the little log school and church buildings scattered about through the woods. Families come from twenty miles away, passing the Saturday night with friends near by. They approve of emphatic sermons and prayers, though themselves undemonstrative, and an old lady spoke to me of Elder B.— as a “powerful man to pray.” At the Methodist protracted meeting that I attended they remained impassive and calm, though the circuit-riders were vigorous in manner and address, and the only persons that seemed thrown off their balance were two “foreigners,” railroad laborers, who were awakened to a sense of their short-comings. They are not intemperate, though on county court day, which is once a month, and when everybody comes to the county town, some of the young men drink more of the new corn whisky than is at all good for them, the result being frequent quarrels. Still, it is rather a matter of sociability on this occasion, than a love for the liquor. Sometimes a man brings home a pint from the town, and the bottle is passed solemnly round the family circle, children and all taking a sup, for which they care little, but of which they have no conventional disapproval.

Notwithstanding their limited education,

they have extraordinary knowledge of law and its technicalities. They are rather apt to go to law, and as they all attend every court and listen attentively to the trials, and are drawn on juries frequently, they discuss legal subjects and use familiarly technical terms, that our college graduates, other than lawyers, would be puzzled to apply a meaning to.

Of medicine, they happily know nothing. Living where the mortality list is lower than on any other spot of the United States, as it is said, there is no field for physicians, and if a twinge of rheumatism, or a cut, or a child's teething appears serious, a bottle of some famous patent cure-all from the store hits the case, and as the patient, favored of nature, is almost sure to get speedily well, it follows that these valuable remedies are held in high esteem, and printed lists of their testimonials not infrequently adorn the cabin walls.

But this sketch must come to a close, its material occupying a larger place in the memory of the writer than it is likely to fill in the attention of the reader, who, however, if he has exhausted the usual rounds of summer travel, can nowhere enjoy a few weeks more pleasantly than by taking a trip into the wilds of the Cumberland Mountains.

*Charles F. Williams.*

