

any conversation on religious subjects was offered him by his neighbors, who saw that his end was fast approaching, he always replied with some observation about building a barn, a fence, or something else of a worldly nature. During this year he did more worldly business than he ever had done in any ten years of his life before.

I knew an instance of a similar change in the deportment of a gentleman whom I attended in a severe attack of the dropsy. Before his illness he was an easy, good natured, careless man, and a good neighbor; but after his recovery he was excessively avaricious, profane in his language, and a tyrant to his family and neighbors. Both these men appeared to have undergone an entire change in the state of the mind and external deportment.

The question whether the moral system of our nature is not as apt to suffer a deterioration, as to receive an improvement, in consequence of severe and long continued fits of sickness, would be an interesting subject in moral philosophy, and deserves the attention of men of science.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY.

The settlements on this side of the mountains commenced along the Monongahela, and between that river and the Laurel Ridge, in the year 1772. In the succeeding year they reached the Ohio river. The greater number of the first settlers came from the upper parts of the then colonies of Maryland and Virginia. Braddock's trail, as it was called, was the route by which the greater number of them crossed the mountains. A less number of them came by the way of Bedford and Fort Ligonier, the military road from Pennsylvania to Pittsburg. They effected their removals on horses furnished with pack-

saddles. This was the more easily done, as but few of these early adventurers into the wilderness were encumbered with much baggage.

Land was the object which invited the greater number of these people to cross the mountain, for as the saying then was, "it was to be had here for taking up"; that is, building a cabin and raising a crop of grain, however small, of any kind, entitled the occupant to four hundred acres of land, and a preemption right to one thousand acres more adjoining, to be secured by a land office warrant. This right was to take effect if there happened to be so much vacant land, or any part thereof, adjoining the tract secured by the settlement right.

At an early period the government of Virginia appointed three commissioners to give certificates of settlement rights. These certificates, together with the surveyor's plan, were sent to the land office of the state, where they laid six months, to await any caveat which might be offered. If none was offered the patent then issued.

There was, at an early period of our settlements, an inferior kind of land title denominated a *tomahawk right*, which was made by deadening a few trees near the head of a spring, and marking the bark of some one or more of them with the initials of the name of the person who made the improvement. I remember having seen a number of these tomahawk rights when a boy. For a long time many of them bore the names of those who made them. I have no knowledge of the efficacy of the tomahawk improvement, or whether it conferred any right whatever, unless followed by an actual settlement. These rights, however, were often bought and sold. Those who wished to make settlement on their favorite tracts of land bought up the tomahawk improvements rather than enter into quarrels with those who had made them. Other improvers of the land, with a view to actual settlement, and who happened to be stout veteran fellows, took a very different course from that of purchasing the tomahawk rights. When annoyed by the claimants under those rights they deliberately cut a few good hickories and gave them what was called in those days a *laced jacket*, that is a sound whipping.

Some of the early settlers took the precaution to come over the mountains in the spring, leaving their families behind to raise a crop of corn, and then return and bring them out in the fall. This I should think was the better way. Others, especially those whose families were small, brought them with them in the spring. My father took the latter course. His family was but small and he brought them all with him. The Indian meal which he brought over the mountain was expended six weeks too soon, so that for that length of time we had to live without bread. The lean venison and the breast of the wild turkey we were taught to call bread. The flesh of the bear was denominated meat. This artifice did not succeed very well; after living in this way for some time we became sickly, the stomach seemed to be always empty, and tormented with a sense of hunger. I remember how narrowly the children watched the growth of the potato tops, pumpkin and squash vines, hoping from day to day to get something to answer in the place of bread. How delicious was the taste of the young potatoes when we got them! What a jubilee when we were permitted to pull the young corn for roasting ears! Still more so when it had acquired sufficient hardness to be made into johnny cakes by the aid of a tin grater. We then became healthy, vigorous and contented with our situation, poor as it was.

My father with a small number of his neighbors made their settlements in the spring of 1773.<sup>1</sup> Though they were in a poor and destitute situation, they nevertheless lived in peace; but their tranquility was not of long continuance. Those most atrocious murders of the peaceable inoffensive Indians at Captina and Yellow Creek brought on the war of Lord Dunmore in the spring of the year 1774. Our little settlement then broke up. The women and children were removed to Morris' fort in Sandy

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<sup>1</sup> Among those who settled in 1773 with Mr. Doddridge was Alexander Wells, who built the mill where Oliver Clemons now lives. John Tennell settled where W. V. Walker now lives. Mr. Wells died in 1813, aged 86 years, and was buried in the old Wells grave yard.—(*Simpson.*)

creek glade, some distance to the east of Uniontown.<sup>2</sup> The fort consisted of an assemblage of small hovels, situated on the margin of a large and noxious marsh, the effluvia of which gave the most of the women and children the fever and ague. The men were compelled by necessity to return home, and risk the tomahawk and scalping knife of the Indians, in raising corn to keep their families from starvation the succeeding winter. Those sufferings, dangers and losses, were the tribute we had to pay to that thirst for blood which actuated those veteran murderers who brought the war upon us! The memory of the sufferers in this war, as well as that of their descendants, still looks back upon them with regret and abhorrence, and the page of history will consign their names to posterity with the full weight of infamy they deserve.

A correct and detailed view of the origin of societies, and their progress from one condition or point of wealth, science and civilization, to another, in these important respects a much higher grade, is always highly interesting even when received through the dusky medium of history, oftentimes but poorly and partially written; but when this retrospect of things past and gone is drawn from the recollections of experience, the impressions which it makes on the heart are of the most vivid, deep and lasting kind. The following history of the state of society, manners and customs of our forefathers is to be drawn from the latter source, and it is given to the world with the recollection that many of my cotemporaries, still living, have, as well as myself, witnessed all the scenes and events herein described, and whose memories would speedily detect and expose any errors the work may contain.

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<sup>2</sup> Veech's "Monongahela of Old" makes mention of this reference to the father and family of Dr. Doddridge passing over the "Sandy Creek road" in 1774, and Mr. Veech points out that "this was the second road viewed and laid out by order of the court of Fayette county after its erection in 1783. It came from the Ten Mile settlement through Greene county, crossing the river (Monongahela) at Hyde's Ferry, or mouth of Big Whitely, passing by the south side of Masontown, through Haydentown, or by David John's mill, up Laurel Hill, through the Sandy Creek settlement to Daniel McPeak's and into Virginia. Morris Fort was on Sandy Creek, in Virginia, just outside the Fayette county border. It was much resorted to by the early settlers on the upper Monongahela and Cheat rivers, and from Ten Mile."

The municipal, as well as ecclesiastical, institutions of society, whether good or bad, in consequence of their long continued use, give a corresponding cast to the public character of the society whose conduct they direct, and the more so because in the lapse of time the observance of them becomes a matter of conscience. This observation applies, in full force, to that influence of our early land laws, which allowed four hundred acres, and no more, to a settlement right. Many of our first settlers seemed to regard this amount of the surface of the earth as the allotment of divine providence for one family, and believed that any attempt to get more would be sinful. Most of them, therefore, contented themselves with that amount; although they might have evaded the law, which allowed but one settlement right to any one individual, by taking out the title papers in the names of others, to be afterwards transferred to them, as if by purchase. Some few, indeed, pursued this practice; but it was held in detestation.

My father, like many others, believed, that having secured his legal allotment, the rest of the country belonged of right to those who chose to settle in it. There was a piece of vacant land adjoining his tract amounting to about two hundred acres. To this tract of land he had the preemption right, and accordingly secured it by warrant; but his conscience would not permit him to retain it in his family; he therefore gave it to an apprentice lad whom he had raised in his house. This lad sold it to an uncle of mine for a cow and a calf and a wool hat.

Owing to the equal distribution of real property directed by our land laws, and the sterling integrity of our forefathers in their observance of them, we have no districts of *sold land*, as it is called, that is large tracts of land in the hands of individuals, or companies, who neither sell nor improve them, as is the case in Lower Canada and the north-western part of Pennsylvania. These unsettled tracts make huge blanks in the population of the country where they exist.

The division lines between those whose lands adjoined were generally made in an amicable manner, before any survey of them was made, by the parties concerned. In doing this they were

guided mainly by the tops of ridges and water courses, but particularly the former. Hence the greater number of farms in the western parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia bear a striking resemblance to an amphitheatre. The buildings occupy a low situation and the tops of the surrounding hills are the boundaries of the tract to which the family mansion belongs.

Our forefathers were fond of farms of this description, because, as they said, they are attended with this convenience "that everything comes to the house down hill." In the hilly parts of the state of Ohio, the land having been laid off in an arbitrary manner, by straight parallel lines, without regard to hill or dale, the farms present a different aspect from those on the east side of the river opposite. There the buildings as frequently occupy the tops of the hills as any other situation.

Our people had become so accustomed to the mode of "getting land for taking it up," that for a long time it was generally believed that the land on the west side of the Ohio would ultimately be disposed of in that way. Hence almost the whole tract of country between the Ohio and Muskingum was parcelled out in tomahawk improvements; but these latter improvers did not content themselves with a single four hundred acre tract apiece. Many of them owned a great number of tracts of the best land, and thus, in imagination, were as "wealthy as a South Sea dream." Many of the land jobbers of this class did not content themselves with marking the trees, at the usual height, with the initials of their names, but climbed up the large beech trees and cut the letters in their bark from twenty to forty feet from the ground. To enable them to identify those trees, at a future period, they made marks on other trees around them as references.

Most of the early settlers considered their land as of little value, from an apprehension that after a few years' cultivation it would lose its fertility, at least for a long time. I have often heard them say that such a field would bear so many crops and another so many, more or less, than that. The ground of this belief concerning the short lived fertility of the land in this country was the poverty of a great proportion of the land in

the lower parts of Maryland and Virginia, which, after producing a few crops, became unfit for use and was thrown out into commons.

In their unfavorable opinion of the nature of the soil of our country our forefathers were utterly mistaken. The native weeds were scarcely destroyed before the white clover and different kinds of grass made their appearance. These soon covered the ground, so as to afford pasture for the cattle, by the time the wood range was eaten out, as well as protect the soil from being washed away by drenching rains, so often injurious in hilly countries.

Judging from Virgil's<sup>1</sup> test of fruitful and barren soils, the greater part of this country must possess every requisite for fertility. The test is this: dig a hole of any reasonable dimensions and depth. If the earth which was taken out, when thrown lightly back into it, does not fill up the hole the soil is fruitful; but if it more than fill it up the soil is barren.

Whoever chooses to make this experiment will find the result indicative of the richness of our soil. Even our graves, notwithstanding the size of the vault, are seldom finished with the earth thrown out of them, and they soon sink below the surface of the earth.

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## CHAPTER X.

### HOUSE FURNITURE AND DIET.

The settlement of a new country, in the immediate neighborhood of an old one, is not attended with much difficulty, because supplies can be readily obtained from the latter; but the

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<sup>1</sup>Ante locum capies oculos, alteque jubebis  
In solido puteum demitti, omnemque repones  
Rursus humum, et pedibus summas œquabis arenas,  
Si deerunt: rarum, pecorique et vitibus almis  
Aptius uber erit. Sin in sua posse negabunt  
Ire loca, et scrobibus superabit terra repletis,  
Spissus ager: glebas cunctanes crassaque terga  
Expecta, validis terram proscinde Juvencis.

*Vir. Geo.*, lib., ii, l, 230.

—(D)

settlement of a country very remote from any cultivated region is a very different thing, because at the outset, food, raiment, and the implements of husbandry are obtained only in small supplies and with great difficulty. The task of making new establishments in a remote wilderness in a time of profound peace is sufficiently difficult; but when, in addition to all the unavoidable hardships attendant on this business, those resulting from an extensive and furious warfare with savages are super-added, toil, privations and sufferings are then carried to the full extent of the capacity of men to endure them.

Such was the wretched condition of our forefathers in making their settlements here. To all their difficulties and privations the Indian war was a weighty addition. This destructive warfare they were compelled to sustain almost single handed, because the revolutionary contest with England gave full employment for the military strength and resources on the east side of the mountains.

The following history of the poverty, labors, sufferings, manners and customs, of our forefathers, will appear like a collection of "tales of olden times" without any garnish of language to spoil the original portraits by giving them shades of coloring which they did not possess. I shall follow the order of things as they occurred during the period of time embraced in these narratives, beginning with those rude accommodations with which our first adventurers into this country furnished themselves at the commencement of their establishments. It will be a homely narrative; yet valuable on the ground of its being real history.

If my reader, when viewing through the medium which I here present the sufferings of human nature in one of its most depressed and dangerous conditions, should drop an involuntary tear, let him not blame me for the sentiment of sympathy which he feels. On the contrary, if he should sometimes meet with a recital calculated to excite a smile or a laugh I claim no credit for his enjoyment. It is the subject matter of the history and not the historian which makes those widely different impressions on the mind of the reader.



In this chapter it is my design to give a brief account of the household furniture and articles of diet which were used by the first inhabitants of our country. A description of their cabins and half-faced camps, and their manner of building them, will be found elsewhere.

The furniture for the table, for several years after the settlement of this country, consisted of a few pewter dishes, plates and spoons; but mostly of wooden bowls, trenchers and noggins. If these last were scarce, gourds and hard shelled squashes made up the deficiency. The iron pots, knives and forks, were brought from the east side of the mountains along with the salt and iron on pack horses. These articles of furniture corresponded very well with the articles of diet on which they were employed. "Hog and hominy" were proverbial for the dish of which they were the component parts. Johnny cake and pone were at the outset of the settlements of the country the only forms of bread in use for breakfast and dinner. At supper, milk and mush was the standard dish. When milk was not plenty, which was often the case, owing to the scarcity of cattle, or the want of proper pasture for them, the substantial dish of hominy had to supply the place of them; mush was frequently eaten with sweetened water, molasses, bear's oil, or the gravy of fried meat.

Every family, besides a little garden for the few vegetables which they cultivated, had another small enclosure containing from half an acre to an acre, which they called a *truck patch*, in which they raised corn for roasting ears, pumpkins, squashes, beans and potatoes. These, in the latter part of the summer and fall, were cooked with their pork, venison and bear meat for dinner, and made very wholesome and well tasted dishes. The standard dinner dish for every log rolling, house raising and harvest day was a pot pie, or what in other countries is called *sea pie*. This, besides answering for dinner, served for a part of the supper also. The remainder of it from dinner, being eaten with milk in the evening, after the conclusion of the labor of the day.

In our whole display of furniture, the delft, china and silver were unknown. It did not then as now require contributions from the four quarters of the globe to furnish the breakfast table, viz: the silver from Mexico; the coffee from the West Indies; the tea from China, and the delft and porcelain from Europe or Asia. Yet our homely fare, and unsightly cabins, and furniture, produced a hardy veteran race, who planted the first footsteps of society and civilization in the immense regions of the west. Inured to hardihood, bravery and labor from their early youth, they sustained with manly fortitude the fatigue of the chase, the campaign and scout, and with strong arms "turned the wilderness into fruitful fields" and have left to their descendants the rich inheritance of an immense empire blessed with peace and wealth.

I well recollect the first time I ever saw a tea cup and saucer and tasted coffee. My mother died when I was about six or seven years of age. My father then sent me to Maryland with a brother of my grandfather, Mr. Alexander Wells, to school. At Colonel Brown's in the mountains, at Stony creek glades, I for the first time saw tame geese, and by bantering a pet gander I got a severe biting by his bill, and beating by his wings. I wondered very much that birds so large and strong should be so much tamer than the wild turkeys. At this place, however, all was right, excepting the large birds which they called geese. The cabin and its furniture were such as I had been accustomed to see in the backwoods, as my country was then called. At Bedford everything was changed. The tavern at which my uncle put up was a stone house, and to make the change still more complete it was plastered in the inside, both as to the walls and ceiling. On going into the dining room I was struck with astonishment at the appearance of the house. I had no idea that there was any house in the world which was not built of logs; but here I looked round the house and could see no logs, and above I could see no joists; whether such a thing had been made by the hands of man, or had grown so of itself, I could not conjecture. I had not the courage to inquire anything about it. When supper came on, "my confusion was

worse confounded." A little cup stood in a bigger one with some brownish looking stuff in it, which was neither milk, hominy nor broth; what to do with these little cups and the little spoon belonging to them I could not tell; and I was afraid to ask anything concerning the use of them.

It was in the time of the war, and the company were giving accounts of catching, whipping and hanging the tories. The word *jail* frequently occurred: this word I had never heard before; but I soon discovered, and was much terrified at its meaning, and supposed that we were in much danger of the fate of the tories; for I thought, as we had come from the backwoods, it was altogether likely that we must be tories too. For fear of being discovered I durst not utter a single word. I therefore watched attentively to see what the big folks would do with their little cups and spoons. I imitated them, and found the taste of the coffee nauseous beyond anything I ever had tasted in my life. I continued to drink, as the rest of the company did, with the tears streaming from my eyes, but when it was to end I was at a loss to know, as the little cups were filled immediately after being emptied. This circumstance distressed me very much, as I durst not say I had enough. Looking attentively at the grown persons, I saw one man turn his little cup bottom upwards and put his little spoon across it. I observed that after this his cup was not filled again; I followed his example, and to my great satisfaction the result as to my cup was the same.

The introduction of delft ware was considered by many of the backwoods people as a culpable innovation. It was too easily broken, and the plates of that ware dulled their scalping and clasp knives; tea ware was too small for *men*; they might do for women and children. Tea and coffee were only slops, which in the adage of the day "did not stick by the ribs." The idea was they were designed only for people of quality, who do not labor, or the sick. A genuine backwoodsman would have thought himself disgraced by showing a fondness for those slops. Indeed, many of them have, to this day, very little respect for them.

## CHAPTER XI.

## DRESS OF THE INDIANS AND FIRST SETTLERS.

On the frontiers, and particularly amongst those who were much in the habit of hunting, and going on scouts and campaigns, the dress of the men was partly Indian and partly that of civilized nations.

(The hunting shirt was universally worn. This was a kind of loose frock, reaching half way down the thighs, with large sleeves, open before, and so wide as to lap over a foot or more when belted. The cap was large, and sometimes handsomely fringed with a ravelled piece of cloth of a different color from that of the hunting shirt itself. The bosom of this dress served as a wallet to hold a chunk of bread, cakes, jerk, tow for wiping the barrel of the rifle, or any other necessary for the hunter or warrior.) The belt, which was always tied behind, answered several purposes, besides that of holding the dress together. In cold weather the mittens, and sometimes the bullet-bag, occupied the front part of it. To the right side was suspended the tomahawk and to the left the scalping knife in its leathern sheath. The hunting shirt was generally made of linsey, sometimes of coarse linen, and a few of dressed deer skins. These last were very cold and uncomfortable in wet weather. The shirt and jacket were of the common fashion. A pair of drawers or breeches and leggins were the dress of the thigh and legs; a pair of moccasins answered for the feet much better than shoes. These were made of dressed deer skin. They were mostly made of a single piece with a gathering seam along the top of the foot, and another from the bottom of the heel, without gathers as high as the ankle joint or a little higher. Flaps were left on each side to reach some distance up the legs. These were nicely

adapted to the ankles and lower part of the leg by thongs of deer skin, so that no dust, gravel or snow could get within the moccasin.

The moccasins in ordinary use cost but a few hours labor to make them. This was done by an instrument denominated a moccasin awl, which was made of the backspring of an old claspknife. This awl with its buckshorn handle was an appendage of every shot pouch strap, together with a roll of buckskin for mending the moccasins. This was the labor of almost every evening. They were sewed together and patched with deer skin thongs, or whangs, as they were commonly called.

In cold weather the moccasins were well stuffed with deer's hair, or dry leaves, so as to keep the feet comfortably warm; but in wet weather it was usually said that wearing them was "a decent way of going barefooted;" and such was the fact, owing to the spongy texture of the leather of which they were made.

Owing to this defective covering of the feet, more than to any other circumstance, the greater number of our hunters and warriors were afflicted with the rheumatism in their limbs. Of this disease they were all apprehensive in cold or wet weather, and therefore always slept with their feet to the fire to prevent or cure it as well as they could. This practice unquestionably had a very salutary effect, and prevented many of them from becoming confirmed cripples in early life.

In the latter years of the Indian war our young men became more enamored of the Indian dress throughout, with the exception of the matchcoat. The drawers were laid aside and the leggins made longer, so as to reach the upper part of the thigh. The Indian breech clout was adopted. This was a piece of linen or cloth nearly a yard long, and eight or nine inches broad. This passed under the belt before and behind leaving the ends for flaps hanging before and behind over the belt. These flaps were sometimes ornamented with some coarse kind of embroidery work. To the same belts which secured the breech clout, strings which supported the long leggins were attached.

When this belt, as was often the case, passed over the hunting shirt the upper part of the thighs and part of the hips were naked.

The young warrior instead of being abashed by this nudity was proud of his Indian like dress. In some few instances I have seen them go into places of public worship in this dress. Their appearance, however, did not add much to the devotion of the young ladies.

The linsey petticoat and bed gown, which were the universal dress of our women in early times, would make a strange figure in our days. A small home-made handkerchief, in point of elegance, would illy supply the place of that profusion of ruffles with which the necks of our ladies are now ornamented.

They went barefooted in warm weather, and in cold their feet were covered with moccasins, coarse shoes, or shoepacks, which would make but a sorry figure beside the elegant morocco slippers often embossed with bullion which at present ornament the feet of their daughters and grand-daughters.

The coats and bedgowns of the women, as well as the hunting shirts of the men, were hung in full display on wooden pegs round the walls of their cabins, so that while they answered in some degree the place of paper hangings or tapestry they announced to the stranger as well as neighbor the wealth or poverty of the family in the articles of clothing. This practice has not yet been wholly laid aside amongst the backwoods families.

The historian would say to the ladies of the present time, our ancestors of your sex knew nothing of the ruffles, leghorns, curls, combs, rings and other jewels with which their fair daughters now decorate themselves. Such things were not then to be had. Many of the younger part of them were pretty well grown up before they ever saw the inside of a store room, or even knew there was such a thing in the world, unless by hearsay, and indeed scarcely that. Instead of the toilet, they had to handle the distaff or shuttle, the sickle or weeding hoe, contented if they could obtain their linsey clothing and cover their heads with a sun bonnet made of six or seven hundred linen.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE FORT AND OTHER DEFENSÉS.

My reader will understand by this term, not only a place of defense, but the residence of a small number of families belonging to the same neighborhood. As the Indian mode of warfare was an indiscriminate slaughter of all ages and both sexes, it was as requisite to provide for the safety of the women and children as for that of the men.

The fort consisted of cabins, blockhouses and stockades. A range of cabins commonly formed one side, at least, of the fort. Divisions or partitions of logs separated the cabins from each other. The walls on the outside were ten or twelve feet high, the slope of the roof being turned wholly inward. A very few of these cabins had puncheon floors, the greater part were earthen. The blockhouses were built at the angles of the fort. They projected about two feet beyond the outer walls of the cabins and stockades. Their upper stories were about eighteen inches every way larger in dimension than the under one, leaving an opening at the commencement of the second story to prevent the enemy from making a lodgment under their walls. In some forts, instead of blockhouses, the angles of the fort were furnished with bastions. A large folding gate made of thick slabs, nearest the spring, closed the fort. The stockades, bastions, cabins and blockhouse walls, were furnished with port holes at proper heights and distances. The whole of the outside was made completely bullet proof.

It may be truly said that necessity is the mother of invention; for the whole of this work was made without the aid of a single nail or spike of iron, and for this reason, such things were not to be had.

In some places less exposed a single blockhouse, with a cabin or two, constituted the whole fort. Such places of refuge may appear very trifling to those who have been in the habit of

seeing the formidable military garrisons of Europe and America; but they answered the purpose, as the Indians had no artillery. They seldom attacked, and scarcely ever took one of them.

The families belonging to these forts were so attached to their own cabins on their farms that they seldom moved into their fort in the spring until compelled by some alarm, as they called it; that is, when it was announced by some murder that the Indians were in the settlement.

The fort to which my father belonged was, during the first years of the war, three-quarters of a mile from his farm; but when this fort went to decay, and became unfit for defense, a new one was built at his own house. I well remember that, when a little boy, the family were sometimes waked up in the dead of night by an express with a report that the Indians were at hand. The express came softly to the door, or back window, and by a gentle tapping waked the family. This was easily done, as an habitual fear made us ever watchful and sensible to the slightest alarm. The whole family were instantly in motion. My father seized his gun and other implements of war. My stepmother waked up and dressed the children as well as she could, and being myself the oldest of the children I had to take my share of the burdens to be carried to the fort. There was no possibility of getting a horse in the night to aid us in removing to the fort. Besides the little children, we caught up what articles of clothing and provision we could get hold of in the dark, for we durst not light a candle or even stir the fire. All this was done with the utmost dispatch and the silence of death. The greatest care was taken not to awaken the youngest child. To the rest it was enough to say *Indian* and not a whimper was heard afterwards. Thus it often happened that the whole number of families belonging to a fort who were in the evening at their homes were all in their little fortress before the dawn of the next morning. In the course of the succeeding day their household furniture was brought in by parties of the men under arms.

Some families belonging to each fort were much less under the influence of fear than others, and who, after an alarm had subsided, in spite of every remonstrance, would remove home,



while their more prudent neighbors remained in the fort. Such families were denominated *fool hardy* and gave no small amount of trouble by creating such frequent necessities of sending runners to warn them of their danger, and sometimes parties of our men to protect them during their removal.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### CARAVANS AND MODE OF TRADE.

The acquisition of the indispensable articles of salt, iron, steel and castings, presented great difficulties to the first settlers of the western country. They had no stores of any kind, no salt, iron, nor iron works; nor had they money to make purchases where those articles could be obtained. Peltry and furs were their only resources before they had time to raise cattle and horses for sale in the Atlantic states.

Every family collected what peltry and fur they could obtain throughout the year for the purpose of sending them over the mountains for barter.

In the fall of the year, after seeding time, every family formed an association with some of their neighbors for starting the little caravan. A master driver was selected from among them who was to be assisted by one or more young men and sometimes a boy or two. The horses were fitted out with pack-saddles, to the hinder part of which was fastened a pair of hobbles made of hickory withes; a bell and collar ornamented his neck. The bags provided for the conveyance of the salt were filled with feed for the horses; on the journey a part of this feed was left at convenient stages on the way down, to support the return of the caravan; large wallets well filled with bread, jerk, boiled ham and cheese furnished provisions for the drivers. At night after feeding, the horses, whether put in pasture or turned out into the woods, were hobbled and the bells were opened.

The barter for salt and iron was made first at Baltimore; Frederick, Hagerstown, Oldtown and Fort Cumberland, in succession, became the place of exchange. Each horse carried two bushels of alum salt weighing eighty four pounds to the bushel. This, to be sure, was not a heavy load for the horses but it was enough, considering the scanty subsistence allowed them on the journey.

The common price of a bushel of alum salt, at an early period, was a good cow and calf; and until weights were introduced, the salt was measured into the half bushel, by hand, as lightly as possible. No one was permitted to walk heavily over the floor while the operation of measuring was going on.

The following anecdote will serve to show how little the native sons of the forest knew of the etiquette of the Atlantic cities.

A neighbor of my father, some years after the settlement of the country, had collected a small drove of cattle for the Baltimore market. Amongst the hands employed to drive them was one who never had seen any condition of society but that of woodsmen. At one of their lodging places in the mountain, the landlord and his hired man, in the course of the night, stole two of the bells belonging to the drove and hid them in a piece of woods. The drove had not gone far in the morning before the bells were missed; and a detachment went back to recover the stolen bells. The men were found reaping in the field of the landlord. They were accused of the theft, but they denied the charge. The torture of sweating according to the custom of that time, that is of suspension by the arms pinioned behind their backs, brought a confession. The bells were procured and hung around the necks of the thieves. In this condition they were driven on foot before the detachment until they overtook the drove, which by this time had gone nine miles. A halt was called and a jury selected to try the culprits. They were condemned to receive a certain number of lashes on the bare back from the hand of each drover.

The man above alluded to was the owner of one of the bells; when it came to his turn to use the hickory, "now," says he to the

thief, "you infernal scoundrel, I'll work your jacket nineteen to the dozen; only think what a rascally figure I should make in the streets of Baltimore without a bell on my horse."

The man was in earnest; having seen no horses used without bells he thought they were requisite in every situation.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### SUBSISTENCE BY HUNTING.

This was an important part of the employment of the early settlers of this country. For some years the woods supplied them with the greater amount of their subsistence, and with regard to some families at certain times, the whole of it; for it was no uncommon thing for families to live several months without a mouthful of bread. It frequently happened that there was no breakfast until it was obtained from the woods. Fur and peltry were the people's money. They had nothing else to give in exchange for rifles, salt and iron, on the other side of the mountains.

The fall and early part of the winter was the season for hunting the deer, and the whole of the winter, including part of the spring, for bears and fur skinned animals. It was a customary saying that fur is good during every month in the name of which the letter R occurs.

The class of hunters with whom I was best acquainted were those whose hunting ranges were on the western side of the river, and at the distance of eight or nine miles from it. As soon as the leaves were pretty well down and the weather became rainy, accompanied by light snows, these men, after acting the part of husbandmen, so far as the state of warfare permitted them to do so, soon began to feel that they were hunters. They became uneasy at home. Everything about them became disagreeable. The house was too warm. The feather bed too soft, and even the good wife was not thought for the time being a proper companion. The mind of the hunter was wholly occupied with the camp and

chase. I have often seen them get up early in the morning at this season, walk hastily out and look anxiously to the woods and snuff the autumnal winds with the highest rapture, then return into the house and cast a quick and attentive look at the rifle, which was always suspended to a joist by a couple of buck's horns, or little forks. His hunting dog, understanding the intentions of his master, would wag his tail and by every blandishment in his power express his readiness to accompany him to the woods.

A day was soon appointed for the march of the little cavalcade to the camp. Two or three horses furnished with pack saddles were loaded with flour, Indian meal, blankets and everything else requisite for the use of the hunter.

A hunting camp, or what was called a half-faced cabin, was of the following form: the back part of it was sometimes a large log; at the distance of eight or ten feet from this two stakes were set in the ground a few inches apart, and at the distance of eight or ten feet from these two more, to receive the ends of the poles for the sides of the camp. The whole slope of the roof was from the front to the back. The covering was made of slabs, skins or blankets, or, if in the spring of the year, the bark of hickory or ash trees. The front was left entirely open. The fire was built directly before this opening. The cracks between the logs were filled with moss. Dry leaves served for a bed. It is thus that a couple of men, in a few hours, will construct for themselves a temporary, but tolerably comfortable, defense from the inclemencies of the weather. The beaver, otter, muskrat and squirrel are scarcely their equals in dispatch in fabricating for themselves a covert from the tempest! A little more pains would have made a hunting camp a defense against the Indians. A cabin ten feet square, bullet proof and furnished with port holes, would have enabled two or three hunters to hold twenty Indians at bay for any length of time. But this precaution I believe was never attended to; hence the hunters were often surprised and killed in their camps.

The site for the camp was selected with all the sagacity of the woodsmen, so as to have it sheltered by the surrounding hills from every wind, but more especially from those of the north and west.

An uncle of mine of the name of Samuel Teter occupied the same camp for several years in succession. It was situated on one of the southern branches of Cross creek. Although I lived many years not more than fifteen miles from the place, it was not till within a very few years ago that I discovered its situation. It was shown me by a gentleman living in the neighborhood. Viewing the hills round about it, I soon perceived the sagacity of the hunter in the site for his camp. Not a wind could touch him; and unless by the report of his gun or the sound of his axe, it would have been by mere accident if an Indian had discovered his concealment.

Hunting was not a mere ramble in pursuit of game, in which there was nothing of skill and calculation; on the contrary the hunter, before he set out in the morning, was informed by the state of the weather in what situation he might reasonably expect to meet with his game; whether on the bottoms, sides or tops of the hills. In stormy weather the deer always seek the most sheltered places, and the leeward sides of the hills. In rainy weather, in which there is not much wind, they keep in the open woods on the highest ground.

In every situation it was requisite for the hunter to ascertain the course of the wind, so as to get the leeward of the game. This he effected by putting his finger in his mouth and holding it there until it became warm, then holding it above his head; the side which first becomes cold shows which way the wind blows.

As it was requisite, too, for the hunter to know the cardinal points, he had only to observe the trees to ascertain them. The bark of an aged tree is thicker and much rougher on the north than on the south side. The same thing may be said of the moss, it is much thicker and stronger on the north than on the south sides of the trees.

The whole business of the hunter consists of a succession of intrigues. From morning till night he was on the alert to gain the wind of his game, and approach them without being discovered. If he succeeded in killing a deer, he skinned it and hung it up out of the reach of the wolves, and immediately resumed the chase till the close of the evening, when he bent his course towards his camp; when arrived there he kindled up his fire, and together with his fellow hunter cooked his supper. The supper finished, the adventures of the day furnished the tales for the evening. The spike buck, the two and three pronged buck, the doe and barren doe, figured through their anecdotes with great advantage. It would seem that after hunting awhile on the same ground, the hunters became acquainted with nearly all the gangs of deer within their range, so as to know each flock of them when they saw them. Often some old buck, by the means of his superior sagacity and watchfulness, saved his little gang from the hunter's skill by giving timely notice of his approach. The cunning of the hunter and that of the old buck were staked against each other, and it frequently happened that at the conclusion of the hunting season the old fellow was left free, uninjured tenant of his forest; but if his rival succeeded in bringing him down, the victory was followed by no small amount of boasting on the part of the conqueror.

When the weather was not suitable for hunting, the skins and carcases of the game were brought in and disposed of.

Many of the hunters rested from their labors on the Sabbath day, some from a motive of piety; others said that whenever they hunted on Sunday they were sure to have bad luck all the rest of the week.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE WEDDING AND MODE OF LIVING.

For a long time after the first settlement of this country the inhabitants in general married young. There was no distinction of rank and very little of fortune. On these accounts the first impression of love resulted in marriage; and a family establishment cost but a little labor and nothing else. A description of a wedding from the beginning to the end will serve to show the manners of our forefathers and mark the grade of civilization which has succeeded to their rude state of society in the course of a few years.

At an early period the practice of celebrating the marriage at the house of the bride began, and it should seem with great propriety. She also has the choice of the priest to perform the ceremony.

In the first years of the settlement of this country a wedding engaged the attention of a whole neighborhood; and the frolic was anticipated by old and young with eager expectation. This is not to be wondered at, when it is told that a wedding was almost the only gathering which was not accompanied with the labor of reaping, log rolling, building a cabin, or planning some scout or campaign.

In the morning of the wedding day the groom and his attendants assembled at the house of his father for the purpose of reaching the mansion of his bride by noon, which was the usual time for celebrating the nuptials, which for certain must take place before dinner.

Let the reader imagine an assemblage of people without a store, tailor or mantuamaker within a hundred miles; and an assemblage of horses without a blacksmith or saddler within an equal distance. The gentlemen dressed in shoe packs, moccasins, leather breeches, leggins, linsey hunting shirts, and all home made. The ladies dressed in linsey petticoats and linsey or linen bed gowns, coarse shoes, stockings, handkerchiefs and buckskin

gloves, if any. If there were any buckles, rings, buttons, or ruffles, they were the relics of old times; family pieces from parents or grand parents. The horses were caparisoned with old saddles, old bridles or halters, and packsaddles, with a bag or blanket thrown over them: a rope or string as often constituted the girth as a piece of leather.

The march, in double file, was often interrupted by the narrowness and obstructions of our horse paths, as they were called, for we had no roads; and these difficulties were often increased, sometimes by the good, and sometimes by the ill will of neighbors, by felling trees and tying grape vines across the way. Sometimes an ambuscade was formed by the way side, and an unexpected discharge of several guns took place, so as to cover the wedding company with smoke. Let the reader imagine the scene which followed this discharge; the sudden spring of the horses, the shrieks of the girls, and the chivalric bustle of their partners to save them from falling. Sometimes, in spite of all that could be done to prevent it, some were thrown to the ground. If a wrist, elbow, or ankle happened to be sprained it was tied with a handkerchief, and little more was thought or said about it.

Another ceremony commonly took place before the party reached the house of the bride, after the practice of making whiskey began, which was at an early period. When the party were about a mile from the place of their destination, two young men would single out to run for the bottle; the worse the path, the more logs, brush and deep hollows the better, as these obstacles afforded an opportunity for the greater display of intrepidity and horsemanship. The English fox chase, in point of danger to the riders and their horses, is nothing to this race for the bottle. The start was announced by an Indian yell; logs, brush, muddy hollows, hill and glen, were speedily passed by the rival ponies. The bottle was always filled for the occasion, so that there was no use for judges; for the first who reached the door was presented with the prize, with which he returned in triumph to the company. On approaching them he announced his victory over his rival by a shrill whoop. At the head of the troop, he gave the bottle first to the groom and his attendants, and



then to each pair in succession to the rear of the line, giving each a dram; and then, putting the bottle in the bosom of his hunting shirt, took his station in the company.

The ceremony of the marriage preceded the dinner, which was a substantial backwoods feast of beef, pork, fowls, and sometimes venison and bear meat roasted and boiled, with plenty of potatoes, cabbage, and other vegetables. During the dinner the greatest hilarity always prevailed; although the table might be a large slab of timber, hewed out with a broad axe, supported by four sticks set in auger holes; and the furniture, some old pewter dishes and plates; the rest, wooden bowls and trenchers; a few pewter spoons, much battered about the edges, were to be seen at some tables. The rest were made of horns. If knives were scarce, the deficiency was made up by the scalping knives which were carried in sheaths suspended to the belt of the hunting shirt.

After dinner the dancing commenced, and generally lasted till the next morning. The figures of the dances were three and four handed reels, or square sets and jigs. The commencement was always a square four, which was followed by what was called jiggling it off; that is, two of the four would single out for a jig, and were followed by the remaining couple. The jigs were often accompanied with what was called cutting out; that is, when either of the parties became tired of the dance, on intimation, the place was supplied by some one of the company without any interruption of the dance. In this way a dance was often continued till the musician was heartily tired of his situation. Toward the latter part of the night, if any of the company, through weariness, attempted to conceal themselves for the purpose of sleeping, they were hunted up, paraded on the floor, and the fiddler ordered to play "Hang on till to-morrow morning."

About nine or ten o'clock a deputation of the young ladies stole off the bride and put her to bed. In doing this it frequently happened that they had to ascend a ladder instead of a pair of stairs, leading from the dining and ball room to the loft, the floor of which was made of clapboards lying loose and without nails. This ascent, one might think, would put the bride and her attendants to the blush; but as the foot of the ladder was commonly

behind the door, which was purposely opened for the occasion, and its rounds at the inner end were well hung with hunting shirts, petticoats, and other articles of clothing, the candles being on the opposite side of the house, the exit of the bride was noticed but by few. This done, a deputation of young men in like manner stole off the groom, and placed him snugly by the side of his bride. The dance still continued; and if seats happened to be scarce, which was often the case, every young man, when not engaged in the dance, was obliged to offer his lap as a seat for one of the girls; and the offer was sure to be accepted. In the midst of this hilarity the bride and groom were not forgotten. Pretty late in the night some one would remind the company that the new couple must stand in need of some refreshment; black Betty, which was the name of the bottle, was called for and sent up the ladder, but sometimes black Betty did not go alone; I have many times seen as much bread, beef, pork and cabbage sent along with her as would afford a good meal for a half dozen hungry men. The young couple were compelled to eat and drink, more or less, of whatever was offered them.

In the course of the festivity if any wanted to help himself to a dram, and the young couple to a toast, he would call out:

“Where is black Betty? I want to kiss her sweet lips.” Black Betty was soon handed to him. Then holding her up in his right hand he would say:

“Health to the groom, not forgetting myself; and here’s to the bride, thumping luck and big children.”

This, so far from being taken amiss, was considered as an expression of a very proper and friendly wish, for big children, especially sons, were of great importance; as we were few in number, and engaged in perpetual hostility with the Indians, the end of which no one could foresee. Indeed many of them seemed to suppose that war was the natural state of man, and therefore did not anticipate any conclusion of it; every big son was therefore considered as a young soldier.

But to return. It often happened that some neighbors or relations, not being asked to the wedding, took offense; and the mode of revenge adopted by them on such occasions was that of

cutting off the manes, foretops and tails of the horses of the wedding company. Another method of revenge which was adopted when the chastity of the bride was a little suspected was that of setting up a pair of horns on poles, or trees, on the route of the wedding company. This was a hint to the groom that he might expect to be complimented with a pair of horns himself.

On returning to the infare, the order of procession and the race for black Betty was the same as before. The feasting and dancing often lasted for several days, at the end of which the whole company were so exhausted with loss of sleep that several days' rest were requisite to fit them to return to their ordinary labors.

Should I be asked why I have presented this unpleasant portrait of the rude manners of our forefathers, I in my turn would ask my reader, why are you pleased with the histories of the blood and carnage of battles? Why are you delighted with the fictions of poetry, the novel and romance? I have related truth, and only truth, strange as it may seem. I have depicted a state of society and manners which are fast vanishing from the memory of man, with a view to give the youth of our country a knowledge of the advantages of civilization, and to give contentment to the aged by preventing them from saying "that former times were better than the present."

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE HOUSE WARMING.

I will proceed to state the usual manner of settling a young couple in the world.

A spot was selected on a piece of land of one of the parents, for their habitation. A day was appointed shortly after their marriage for commencing the work of building their cabin. The fatigue party consisted of choppers, whose business it was to fell the trees and cut them off at proper lengths. A man with a team for hauling them to the place, and arranging them, properly as-

sorted, at the sides and ends of the building, a carpenter, if such he might be called, whose business it was to search the woods for a proper tree for making clapboards for the roof. The tree for this purpose must be straight grained and from three to four feet in diameter. The boards were split four feet long, with a large frow, and as wide as the timber would allow. They were used without planing or shaving. Another division was employed in getting puncheons for the floor of the cabin; this was done by splitting trees, about eighteen inches in diameter, and hewing the faces of them with a broad axe. They were half the length of the floor they were intended to make. The materials for the cabin were mostly prepared on the first day and sometimes the foundation laid in the evening. The second day was allotted for the raising.

In the morning of the next day the neighbors collected for the raising. The first thing to be done was the election of four corner men, whose business it was to notch and place the logs. The rest of the company furnished them with the timbers. In the meantime the boards and puncheons were collecting for the floor and roof, so that by the time the cabin was a few rounds high the sleepers and floor began to be laid. The door was made by sawing or cutting the logs in one side so as to make an opening about three feet wide. This opening was secured by upright pieces of timber about three inches thick through which holes were bored into the ends of the logs for the purpose of pinning them fast. A similar opening, but wider, was made at the end for the chimney. This was built of logs and made large to admit of a back and jambs of stone. At the square, two end logs projected a foot or eighteen inches beyond the wall to receive the butting poles, as they were called, against which the ends of the first row of clapboards was supported. The roof was formed by making the end logs shorter until a single log formed the comb of the roof. On these logs the clapboards were placed, the ranges of them lapping some distance over those next below them and kept in their places by logs placed at proper distances upon them.

The roof and sometimes the floor were finished on the same day of the raising. A third day was commonly spent by a few

carpenters in leveling off the floor, making a clapboard door and a table. This last was made of a split slab and supported by four round legs set in auger holes. Some three-legged stools were made in the same manner. Some pins stuck in the logs at the back of the house supported some clapboards which served for shelves for the table furniture. A single fork, placed with its lower end in a hole in the floor and the upper end fastened to a joist, served for a bedstead by placing a pole in the fork with one end through a crack between the logs of the wall. This front pole was crossed by a shorter one within the fork, with its outer end through another crack. From the front pole, through a crack between the logs of the end of the house, the boards were put on which formed the bottom of the bed. Sometimes other poles were pinned to the fork a little distance above these, for the purpose of supporting the front and foot of the bed, while the walls were the supports of its back and head. A few pegs around the walls for a display of the coats of the women, and hunting shirts of the men, and two small forks or buck's horns to a joist for the rifle and shot pouch, completed the carpenter work.

In the mean time masons were at work. With the heart pieces of the timber of which the clapboards were made they made billets for chunking up the cracks between the logs of the cabin and chimney; a large bed of mortar was made for daubing up those cracks; a few stones formed the back and jambs of the chimney.

The cabin being finished, the ceremony of house warming took place before the young couple were permitted to move into it. The house warming was a dance of a whole night's continuance, made up of the relations of the bride and groom and their neighbors. On the day following the young couple took possession of their new mansion.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## LABOR AND ITS DISCOURAGEMENTS.

The necessary labors of the farms along the frontiers were performed with every danger and difficulty imaginable. The whole population of the frontiers huddled together in their little forts left the country with every appearance of a deserted region; and such would have been the opinion of a traveler concerning it, if he had not seen, here and there, some small fields of corn or other grain in a growing state.

It is easy to imagine what losses must have been sustained by our first settlers owing to this deserted state of their farms. It was not the full measure of their trouble that they risked their lives, and often lost them, in subduing the forest, and turning it into fruitful fields; but compelled to leave them in a deserted state during the summer season, a great part of the fruits of their labors was lost by this untoward circumstance. Their sheep and hogs were devoured by the wolves, panthers and bears. Horses and cattle were often let into their fields, through breaches made in their fences by the falling of trees, and frequently almost the whole of a little crop of corn was destroyed by squirrels and raccoons, so that many families, and after an hazardous and laborious spring and summer, had but little left for the comfort of the dreary winter.

The early settlers on the frontiers of this country were like Arabs of the desert of Africa, in at least two respects; every man was a soldier, and from early in the spring till late in the fall, was almost continually in arms. Their work was often carried on by parties, each one of whom had his rifle and everything else belonging to his war dress. These were deposited in some central place in the field. A sentinel was stationed on the outside of the fence, so that on the least alarm the whole company repaired to their arms, and were ready for the combat in a moment. Here, again, the rashness of some families proved a source of difficulty. Instead of joining the working parties, they went out and attended

their farms by themselves, and in case of alarm an express was sent for them, and sometimes a party of men to guard them to the fort. These families, in some instances, could boast that they had better crops, and were every way better provided for the winter than their neighbors. In other instances their temerity cost them their lives.

In military affairs, when every one concerned is left to his own will, matters are sure to be but badly managed. The whole frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia presented a succession of military camps or forts. We had military officers, that is to say, captains and colonels, but they, in many respects, were only nominally such. They could advise but not command. Those who chose to follow their advice did so to such an extent as suited their fancy or interest. Others were refractory and thereby gave much trouble. These officers would lead a scout or campaign. Those who thought proper to accompany them did so, those who did not remained at home. Public odium was the only punishment for their laziness or cowardice. There was no compulsion to the performance of military duties, and no pecuniary reward when they were performed.

It is but doing justice to the first settlers of this country to say that instances of disobedience of families and individuals to the advice of our officers were by no means numerous. The greater number cheerfully submitted to their directions with a prompt and faithful obedience.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE MECHANIC ARTS.

In giving the history of the state of the mechanic arts, as they were exercised at an early period of the settlement of this country, I shall present a people driven by necessity to perform works of mechanical skill far beyond what a person enjoying all the advantages of civilization would expect from a population placed in such destitute circumstances.

My reader will naturally ask where were their mills for grinding grain? Where their tanners for making leather? Where their smith shops for making and repairing their farming utensils? Who were their carpenters, tailors, cabinet workmen, shoemakers, and weavers? The answer is, those manufacturers did not exist, nor had they any tradesmen, who were professedly such. Every family were under the necessity of doing every thing for themselves as well as they could.

The hominy block and hand mills were in use in most of our houses. The first was made of a large block of wood about three feet long, with an excavation burned in one end, wide at the top and narrow at the bottom, so that the action of the pestle on the bottom threw the corn up to the sides toward the top of it, from whence it continually fell down into the centre. In consequence of this movement the whole mass of the grain was pretty equally subjected to the strokes of the pestle. In the fall of the year, while the Indian corn was soft, the block and pestle did very well for making meal for johnny cake and mush, but were rather slow when the corn became hard.

The sweep was sometimes used to lessen the toil of pounding grain into meal. This was a pole of some springy elastic wood, thirty feet long or more; the butt end was placed under the side of a house, or a large stump; this pole was supported by two forks, placed about one-third of its length from the butt end so as to elevate the small end about fifteen feet from the ground; to this was attached, by a large mortise, a piece of a sapling about five or six inches in diameter and eight or ten feet long. The lower end of this was shaped so as to answer for a pestle. A pin of wood was put through it at a proper height, so that two persons could work at the sweep at once. This simple machine very much lessened the labor, and expedited the work. I remember that when a boy I put up an excellent sweep at my father's. It was made of a sugar tree sapling. It was kept going almost constantly from morning till night by our neighbors for several weeks.

In the Greenbriar country, where they had a number of saltpetre caves, the first settlers made plenty of excellent gun powder by the means of these sweeps and mortars.



A machine, still more simple than the mortar and pestle, was used for making meal while the corn was too soft to be beaten. It was called a grater. This was a half circular piece of tin, perforated with a punch from the concave side, and nailed by its edges to a block of wood. The ears of corn were rubbed on the rough edges of the holes, while the meal fell through them on the board or block to which the grater was nailed, which, being in a slanting direction, discharged the meal into a cloth or bowl place for its reception. This to be sure was a slow way of making meal; but necessity has no law.

The hand mill was better than the mortar and grater. It was made of two circular stones, the lowest of which was called the bed stone, the upper one the runner. These were placed in a hoop, with a spout for discharging the meal. A staff was let into a hole in the upper surface of the runner, near the outer edge, and its upper end through a hole in a board fastened to a joist above, so that two persons could be employed in turning the mill at the same time. The grain was put into the opening in the runner by hand. These mills are still in use in Palestine, the ancient country of the Jews. To a mill of this sort our Saviour alluded, when, with reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, He said, "Two women shall be grinding at a mill, the one shall be taken and the other left." This mill is much preferable to that used at present in upper Egypt for making the dhourra bread. It is a smooth stone, placed on an inclined plane upon which the grain is spread, which is made into meal by rubbing another stone up and down upon it.

Our first water mills were of that description denominated tub mills. It consists of a perpendicular shaft, to the lower end of which an horizontal wheel of about four or five feet diameter is attached; the upper end passes through the bedstone and carries the runner, after the manner of a trundlehead. These mills were built with very little expense, and many of them answered the purpose very well.

Instead of bolting cloths, sifters were in general use. These were made of deer skins in the state of parchment, stretched over a hoop and perforated with a hot wire.

Our clothing was all of domestic manufacture. We had no other resource for clothing, and this, indeed, was a poor one. The crops of flax often failed, and the sheep were destroyed by the wolves. Linsey, which is made of flax and wool, the former the chain and the latter the filling, was the warmest and most substantial cloth we could make. Almost every house contained a loom, and almost every woman was a weaver.

Every family tanned their own leather. The tan vat was a large trough sunk to the upper edge in the ground. A quantity of bark was easily obtained every spring, in clearing and fencing the land. This, after drying, was brought in and in wet days was shaved and pounded on a block of wood, with an axe or mallet. Ashes was used in place of lime for taking off the hair. Bear's oil, hog's lard and tallow, answered the place of fish oil. The leather, to be sure, was coarse; but it was substantially good. The operation of currying was performed by a drawing knife with its edge turned, after the manner of a currying knife. The blacking for the leather was made of soot and hog's lard.

Almost every family contained its own tailors and shoemakers. Those who could not make shoes could make shoepacks. These, like moccasins, were made of a single piece of leather with the exception of a tongue piece on the top of the foot. This was about two inches broad and circular at the lower end. To this the main piece of leather was sewed, with a gathering stitch. The seam behind was like that of a moccasin. To the shoepack a sole was sometimes added. The women did the tailor work. They could all cut out and make hunting shirts, leggins and drawers.

The state of society which existed in our country at an early period of its settlement is well calculated to call into action every native mechanical genius. This happened in this country. There was, in almost every neighborhood, some one whose natural ingenuity enabled him to do many things for himself and his neighbors, far above what could have been reasonably expected. With the few tools which they brought with them into the country they certainly performed wonders. Their plows, harrows with their

wooden teeth, and sleds, were in many instances well made. Their cooper ware, which comprehended everything for holding milk and water, was generally pretty well executed. The cedar ware, by having alternately a white and red stave, was then thought beautiful. Many of their puncheon floors were very neat, their joints close and the top even and smooth. Their looms, although heavy, did very well. Those who could not exercise these mechanic arts were under the necessity of giving labor, or barter, to their neighbors in exchange for the use of them, so far as their necessities required.

An old man in my father's neighborhood had the art of turning bowls from the knots of trees, particularly those of the ash. In what way he did it, I do not know: or whether there was much mystery in his art. Be that as it may, the old man's skill was in great request as well turned wooden bowls were amongst our first rate articles of household furniture.

My brothers and myself once undertook to procure a fine suit of these bowls made of the best wood, the ash. We gathered all we could find on our father's land and took them to the artist, who was to give, as the saying was, one-half for the other. He put the knots in a branch before his door. A freshet came and swept them all away. Not one of them was ever found. This was a dreadful misfortune. Our anticipation of an elegant display of new bowls was utterly blasted in a moment, as the poor old man was not able to repair our loss, or any part of it.

My father possessed a mechanical genius of the highest order, and necessity, which is the mother of invention, occasioned the full exercise of his talents. His farming utensils were the best in the neighborhood. After making his loom, he often used it as a weaver. All the shoes belonging to the family were made by himself. He always spun his own shoe thread. Saying that no woman could spin *shoe thread* as well as he could. His cooper ware was made by himself. I have seen him make a small, neat kind of wooden ware called set work, in which the staves were all attached to the bottom of the vessel by the means of a groove cut in them by a strong clasp knife, and small chisel, before a single hoop was put on. He was sufficiently the car-

penyer to build the best kind of houses then in use, that is to say first a cabin, and afterwards the hewed log house, with a shingled roof. In his latter years he became sickly, and not being able to labor he amused himself with tolerably good imitations of cabinet work.

Not possessing sufficient health for service on the scouts, and campaigns, his duty was that of repairing the rifles of his neighbors when they needed it. In this business he manifested a high degree of ingenuity. A small depression on the surface of a stump or log and a wooden mallet were his instruments for straightening the gun barrel when crooked. Without the aid of a bow string he could discover the smallest bend in a barrel. With a bit of steel, he could make a saw for deepening the furrows, when requisite. A few shots determined whether the gun might be trusted.

Although he never had been more than six weeks at school he was nevertheless a first rate penman, and a good arithmetician. His penmanship was of great service to his neighbors in writing letters, bonds, deeds of conveyance, etc.

Young as I was, I was possessed of an art which was of great use. It was that of weaving shot-pouch straps, belts and garters. I could make my loom and weave a belt in less than one day. Having a piece of board about four feet long, an inch auger, spike gimlet, and a drawing knife, I needed no other tools or materials for making my loom. It frequently happened that my weaving proved serviceable to the family, as I often sold a belt for a day's work, or making an hundred rails. So that, although a boy, I could exchange my labor for that of a full grown person for an equal length of time.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## DISEASES AND THEIR REMEDIES.

This, amongst a rude and illiterate people, consisted mostly of specifics. As far as I can recollect them, they shall be enumerated, together with the diseases for which they were used.

The diseases of children were mostly ascribed to worms, for the expulsion of which a solution of common salt was given. The dose was always large. I well remember, having been compelled to take half a table spoon full, when quite small. To the best of my recollection it generally answered the purpose. Scrapings of pewter spoons was another remedy for the worms. This dose was also large, amounting, I should think, from twenty to forty grains. It was commonly given in sugar. Sulphate of iron, or green copperas, was a third remedy for the worms. The dose of this was also larger than we should venture to give at this time.

For burns a poultice of Indian meal was a common remedy. A poultice of scraped potatoes was also a favorite remedy with some people. Roasted turnips, made into a poultice, was used by others. Slippery elm bark was often used in the same way. I do not recollect that any internal remedy or bleeding was ever used for burns.

The croup, or what was then called the *bold hives*, was a common disease among the children, many of whom died of it. For the cure of this, the juice of roasted onions or garlic was given in large doses. Wall-ink was also a favorite remedy with many of the old ladies. For fevers, sweating was the general remedy. This was generally performed by means of a strong decoction of Virginia snake root. The dose was always very large. If a purge was used, it was about half a pint of a strong decoction of white walnut bark. This, when intended for a purge, was peeled downwards; if for a vomit, it was peeled upwards. Indian physic, or bowman root, a species of *epicacuanha* was frequently used for a vomit, and sometimes the *pocoon* or blood root.

For the bite of a rattle, or copper snake, a great variety of specifics was used. I remember when a small boy to have seen a man bitten by a rattlesnake brought into the fort on a man's back. One of the company dragged the snake after him by a forked stick fastened in its head. The body of the snake was cut into pieces of about two inches in length, split open in succession, and laid on the wound to draw out the poison, as they expressed it. When this was over, a fire was kindled up in the fort yard and the whole of the serpent burned to ashes, by way of revenge for the injury he had done. After this process was over, a large quantity of chestnut leaves was collected and boiled in a pot. The whole of the wounded man's leg and part of his thigh were placed in a piece of chestnut bark, fresh from the tree, and the decoction poured on the leg so as to run down into the pot again; after continuing this process for some time, a quantity of the boiled leaves were bound to the leg. This was repeated several times a day. The man got well; but whether owing to the treatment bestowed on his wound is not so certain.

A number of native plants were used for the cure of snake bites. Among them the white plantain held a high rank. This was boiled in milk and the decoction given the patient in large quantities. A kind of fern, which, from its resemblance to the leaves of walnut, was called walnut fern, was another remedy. A plant with fibrous roots, resembling the seneka-snake root, of a black color and a strong, but not disagreeable smell, was considered and relied on as the Indian specific for the cure of the sting of a snake. A decoction of this root was also used for the cure of colds. Another plant which very much resembles the one above mentioned, but violently poisonous, was sometimes mistaken for it and used in its place. I knew two young women who, in consequence of being bitten by rattlesnakes, used the poisonous plant instead of the other, and nearly lost their lives by the mistake. The roots were applied to their legs in the form of a poultice; the violent burning and swelling, occasioned by the inflammation, discovered the mistake in time to prevent them from taking any of the decoction, which, had they done, it would have

been instantly fatal. It was with difficulty that the part to which the poultice was applied was saved from mortification, so that the remedy was far worse than the disease.

Cupping, sucking the wound, and making deep incisions which were filled with salt and gun powder, were amongst the remedies for snake bits. It does not appear to me that any of the internal remedies used by the Indians and the first settlers of this country, were well adapted for the cure of the disease occasioned by the bite of a snake. The poison of a snake, like that of a bee or wasp, must consist of an highly concentrated and very poisonous acid, which instantly inflames the part to which it is applied. That any substance whatever can act as a specific for the decomposition of this poison seems altogether doubtful. The cure of the fever occasioned by this animal poison must be effected with reference to those general indications which are regarded in the cure of other fevers of equal force. The internal remedies alluded to, so far as I am acquainted with them, are possessed of little or no medical efficacy. They are not emetics, cathartics, or sudorifics. What then? They are harmless substances which do wonders in all those cases in which there is nothing to be done.

The truth is, the bite of a rattle or copper snake in a fleshy or tenderous part, where the blood vessels are neither numerous nor large, soon healed under any kind of treatment. But when the fangs of the serpent, which are hollow and eject the poison through an orifice near the points, penetrate a blood vessel of any considerable size, a malignant and incurable fever was generally the immediate consequence, and the patient often expired in the first paroxysm. The same observations apply to the effects of the bite of serpents when inflicted on beasts. Horses were frequently killed by them, as they were commonly bitten somewhere about the nose, in which the blood vessels are numerous and large. I once saw a horse die of the bite of a rattlesnake. The blood, for some time before he expired, exuded in great quantity through the pores of the skin.

Cattle were less frequently killed, because their noses are of a grisly texture, and less furnished with blood vessels than those of a horse. Dogs were sometimes bitten, and being naturally physicians they commonly scratched a hole in some damp place and held the wounded part in the ground till the inflammation abated. Hogs, when in tolerable order, were never hurt by them, owing to their thick subtratum of fat between the skin, muscular flesh and blood vessels. The hog generally took immediate revenge for the injury done him by instantly tearing to pieces and devouring the serpent which inflicted it.

The itch, which was a very common disease in early times, was commonly cured by an ointment made of brimstone and hog's lard.

Gun shot, and other wounds, were treated with slippery elm bark, flax seed and other such like poultices. Many lost their lives from wounds which would now be considered trifling and easily cured. The use of the lancet and other means of depletion, in the treatment of wounds, constituted no part of their cure in this country in early times.

My mother died in early life of a wound from the tread of a horse, which any person in the habit of letting blood might have cured by two or three bleedings, without any other remedy. The wound was poulticed with spikenard roots and soon terminated in an extensive mortification.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the men of the early settlers of this country were affected with the rheumatism. For relief from this disease the hunters generally slept with their feet to the fire. From this practice they certainly derived much advantage. The oil of rattlesnakes, geese, wolves, bears, raccoons, ground-hogs and polecats, was applied to swelled joints and bathed in before the fire.

The pleurisy was the only disease which was supposed to require blood letting; but in many cases a bleeder was not to be had.

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Doddridge was killed about 1777 by horses running away with a sled. Her body was buried on the Doddridge farm, but in 1824 was removed, with the remains of her husband, to Wellsburg. Mr. Doddridge was absent from home when his wife was killed. He had gone east for their salt.—(*Simpson.*)



Coughs, and pulmonary consumptions, were treated with a great variety of syrups, the principal ingredients of which were commonly spikenard and elecampane. These syrups certainly gave but little relief.

Charms and incantations were in use for the cure of many diseases. I learned, when young, the incantation in German for the cure of burns, stopping blood, for the toothache, and the charm against bullets in battle; but for the want of faith in their efficacy I never used any of them.

The erysipelas, or St. Anthony's fire, was circumscribed by the blood of a black cat. Hence there was scarcely a black cat to be seen whose ears and tail had not been frequently cropped, for a contribution of blood.

Whether the medical profession is productive of most good or harm may still be a matter of dispute with some philosophers who never saw any condition of society in which there were no physicians, and therefore could not be furnished a proper test for deciding the question. Had an unbeliever in the healing art been amongst the early inhabitants of this country, he would have been in a proper situation to witness the consequences of the want of the exercise of this art. For many years in succession there was no person who bore even the name of a doctor within a considerable distance of the residence of my father. For the honor of the medical profession, I must give it as my opinion, that many of our people perished for want of medical skill and attention.

The pleurisy was the only disease which was, in any considerable degree, understood by our people. A pain in the side called for the use of the lancet, if there was any to be had; but owing to its sparing use, the patient was apt to be left with a spitting of blood, which sometimes ended in consumption. A great number of children died of the croup. Remittent and intermittent fevers were treated with warm drinks, for the purpose of sweating. The patients were denied the use of cold water and fresh air. Many of them died. Of those who escaped, not a few died afterwards of the dropsy, or consumption; or were left with paralytic limbs. Deaths in child bed were not unfrequent. Many, no doubt, died of the bite of serpents, in consequence of an improper reliance on specifics possessed of no medical virtue.

My father died of an hepatitis, at the age of about forty-six. He had labored under this disease for thirteen years. The fever which accompanied it was called "the dumb ague," and the swelling in the region of the liver, "the ague cake." The abscess bursted and discharged a large quantity of matter which put a period to his life in about thirty hours after the commencement of the discharge.

Thus I, for one, may say, that in all human probability, I lost both my parents for want of medical aid.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### GAMES AND DIVERSIONS.

These were such as might be expected among a people who, owing to their circumstances as well as education, set a higher value on physical than on mental endowments, and on skill in hunting and bravery in war than on any polite accomplishments, or fine arts.

Amusements are, in many instances, either imitations of the business of life, or, at least, of some of its particular objects of pursuit; on the part of young men belonging to nations in a state of warfare, many amusements are regarded as preparations for the military character which they are expected to sustain in future life. Thus, the war dance of savages is a pantomime of their stratagems and horrid deeds of cruelty in war, and the exhibition prepares the minds of their young men for a participation in the bloody tragedies which they represent. Dancing, among civilized people, is regarded not only as an amusement suited to the youthful period of human life, but as a means of inducing urbanity of manners and a good personal deportment in public. Horse racing is regarded by the statesman as a preparation, in various ways, for the equestrian department of warfare; it is said that the English government never possessed a good cavalry until, by the encouragement given to public races, their

breed of horses was improved. Games, in which there is a mixture of chance and skill, are said to improve the understanding in mathematical and other calculations.

Many of the sports of the early settlers of this country were imitative of the exercises and stratagems of hunting and war. Boys were taught the use of the bow and arrow at an early age; but although they acquired considerable adroitness in the use of them, so as to kill a bird or squirrel sometimes, yet it appears to me that in the hands of the white people the bow and arrow could never be depended upon for warfare or hunting, unless made and managed in a different manner from any specimens of them which I ever saw. In ancient times the bow and arrow must have been deadly instruments in the hands of the barbarians of our country; but I much doubt whether any of the present tribes of Indians could make much use of the flint arrow heads which must have been so generally used by their forefathers.

Fire arms, wherever they can be obtained, soon put an end to the use of the bow and arrow; but independently of this circumstance, military, as well as other arts, sometimes grow out of date and vanish from the world. Many centuries have elapsed since the world has witnessed the destructive accuracy of the Benjamites in their use of the sling and stone; nor does it appear to me that a diminution in the size and strength of the aborigines of this country has occasioned a decrease of accuracy and effect in their use of the bow and arrow. From all the ancient skeletons which have come under my notice, it does not appear that this section of the globe was ever inhabited by a larger race of human beings than that which possessed it at the time of its discovery by the Europeans.

One important pastime of our boys was that of imitating the noise of every bird and beast in the woods. This faculty was not merely a pastime, but a very necessary part of education, on account of its utility in certain circumstances. The imitations of the gobbling and other sounds of wild turkeys often brought those keen eyed and ever watchful tenants of the forest within the reach of the rifle. The bleating of the fawn brought her dam to her death in the same way. The hunter often collected

a company of mopish owls to the trees about his camp, and amused himself with their hoarse screaming; his howl would raise and obtain responses from a pack of wolves, so as to inform him of their neighborhood, as well as guard him against their depredations.

This imitative faculty was sometimes requisite as a measure of precaution in war. The Indians, when scattered about in a neighborhood, often collected together by imitating turkeys by day and wolves or owls by night. In similar situations our people did the same. I have often witnessed the consternation of a whole neighborhood in consequence of a few screeches of owls. An early and correct use of this imitative faculty was considered as an indication that its possessor would become in due time a good hunter and a valiant warrior.

Throwing the tomahawk was another boyish sport, in which many acquired considerable skill. The tomahawk with its handle of a certain length will make a given number of turns in a given distance. Say in five steps it will strike with the edge, the handle downwards; at the distance of seven and a half, it will strike with the edge, the handle upwards, and so on. A little experience enabled the boy to measure the distance with his eye, when walking through the woods, and strike a tree with his tomahawk in any way he chose.

The athletic sports of running, jumping and wrestling, were the pastimes of boys, in common with the men. A well grown boy, at the age of twelve or thirteen years, was furnished with a small rifle and shot pouch. He then became a fort soldier, and had his port hole assigned him. Hunting squirrels, turkeys and raccoons soon made him expert in the use of his gun.

Dancing was the principal amusement of our young people of both sexes. Their dances, to be sure, were of the simplest forms. Three and four handed reels and jigs. Contra dances, cotillions and minuets, were unknown. I remember to have seen, once or twice, a dance which was called the Irish trot, but I have long since forgotten its figure.

Shooting at marks was a common diversion among the men, when their stock of ammunition would allow it; this, however, was far from being always the case. The present mode of shooting off hand was not then in practice. This mode was not considered as any trial of the value of a gun; nor, indeed, as much of a test of the skill of a marksman. Their shooting was from a rest, and at as great distance as the length and weight of the barrel of the gun would throw a ball on a horizontal level. Such was their regard to accuracy, in these sportive trials of their rifles, and of their own skill in the use of them, that they often put moss, or some other soft substance, on the log or stump from which they shot, for fear of having the bullet thrown from the mark, by the spring of the barrel. When the rifle was held to the side of a tree for a rest, it was pressed against it as lightly as possible, for the same reason.

Rifles of former times were different from those of modern date; few of them carried more than forty-five bullets to the pound. Bullets of less size were not thought sufficiently heavy for hunting or war.

Dramatic narrations, chiefly concerning Jack and the giant, furnished our young people with another source of amusement during their leisure hours. Many of these tales were lengthy, and embraced a considerable range of incident. Jack, always the hero of the story, after encountering many difficulties, and performing many great achievements, came off conqueror of the giant. Many of these stories were tales of knight errantry, in which some captive virgin was released from captivity and restored to her lover. These dramatic narrations concerning Jack and the giant bore a strong resemblance to the poems of Ossian, the story of the Cyclops and Ulysses, in the *Odyssey* of Homer, and the tale of the giant and Great-heart, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. They were so arranged, as to the different incidents of the narration, that they were easily committed to memory. They certainly have been handed down from generation to generation, from time immemorial. Civilization has, indeed, banished the use of those ancient tales of romantic heroism; but what then? it has substituted in their place the novel and romance.

It is thus that in every state of society the imagination of man is eternally at war with reason and truth. That fiction should be acceptable to an unenlightened people is not to be wondered at, as the treasures of truth have never been unfolded to their mind; but that a civilized people themselves should in so many instances, like barbarians, prefer the fairy regions of fiction to the august treasures of truth developed in the sciences of theology, history, natural and moral philosophy, is truly a sarcasm on human nature. It is as much as to say that it is essential to our amusement; that, for the time being, we must suspend the exercise of reason, and submit to a voluntary deception.

Singing was another, but no very common, amusement among our first settlers. Their tunes were rude enough, to be sure. Robin Hood furnished a number of our songs, the balance were mostly tragical. These last were denominated "love songs about murder;" as to cards, dice, back-gammon and other games of chance, we knew nothing about them. These are amongst the blessed gifts of civilization.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE WITCHCRAFT DELUSION.

I shall not be lengthy on this subject. The belief in witchcraft was prevalent among the early settlers of the western country. To the witch was ascribed the tremendous power of inflicting strange and incurable diseases, particularly on children, of destroying cattle by shooting them with hair balls, and a great variety of other means of destruction, of inflicting spells and curses on guns and other things, and lastly of changing men into horses, and after bridling and saddling them, riding them in full speed over hill and dale to their frolics and other places of rendezvous. More ample powers of mischief than these cannot well be imagined.

Wizards were men supposed to possess the same mischievous powers as the witches; but these were seldom exercised for bad purposes. The powers of the wizards were exercised almost exclusively for the purpose of counteracting the malevolent influences of the witches of the other sex. I have known several of those witch masters, as they were called, who made a public profession of curing the diseases inflicted by the influence of witches, and I have known respectable physicians who had no greater portion of business in the line of their profession than many of those witch masters had in theirs.

The means by which the witch was supposed to inflict diseases, curses and spells, I never could learn. They were occult sciences, which no one was supposed to understand, excepting the witch herself, and no wonder, as no such arts ever existed in any country.

The diseases of children supposed to be inflicted by witchcraft were those of the internal organs, dropsy of the brain, and the rickets. The symptoms and cure of these destructive diseases were utterly unknown in former times in this country. Diseases which could neither be accounted for nor cured were usually ascribed to some supernatural agency of a malignant kind.

For the cure of the diseases inflicted by witchcraft, the picture of the supposed witch was drawn on a stump or piece of board and shot at with a bullet containing a little bit of silver. This silver bullet transferred a painful and sometimes a mortal spell on that part of the witch corresponding with the part of the portrait struck by the bullet. Another method of cure was that of getting some of the child's water, which was closely corked up in a vial and hung up in a chimney. This complemented the witch with a strangury which lasted as long as the vial remained in the chimney. The witch had but one way of relieving herself from any spell inflicted on her in any way, which was that of borrowing something, no matter what, of the family to which the subject of the exercise of her witchcraft belonged. I have known several poor old women much surprised at being refused requests which had usually been granted without hesitation, and almost heart broken when informed of the cause of the refusal.

When cattle or dogs were supposed to be under the influence of witchcraft they were burnt in the forehead by a branding iron, or when dead burned wholly to ashes. This inflicted a spell upon the witch which could only be removed by borrowing, as above stated.

Witches were often said to milk the cows of their neighbors. This they did by fixing a new pin in a new towel for each cow intended to be milked. This towel was hung over her own door, and by the means of certain incantations the milk was extracted from the fringes of the towel after the manner of milking a cow. This happened when the cows were too poor to give much milk.

The first German glass blowers in this country drove the witches out of their furnaces by throwing living puppies into them.

The greater or less amount of belief in witchcraft, necromancy and astrology, serves to show the relative amount of philosophical science in any country. Ignorance is always associated with superstition, which, presenting an endless variety of sources of hope and fear, with regard to the good or bad fortunes of life, keep the benighted mind continually harassed with groundless, and delusive, but strong and often deeply distressing impressions of a false faith. For this disease of the mind there is no cure but that of philosophy. This science shows to the enlightened reason of man that no effect whatever can be produced in the physical world without a corresponding cause. This science announces that the death bell is but a momentary morbid motion of the ear, and the death watch the noise of a bug in the wall, and that the howling of the dog, and the croaking of the raven are but the natural languages of the beast and fowl, and no way prophetic of the death of the sick. The comet, which used to shake pestilence and war from its fiery train, is now viewed with as little emotion as the movements of Jupiter and Saturn in their respective orbits.

An eclipse of the sun, and an unusual freshet of the Tiber, shortly after the assassination of Julius Cæsar by Cassius and Brutus, threw the whole of the Roman empire into consternation. It was supposed that all the gods of heaven and earth were en-



raged and about to take revenge for the murder of the emperor; but since the science of astronomy foretells in the calendar the time and extent of the eclipse, the phenomenon is not viewed as a miraculous and portentous, but as a common and natural event.

That the pythoness and wizard of the Hebrews; the monthly soothsayers, astrologers and prognosticators of the Chaldeans, and the sybils of the Greeks and Romans, were merely mercenary impostors, there can be no doubt. To say that the pythoness and all others of her class were aided in their operations by the intervention of familiar spirits does not mend the matter, for spirits, whether good or bad, possess not the power of life and death, health and disease, with regard to man or beast. Pre-science is an incommunicable attribute of God, and therefore spirits cannot foretell future events.

The afflictions of Job, through the intervention of Satan, were miraculous. The possessions mentioned in the New Testament, in all human probability, were maniacal diseases, and if, at their cures the supposed evil spirits spoke with an audible voice, these events were also miraculous, and effected for a special purpose. But from miracles no general conclusions can be drawn with regard to the divine government of the world. The conclusion is that the powers professed to be exercised by the occult science of necromancy and other arts of divination were neither more or less than impostures.

Among the Hebrews the profession of arts of divination was thought deserving capital punishment, because the profession was of pagan origin, and of course incompatible with the profession of theism, and a theocratic form of government. These jugglers perpetrated a debasing superstition among the people. They were also swindlers, who divested their neighbors of large sums of money, and valuable presents, without an equivalent. On the ground then, of fraud alone, according to the genius of the criminal codes of ancient governments, this offense deserved capital punishment.

But is the present time better than the past with regard to a superstitious belief in occult influences? Do no traces of the polytheism of our fore-fathers remain among their Christian descendants? This inquiry must be answered in the affirmative. Should an almanac maker venture to give out the Christian calendar without a column containing the signs of the zodiac, the calendar would be condemned as being totally deficient and the whole impression would remain on his hands.

But what are these signs? They are constellations of the zodiac, that is clusters of stars, twelve in number, within and including the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. These constellations resemble the animals after which they are named. But what influence do these clusters of stars exert on the animal and the plant. Certainly none at all; and yet we are taught that the northern constellations govern the divisions of living bodies alternately from the head to the reins, and in like manner the southern from the reins to the feet. The sign then makes a skip from the feet to Aries, who again assumes the government of the head, and so on. About half of these constellations are friendly divinities and exert a salutary influence on the animal and the plant. The others are malignant in their temper, and govern only for evil purposes. They blast, during their reign, the seed sown in the earth and render medicine and operations of surgery unsuccessful.

We have read of the Hebrews worshipping the host of heaven, whenever they relapsed into idolatry, and these same constellations were the hosts of heaven which they worshipped. We, it is true, make no offering to these hosts of heaven, but we give them our faith and confidence. We hope for physical benefits from those of them whose dominion is friendly to our interests, while the reign of the malignant ones is an object of dread and painful apprehension. Let us not boast very much of our science, civilization, or even Christianity while this column of the relics of paganism still disgraces the Christian calendar.

I have made these observations with a view to discredit the remnants of superstition still existing among us. While dreams, the howling of the dog, croaking of a raven are prophetic of future

events we are not good Christians. While we are dismayed at the signs of heaven we are for the time being pagans. Life has real evils enough to contend with, without imaginary ones.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### LAW, MORALITY AND RELIGION.

In the section of the country where my father lived there was, for many years after the settlement of the country, "neither law nor gospel." Our want of legal government was owing to the uncertainty whether we belonged to the state of Virginia or Pennsylvania. The line, which at present divides the two states, was not run until some time after the conclusion of the revolutionary war. Thus it happened that during a long period of time we knew nothing of courts, lawyers, magistrates, sheriffs, or constables. Every one was therefore at liberty "to do whatever was right in his own eyes."

As this is a state of society which few of my readers have ever witnessed, I shall describe it minutely as I can, and give in detail those moral maxims which, in a great degree, answered the important purposes of municipal jurisprudence.

In the first place, let it be observed that in a sparse population, where all the members of the community are well known to each other, and especially in a time of war, where every man capable of bearing arms is considered highly valuable as a defender of his country, public opinion has its full effect and answers the purposes of legal government better than it would in a dense population, and in time of peace.

Such was the situation of our people along the frontiers of our settlements. They had no civil, military or ecclesiastical laws, at least none that were enforced, and yet "they were a law unto themselves" as to the leading obligations of our nature in all the relations in which they stood to each other. The turpitude of vice and the majesty of moral virtue were then as apparent as they are now, and they were then regarded with the same senti-

ments of aversion or respect which they inspire at the present time. Industry in working and hunting, bravery in war, candor, honesty, hospitality, and steadiness of deportment, received their full reward of public confidence among our rude forefathers, as well as among their better instructed and more polished descendants. The punishments which they inflicted upon offenders, by the imperial court of public opinion, were well adapted for the reformation of the culprit, or his expulsion from the community.

The punishment for idleness, lying, dishonesty, and ill fame generally, was that of "hating the offender out," as they expressed it. This mode of chastisement was like the *atimea* of the Greeks. It was a public expression, in various ways, of a general sentiment of indignation against such as transgressed the moral maxims of the community to which they belonged. This commonly resulted either in the reformation or banishment of the person against whom it was directed.

At house raisings, log rollings and harvest parties, every one was expected to do his duty faithfully. A person who did not perform his share of labor on these occasions was designated by the epithet of *Lawrence*, or some other title still more opprobrious; and when it came to his turn to require the like aid from his neighbors, the idler soon felt his punishment in their refusal to attend to his calls.

Although there was no legal compulsion to the performance of military duty, yet every man of full age and size was expected to do his full share of public service. If he did not do so he was "hated out as a coward." Even the want of any article of war equipments, such as ammunition, a sharp flint, a priming wire, a scalping knife or tomahawk, was thought highly disgraceful. A man who, without a reasonable cause, failed to go on a scout or campaign, when it came to his turn, met with an expression of indignation in the countenances of all his neighbors, and epithets of dishonor were fastened upon him without mercy.

Debts, which make such an uproar in civilized life, were but little known among our forefathers at the early settlement of this country. After the depreciation of the continental paper they had no money of any kind; everything purchased was paid for in

produce or labor. A good cow and calf was often the price of a bushel of alum salt. If a contract was not punctually fulfilled, the credit of the delinquent was at an end.

Any petty theft was punished with all the infamy that could be heaped on the offender. A man on a campaign stole from his comrade a cake out of the ashes in which it was baking. He was immediately named *the bread rounds*. This epithet of reproach was bandied about in this way; when he came in sight of a group of men, one of them would call "Who comes there?" Another would answer, "The bread rounds." If any one meant to be more serious about the matter, he could call out, "Who stole a cake out of the ashes?" Another replied by giving the name of the man in full; to this a third would give confirmation exclaiming, "That is true and no lie." This kind of *tongue-lashing* he was doomed to bear for the rest of the campaign, as well as for years after his return home.

If a theft was detected in any of the frontier settlements, a summary mode of punishment was always resorted to. The first settlers, as far as I knew of them, had a kind of innate or hereditary detestation of the crime of theft, in any shape or degree, and their maxim was that "a thief must be whipped." If the theft was of something of some value, a kind of jury of the neighborhood, after hearing the testimony, would condemn the culprit to Moses's law, that is, to forty stripes save one. If the theft was of some small article, the offender was doomed to carry on his back the flag of the United States, which then consisted of thirteen stripes. In either case, some able hands were selected to execute the sentence, so that the stripes were sure to be well laid on. This punishment was followed by a sentence of exile. He then was informed that he must decamp in so many days and be seen there no more on penalty of having the number of stripes doubled.

For many years after the law was put in operation in the western part of Virginia the magistrates themselves were in the habit of giving those who were brought before them on charges of small thefts the liberty of being sent to jail or taking a whipping. The latter was commonly chosen and was immediately inflicted, after which the thief was ordered to clear out.

In some instances stripes were inflicted, not for the punishment of an offense, but for the purpose of extorting a confession from suspected persons. This was the torture of our early times, and no doubt sometimes very unjustly inflicted.

If a woman was given to tattling and slandering her neighbors, she was furnished, by common consent, with a kind of patent right to say whatever she pleased without being believed. Her tongue was then said to be harmless, or to be no scandal.

With all their rudeness, these people were given to hospitality, and freely divided their rough fare with a neighbor or stranger, and would have been offended at the offer of pay. In their settlements and forts they lived, they worked, they fought and feasted, or suffered together, in cordial harmony. They were warm and constant in their friendships. On the other hand they were revengeful in their resentments. And the point of honor sometimes led to personal combats. If one man called another a liar, he was considered as having given a challenge which the person who received it must accept, or be deemed a coward, and the charge was generally answered on the spot with a blow. If the injured person was decidedly unable to fight the aggressor he might get a friend to do it for him. The same thing took place on a charge of cowardice, or any other dishonorable action; a battle must follow and the person who made the charge must fight either the person against whom he made the charge or any champion who chose to espouse his cause. Thus circumstanced, our people in early times were much more cautious of speaking evil of their neighbors than they are at present.

Sometimes pitched battles occurred in which time, place and seconds were appointed beforehand. I remember having seen one of those pitched battles in my father's fort, when a boy. One of the young men knew very well beforehand that he should get the worst of the battle, and no doubt repented the engagement to fight; but there was no getting over it. The point of honor demanded the risk of battle. He got his whipping; they then shook hands and were good friends afterwards.

The mode of single combats in those days was dangerous in the extreme; although no weapons were used, fists, teeth and feet were employed at will, but above all the detestable practice of gouging, by which eyes were sometimes put out, rendered this mode of fighting frightful indeed; it was not, however, so destructive as the stiletto of an Italian, the knife of a Spaniard, the small sword of the Frenchman, or the pistol of the American or English duelist.

Instances of seduction and bastardy did not frequently happen in our early times. I remember one instance of the former, in which the life of the man was put in jeopardy by the resentment of the family to which the girl belonged. Indeed, considering the chivalrous temper of our people, this crime could not then take place without great personal danger from the brothers or other relations of the victims of seductions, family honor being then estimated at a high rate.

I do not recollect that profane language was much more prevalent in our early times than at present.

Among the people with whom I was most conversant, there was no other vestige of the Christian religion than a faint observation of Sunday, and that merely as a day of rest for the aged, and a play day for the young. The first Christian service I ever heard was in the garrison church in Baltimore county in Maryland, where my father had sent me to school. I was then about ten years old. The appearance of the church, the windows of which were Gothic, the white surplice of the minister, and the responses in the service, overwhelmed me with surprise. Among my schoolfellows in that place, it was a matter of reproach to me that I was not baptized, and why? Because, as they said, I had no name. Such was their notion of the efficacy of baptism.