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such capacity is not the highest, still less is it the sole qualification for understanding the life of Jesus. It is no slight confirmation of the truth of the Gospels. that they have extorted from the most unfriendly and unsympathizing critics the highest praise. But Christian faith is not a matter of criticism nor of literature. Its truths are not critically and artistically, but morally and spiritually, discerned. They are remedial and restorative. They speak peace and pardon to hearts burdened with the weight of sin and sorrow. "The secret of the Lord is for them that fear Him." The life of Christ is not to be written nor understood unless by those who keep in view the purpose for which St. John tells us that he wrote his Gospel: "That we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, we might have life through His Name."

WILLIAM ANDERSON.

ART. II.—IN THE YŌSEMITÉ VALLEY.

ALREADY a week has slipped by since the beautiful May morning when I woke to find myself in the heart of these glorious mountains; and already I have learnt to feel thoroughly at home in the pleasant little wooden bungalow which is here dignified with the title of "Hotel." It stands on the brink of the calm Merced river, facing the most worshipful Yosemité Falls, in a lovely green valley, encompassed on every side by stupendous rock-walls of the whitest granite.

All arrangements here are of the simplest: everything is quite comfortable, but there is nothing fine, and it is amusing to watch the evident disappointment of some American ladies on first arriving at "The Hotel," a word which, to them, conveys only the idea of such vast palaces as those we saw in San Francisco, one of which provides sleeping accommodation for a thousand persons, and every detail is ordered on a scale of downright magnificence. As multitudes of American families avoid the troubles of housekeeping by having no "home," but only permanent apartments on one of the many flats of these huge buildings, the hotel becomes a substitute for home, and affords a standard of measurement for American ideas of things in general. No wonder that they are on so large a scale!

In comparison with these "palaces" this little wooden house may well seem simple! The main bungalow, which is surrounded by a wide veranda, has on the ground-floor, first,

a minute post-office, booking-office, and bar. Then a large dining-room, with a row of windows on each side, occupies almost the entire space, and opens at the farther end into a clean, tidy kitchen, where a Chinese cook attends to our comfort. An outside staircase leads to another wide veranda running round the upper story, which consists entirely of bedrooms. A separate wooden house stands just beyond it, also two-storied, and all divided into minute sleeping-rooms. I have chosen one of these, as it commands a splendid view of the Falls, and from the earliest dawn I can watch their dream-like loveliness in every changing effect of light; sunshine and storm alike minister to their beauty.

It must be confessed that the rooms are rough and ready, and the partitions apparently consist of sheets of brown paper, so that every word spoken in one room is heard in all the others! I am so well accustomed to this peculiarity, from long residence in the tropics (where ventilation is secured by only running partitions to within a foot of the ceiling), that it does not trouble me much, but must be somewhat startling to the unaccustomed ear, which finds itself unwillingly compelled to share the varied conversation of the inmates of neighbouring stalls!

On the opposite side of the road is the Big Tree Room, which is the public sitting-room, and takes its name from a quaint conceit, namely, that rather than fell a fine large cedar which stood in the way of the house, the sympathetic builder resolved to enclose it; so its great stem now occupies a large corner of the room! Of course it is considered a great curiosity, and all new-comers examine it with as much interest and care as if it were something quite different from all its brethren in the outer air! It certainly is rather an odd inmate for a house, though not, as its name might suggest—a Sequoia Gigantea. It stands near the great open fireplace, where in the still somewhat chilly evenings we gather round a cheery fire of pitch-pine logs, which crackle, and fizz, and splutter, as the resinous pine-knots blaze up, throwing off showers of merry red sparks. It is a real old-fashioned fireplace, with stout handirons, such as we see in old English halls. Round such a log-fire, and in such surroundings, all stiffness seems to melt away, and the various wanderers, who have spent the day exploring scenes of beauty and wonder, wax quite sympathetic as they exchange notes of the wonders they have beheld.

Beyond the Big Tree Room, half hidden among huge mossy boulders and tall pines, stands a charming little cottage, which is generally assigned to any family or party likely to remain some time. At a little distance, nestling among rocks, or overshadowed by big oaks, lies a small village of little shanties and stores, *alias* shops. There is a store in which you can buy dry

goods and clothing, on a moderate scale; a blacksmith's forge; a shop where a neat-handed German sells his beautifully-finished specimens of Californian woodwork, of his own manufacture, and walking-sticks made of the rich claret-coloured manzanita. Then there are cottages for the guides and horse-keepers, and an office for Wells Fargo's invaluable Express Company, which delivers parcels all over America (I believe I may say all over the world). There is even a telegraph office, which, I confess, I view with small affection. It seems so incongruous to have messages from the bustling outer world flashed into the heart of the great, solemn Sierras. As a matter of course, this glorious scenery attracts sundry photographers. The great Mr. Watkins, whose beautiful work first proved to the world that no word-painting could approach the reality of its loveliness, is here with a large photographic waggon. But a minor star has set up a tiny studio, where he offers to immortalize all visitors by posing them as the foreground of the Great Falls! And last, but certainly not least, the baths for ladies and for gentlemen, got up regardless of expense, and in the most luxurious style. They are a speculation which seems to pay uncommonly well, their attractions being greatly enhanced by the excellence of the iced drinks compounded at the bar of such a bright, pleasant-looking billiard-room, that I do not much wonder that the tired men (who, in the dining-room, appear in the light of strict teetotalers, as seems to be the custom at Californian *tables d'hôte*) do find strength left for evening billiards, with a running accompaniment of "brandy-cocktails," "mint juleps," and other potent combinations.

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After a long spell of fine weather, we have had three real rainy days, greatly to the misery of the tourists. I suppose the rain has accelerated the melting of the snows, for the Yōsemité and Merced rivers, which were in flood a week ago, now at the close of May, have passed all bounds, and the Merced has washed away the strong carriage bridge just above this cottage-hotel. All the flat parts of the valley are under water, so that there are broad mirror lakes in every direction, and most lovely they are; these, with the temporary spring falls, add greatly to the beauty of this grand spot, which certainly is the veriest paradise that artist ever dreamt of. No need to go in search of subjects, for they meet you at every turn, and you long for many hands, and eyes, and minds, to work a dozen sketches at a time!

But while a thousand exquisite "bits" attract the sketcher, the main attraction must ever centre around the glorious Falls, whence the valley derives its name, and which are on so vast a scale, that when you think you have left them miles behind, you

look around, and lo! they still form an important feature in the landscape. Like a true worshipper, I like to keep as much as possible within sight of this vision of beauty; so, not content with having secured a bedroom looking directly towards it, I have also taken permanent possession of a corner in the big dining-room next a window commanding a capital view, both of the Falls and of the quiet river, framed by tall poplar trees. So though "men may come, and men may go," I remain faithful to my original position, by right of being already "an old inhabitant."

To me, half the charm of the place is, that though there are now a great number of people in the valley (including some who are very pleasant), there is not the slightest occasion ever to see anyone, except at meals, and then only supposing you come in at the fixed feeding-hours, which is quite voluntary, as it is well understood that people do not come to the Sierras to be tied to regulation hours. So there is never any audible grumbling, however irregular may be the return of the wandering flock. It is a matter of wonder, how well so large an influx of summer visitors are provided for, in this remote oasis in the great rock-wilderness. Though our commissariat is never fine, it is always abundant. Good wholesome beef and mutton, milk and butter, fresh vegetables and excellent bread —all the produce of the valley, besides all manner of good things, imported from the plains, such as "canned" fruits and vegetables. A standing dish is so-called green corn (which is yellow maize, canned in its youth). It is customary here for each person to have a separate little plate for each kind of vegetable, so that each large plate is encircled by a necklace of little ones.

I am told that the pastry is capital; but I eschew it, not liking the Chinese cook's method of preparing it! I know he makes the bread in the same way, but I am compelled to ignore that! The fact is, that all Chinese bakers and washermen have but one unvarying method of damping their bread and their linen. They keep beside them a bowl of water, and with their long thin lips draw up a mouthful, which they then spurt forth in a cloud of the finest spray. Having thus damped the surface evenly, and quite to their own satisfaction, they proceed to roll their pastry, or iron their tablecloths, with admirable results. Here, as in some other matters, it does not do to pry too carefully into antecedents. Results are the main point! Some folks are so prejudiced, that they object to John Chinaman's method of getting up snowy linen, and are content to pay a far higher price to have their washing done by any other race; so that a family of half-caste Spanish washerwomen who have settled in the valley make a very good thing of

it. Bar this peculiarity, there is much to be said in favour of servants who are always ready, always obliging—at work early and late, and always trig and tidy, their hair as smooth as their calm faces; their clothes spotless.

The servants here, are a scratch team of various nations. You would wonder how so few, get through so much work, till you see how much people in this country do for themselves. For instance, to obtain such a superfluity as hot water at bed-time, I must come from my sleeping quarters beside the river, to the main bungalow; there find a candle in one place, and a jug in another, and draw for myself from the kitchen boiler. It is all very primitive; but far more to my taste than a palace hotel would be. You see so much more of life and character.

There are a great many people in the valley at this season, of all sorts and kinds, but all are in their happiest holiday frame of mind. Good temper must be infectious, for no one ever seems put out about anything, and everyone exchanges kindly greetings in this most easy, unstiff manner. Anyone who keeps entirely aloof is either set down as an Englishman, or is said to be giving himself airs. So the rapidity with which angles get rubbed off, and strangers become sociable, in this invigorating mountain region, is most remarkable.

I find that my vocabulary is rapidly becoming enriched by various phrases which strike my ear as novel, though I believe that in truth many of them are good old English, and have been retained by our American cousins in their primary sense, whereas we have departed from their old meaning. Such, for instance, is the use of the word *rare*, as applied to under-done meat. I was very much astonished, the first time I was asked, at table, whether I liked meat "rare;" and I was equally startled at hearing men come in at daybreak or at midnight and call for "lunch." But on referring to the great Dr. Johnson, as to the standard authority on all such disputed questions, I find that *lunch* simply means "a handful of food," and *rare* means raw. One thing to which I fail to attain, is the invariable custom of addressing one another as "sir," and "ma'am." And yet, I have no doubt that this is another instance in which the practice of our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers has been handed down unchanged to their descendants, and that this is really a relic of the studied courtesies of the last century. But, on the other hand, this admirable conservatism does not extend to modern language, and some of our commonest colloquial phrases convey a totally different meaning to that which we intend to express, or should wish to utter. There are also various words, not recognised by Dr. Johnson, which, though in use in the New World, as well as in the Old, express wholly different ideas. Thus, the sense of failure conveyed to the ear

of an English schoolboy by the expression "having bossed his work," or of a sportsman having made a boss-shot, would be the last thought suggested in a country where "to be boss" is to be master and superior. Apart from phrases bordering on slang, many simple adjectives convey very different ideas to what they do in England. Here, to say a person is "homely" is no praise; on the contrary, it implies personal ugliness; while to say he is "ugly" means that he is in bad temper, and the most hideous woman may be described as "lovely," to express mental charm. Then, again, "cunning" conveys no fox-like sneaking; on the contrary, it is high praise. It may be applied to a pretty bonnet, or any other attractive object; while to speak of a cunning little child does not even imply the much-esteemed sharpness, but just that it is a winsome child—the very last idea which the word would convey to English ears. The same distinction is to be observed with respect to various objects. Thus, suppose you ask for a biscuit you will be supplied with a hot-roll, and will then learn that you should have asked for "a cracker." The hungry American who calls for crackers at an English restaurant, would feel somewhat aggrieved at being supplied with jocular sugar-plums! So it is if you enter a draper's store, intending to purchase muslins, calicoes, or cottons. You find that each name means one of the others, and the shopkeepers look as if they thought you an idiot for not knowing what to ask for.

The frequent use of the word "elegant" as applied to such objects as the moon, or its light, is also somewhat startling to the unaccustomed ear, especially when preceded by the word "real." Imagine these majestic waterfalls, half revealed by the pale spiritual moonbeams, being described as "real elegant!" Far pleasanter, to our ears, is "the language quaint and olden," recalled by the use of the old Saxon terminations in such words as "gotten" and "waxen," which we retain only in the Bible and in some of the most primitive of our rural districts; as, for instance, on the Northumbrian coast, where I well remember a fisher-wife greeting me, after an absence of some years, with the exclamation: "Eh! but ye are sair waxen!"

But numerous so-called Americanisms are simply old English phrases, which were in common use in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Such are "to be mad," in the sense of being angry, and "to be sick," as used to describe any illness. What we consider the peculiarly American use of the word "guess" is sanctioned by no less authorities than Chaucer, Locke, Milton, Spenser, and Shakespeare. The latter is quoted as the authority, not only for the frequent use of "guess" in this sense, but also for that of the much-criticized Americanism "Well!"

as, for instance, in 'Richard III.' Act iv. Scene 4, where King Richard replies to Stanley in what we should call pure Yankee phraseology:

"Well, as you guess?"

It is still more startling to learn that even the verb "to skedaddle" is our own by birthright—a heritage from our Scandinavian ancestors. And while Sweden retains the original word *skuddadahl* and Denmark the kindred *skyededehl*, the milkmaids of Ayrshire and Dumfries still use the word in its old meaning; *e.g.*, "You are skedaddling all your milk." The word is to be heard in various other counties, and is even to be found in an old Irish version of the New Testament, which runs thus: "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be sgedad-ol."

After a morning of heavy rain, the sky suddenly (May 24th) brightened, and I joined a party to drive to the Bridal Veil Falls, at the entrance to the valley. They are now a grand sight—but indeed the whole expedition was beautiful. The atmosphere seemed even clearer than is its wont, the brilliant sunlight casting sharp shadows, and bringing out the rich colouring of the spring verdure. Now all the trees are bursting into leaf; each willow is a misty cloud of delicate young foliage, and the showers of white down from the cotton-wood are wafted by every breath of air, like feathery snowflakes. But the green meadows have vanished, and in their place lies a tranquil lake, calm and still, reflecting the clumps of dark pine and oak. The ordinary course of the river is only to be traced by the fringe of alders, willows, poplars, cotton-wood, and Balm of Gilead which love its banks.

There are waterfalls in all directions. Down every steep ravine they come, flashing in brightness, clouds of white vapour and rockets that seem to fall from heaven. All the water-nymphs are keeping holiday, and a thousand rainbows tremble on the columns of sparkling spray which flash in and out among the tall pines—such fine spray, that as you pass near, it soaks you unawares. These extempore falls merely flow across the main road, in sparkling rills and rivulets, but the regular falls form roaring, foaming torrents, through which even at the fords horses have considerable difficulty in passing, and the heavily-laden coaches cause their drivers some anxious moments when the waters are rushing with more than their wonted force. Loveliest of all the temporary falls is that which is now playing round the summit of El Capitan, the huge crag which guards the entrance to the valley. This ethereal foam-cloud is caught up by the wind, and borne aloft high in mid-air—a filmy veil of the finest mist, white as steam, floating above the grim rock.

On the opposite side of the valley, the so-called Bridal Veil is now a thundering cataract of surging waters, raging tumultuously, and rushing down across the valley, in a perfect network of streams, all hurrying to pay their tribute to the Merced.

Keeping well to the left of these extempore torrents, we picked our way through the pine-woods, and after a stiff scramble among the fallen rocks at the base of the crags, we reached a point whence we obtained a magnificent view of the falls, shooting past us sideways, which is always the finest aspect of a heavy fall. These rushing waters have an indescribable fascination which held us riveted, till at last, giddy with their noise and motion, and drenched with spray, we returned on our downward scramble, half envying the streams which leaped so lightly from rock to rock.

Grand as these falls now are, in flood, I thought them more graceful when they were less full. Then they really were suggestive of a gossamer veil of light and mist, woven by the fairies for the bride of the Sierras, for never was fall more exquisite than this cloud of tremulous vapour, silently swayed by every breath of air, enfolding the rock—sometimes entwining its feet, then tossed aloft as a gauze-like cloud, far above the brink, blending it with the white clouds of heaven; the rainbows playing on the spray, like the light from flashing diamonds—a cincture of gems, ever in motion.

I am becoming daily more and more enamoured of the valley (June 4th). Its grandeur impresses one more and more every day one stays in it, becoming more familiar with the endless loveliness of all its details. Moreover, I delight in its free and independent life, with abundant comfort and no stiffness; with plenty of kindly folk always ready to be friendly, if one is inclined for society, but who never think of intruding uninvited. And the valley with its surroundings is so vast, that though there are now fully two hundred people in it, including various camping-parties, and though about fifty ponies start every morning from the hotels, one may roam about from morning till night, and never meet a living soul, except perhaps a few harmless Indians. These still come in summer-time to camp in the valley, which for so many years continued to be their undiscovered sanctuary. They are few in number, and lamentably dirty, but their comical huts of rough bark, the smoke of their camp-fires, and the tall thatched towers of woven branches, in which they store acorns for winter use, form picturesque foregrounds for many a beautiful scene.

This place is an artist's paradise. I constantly come down at about five in the morning—sometimes earlier. The waiters

know my manners and customs, so they leave bread and butter and cold meat where I can find them, and, as the kitchen fire seems never to go out, and the coffee is always on the boil, whether John Chinaman is at his post or not, I forage for myself, and after a comfortable breakfast, prepare my luncheon, shoulder my sketching-gear, and start for the day, with the delightful conviction that I can work or be idle, as inclination prompts, from dawn till sunset, unmolested.

Early rising is here really no exertion, and it brings its own reward, for there is an indescribable charm in the early gloaming as it steals over the Sierras—a freshness and an exquisite purity of atmosphere which thrills through one's being, like a breath of the life celestial. If you would enjoy it to perfection, you must steal out alone, ere the glory of the starlight has paled—as I did this morning, following a devious pathway between thickets of azalea, whose heavenly fragrance perfumed the valley. Then, ascending a steep track through the pine forest, I reached a bald grey crag, commanding a glorious view of the Sierras, and of a range crested with high peaks. Thence I watched the coming of the dawn.

A pale daffodil light crept upward, and the stars faded from heaven. Then the great ghostly granite domes changed from deep purple to a cold dead white, and the far-distant snow-capped peaks stood out in glittering light, while silvery-grey mists floated upward from the canyons, as if awakening from their sleep. Here, just as in our own Highlands, a faint, chill breath of some cold current invariably heralds the day-break, and the tremulous leaves quiver, and whisper a greeting to the dawn. Suddenly, a faint flush of rosy light just tinged the highest snow-peaks, and gradually stealing downwards, overspread range beyond range; another moment, and the granite domes and the great Rock Sentinel alike blazed in the fiery glow, which deepened in colour till all the higher crags seemed aflame, while the valley still lay shrouded in purple gloom, and a great and solemn stillness brooded over all.

I spent most of the day at that grand watch-post, till the purple clouds gathering on every side, warned me of a coming storm, when I hurried down, and (wading knee-deep across a flooded rivulet) reached a cattle-shed just in time to get into its shelter, when a tremendous thunderstorm burst right overhead, followed by a rattling hailstorm, each hailstone the size of a large pea. Then the sky cleared, and the evening was radiant as the morning.

Since my arrival here, at the close of April, I have watched the magic change from winter to summer—from melting snows to sheets of flowers; and the fields of wild strawberries have

gone a step farther, and have changed from blossom to berry. I have watched the chapparel—*i.e.*, the flowery brushwood—which clothes the base of the crags, change from wintry undress to the richest summer beauty. First there came a veil of freshest spring green, and now a wealth of delicate blossoms perfume the whole air. There is the California lilac, here called "the Beauty of the Sierras,"[1] which bears thick, brush-like clusters of fragrant pale-blue blossom, consisting chiefly of stamens, with very little calyx. Then there is the buck-eye, or Californian chestnut,[2] and the blackthorn and the silvery-leaved manzanita,[3] which is a kind of arbutus, akin to the ruddy-stemmed madroña of the Low Coast Range, which is also an arbutus, with dark foliage, and rich clusters of white blossom-like tiny balls of white wax.

The madrona ranks as a first-class forest tree, occasionally attaining to a height of fifty feet, and a diameter of from six to eight feet; the bark always retains a warm chocolate colour, very pleasant among the forest greens, and in the spring-time the tree is dear to the brown honey bees, which find store of treasure in its blossoms.

But whereas the madrona, like the redwood cedars, belongs exclusively to the forest-belt which lies within the influence of the Pacific sea-fogs, this kindly manzanita flourishes throughout the State, and is the most characteristic shrub of California, where its glossy foliage and pink waxy bells meet us at every turn. It is a small shrub, but mighty in strength, for it works its way through cracks and crevices and splits the solid rock as silently but as effectually as does the frost. On the bleakest exposures where soil is scantiest, there, above all, it flourishes, and its smooth, rich, maroon-coloured bark gives a point of warm colour to the cold grey cliffs. Walking-sticks made of its curiously twisted ruddy branches find great favour with travellers. as mementoes of the valley.

It seemed like a dream of English shrubberies, when, in many a sunny nook, I came on banks of crimson ribes and white bird-cherry, and day by day watched them first bud and then burst into bloom. One shrub new to me is the dogwood,[4] a small tree, literally covered with starry blossoms, like large scentless roses, snow-white, and about three inches in diameter. But the palm of delight belongs to the enchanting thickets of most fragrant yellow azalea, not the large gorgeous blossom, but the smaller and more highly-scented pale flower, which to me is more suggestive of heavenly summer evenings than any perfume. Here it grows in dense thickets at the base of the

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[1] *Ceanothus.*
Arctostaphylos glauca.
[2] *Æsculus Californica.*
[4] *Cornus nuttallis.*

crags and among the mossy boulders, and here and there a spray of its delicate blossom overhangs the quiet river.

Wherever you turn, in the meadows or the canyons, there has sprung up a carpet of flowers of every hue in amazing profusion. It is as if all the glory which so amazed us in April on the sea-level, had been transferred to this upper world, where every valley is now flower-strewn. Sweet wild roses, blue and yellow lupines, scarlet columbines, and painter's brush, blue nimophela, purple spotted nimophela, blue larkspur, scarlet lychnis, yellow eschcoltzia, scarlet and blue frittilaria, heart's-ease, pentstemon, golden rod, maripora lilies, dandelion, blue gentian, blue-bells, phloxes, white ranunculus, yellow mimulus, marigold, and many another other lovely blossom, each add their mite of gay colouring to the perfect scene, like threads in some rich tapestry.

Every evening I carry home a handful of the loveliest to adorn my special table in the dining-room, at which the excellent American landlord takes care always to place such new arrivals as he thinks likely to prove most agreeable to me. And I am bound to say he has provided a succession of very pleasant companions, some from England, some from the Eastern States. And there is no denying that after a long day alone with the bees and the squirrels, it is cheery to find nice neighbours at dinner.

Of course everyone who comes here is on the travel. They have either been exploring South or Central America or New Zealand, or they have just arrived from India, China and Japan, or from the Eastern United States. The latter seem to consider a journey here a far more serious undertaking than a tour over the whole continent of Europe. Altogether this strange chasm in the mighty mass of granite mountains is really quite a large little world. Heads of departments, legal, military and medical, from various British colonies, stray members of foreign embassies, Oxford and Cambridge men on vacation tours, ecclesiastical authorities of all denominations, mighty hunters, actors, artists, farmers, miners, men who have lived through California's stormy days when derringers and revolvers were the lawgivers—these are but a sample of the mixed multitude who meet here, with one object in common, and who, one and all, confess that their expectations are surpassed. I know of no other "sight" save the Taj-Mahal which so invariably exceeds the fancy pictures of its pilgrims.

The worst of it is that the majority of "*bonâ fide* travellers," ignorant of the country, arrive here, having made their irrevocable plans, by the advice of coach agents, on certain cut-and-dry calculations of time, which generally assume that three days in the valley is ample allowance. So they spend

their three days, rushing from point to point, missing half the finest scenes, and then resume their dust-coats and rattle away again, with a general impression of fuss and exhaustion. An instance of such aggravating miscalculation was afforded by two English gentlemen who, being bound to catch a particular steamer at San Francisco, discovered on arriving in the valley that they had exactly two hours to remain in it, and must start by the afternoon coach. Like true Britons they devoted their short visit to a refreshing bathe in the ice-cold waters of the Merced, followed by a hasty luncheon, and then bade a regretful farewell to the scenes they would so fain have explored at leisure.

Some of these travellers have so recently left England that they bring me much welcome home news, for some prove to be old acquaintances, and others are friend's friends, a title which (however little it may mean in England) is a great reality in far countries; so that it is with true interest that, on returning to the hotel every evening, I look over the register to see who may have arrived by the three daily coaches. Very different coaches, by the way, to the extremely uncomfortable one in which we jolted all the way here, in the early spring. Now, the roads are in good order, and large luxurious open coaches rattle over the ground. I am bound to say, however, that this season has one terrible disadvantage in the clouds of dust. The wretched travellers arrive half suffocated, and looking very much as if they had walked out of flour-bags, but the flour is finely sifted granite-dust, most cutting to the eyes. As the coach draws up, out rush the waiters and other attendants, armed with feather brushes, which they apply vigorously to the heads of the new-comers, and then help to pull off their dust-coats—most necessary garments in this country.

I have been much struck by the number of ladies, both English and American, who find their way here. During eight years of very devious wanderings, I have hitherto only met one woman travelling absolutely for pleasure. Here there are many, amongst whom I am especially attracted by a very nice gentle old lady, who, at the age of sixty-eight, has taken a craving to see the world before she dies, and although her means are so small that she has to study economy at every turn, she is exploring the earth in the most systematic and plucky manner, like a second Ida Pfeiffer.

Last week the valley was invaded by a large noisy family party from Southern California, overflowing with exuberant life, which could not be quelled even by the toilsome ascent of every high point, but had to find vent in the evenings by riotous, infantile games, in which all around were urged to

join. One evening they sang prettily in chorus. Suddenly my patriotic soul was thrilled by the sound of "God save the Queen," so I drew near to listen, and heard unknown words. Wondering, I asked what they were singing. They looked amazed at such ignorance, and answered,

> "My country, 'tis of thee,
> Sweet land of liberty!'

and seemed quite astonished at my being unable to refrain from a slight expression of unsympathetic feeling at this appropriation of Britain's national air, to the "Land of the Stars and Stripes." This storming-party held the valley for a week, and then departed, saying they had had "a real good time!"

Happily, most folk seem rather hushed by the solemn beauty of the place and the awful stillness of the mountains. Boisterous merriment seems as much out of place as it would be in a grand cathedral; indeed, there are few who do not unconsciously shrink from loud mirth as almost irreverent.

On several Sundays we have had very interesting services, held in a large room,[1] by representatives of divers denominations who chance to find their way here. Curiously enough, the first was conducted by the Rev. George Müller, of the Bristol Orphanage, whose name is so familiar to English ears. It so happened that on Whit-Sunday there were in the Valley an unusual number of parsons of all manner of sects, so they agreed to hold a joint service in the Cosmopolitan Hall, where Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and a Unitarian minister gave addresses by turns, interspersed with exceedingly pretty part-singing, in the Moody and Sankey style, most of the congregation being apparently trained singers. I doubt whether a similar promiscuous gathering in England could produce as pleasant music. It struck me that this good hymn-singing seemed a great promoter of harmony among these preachers of divers denominations.

Of course the natural loveliness of this rock-girt shrine affords ample material for illustration, and the texts which naturally suggests themselves are those which draw their imagery from the mountains. "As the hills stand about Jerusalem, so standeth the Lord round about His people." "The strength of the hills is His." "The earth is full of His praise." "The Lord shall rejoice in His works." "He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness, he brought waters out of the stony rock." "Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers; the mountains saw Thee and they trembled; the overflowing of

[1] Since the above was written, a small chapel has been built in the valley.

the waters passed by." "His voice is as the sound of many waters." "Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary."

Such words as these seem fitting, as we look up to the sheer granite cliffs and massive rock-towers, gleaming in dazzling brightness against the azure sky, whence the water-floods seem to pour down in snow-white cataracts.

C. F. Gordon Cumming.

Art. III.—THOMAS BECKET, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

THE great and familiar names of history are every now and then served up to us as a new dish by historical writers. But to make the dish new and attractive there must be a piquant sauce added, and some fresh surroundings. These Mr. Froude has certainly provided in his essay on Thomas Becket in the latest volume of his "Short Studies." It is a singular coincidence that of the two brothers Froude, one should have been the first to oppose the tide of invective long poured on Becket by Protestant writers, the other should have shown himself the most elaborate writer-down of the once popular saint. We are obliged to dissent somewhat from both the brothers. It is, indeed, a patent absurdity to maintain that Becket had any true title to that saintship with which the accident of his death invested him; it is also equally unhistorical, in our view, to hold that he had no good qualities, that he was a swindler, a traitor, and a liar. According to our view, Becket was an able man, with some high aims, but of a perverse and headstrong disposition—incapable of seeing more than his own view of the question, or of believing that anyone who differed from him could have any right on his side. His temper was extremely violent. His notions of right and wrong were the notions of his age. His morality was what we describe as *positive*, not founded on principle. He held that the end justified the means, and he worked sometimes unscrupulously for what he held to be the highest end, namely, the freedom and supremacy of the Church.

Mr. Froude, as it seems to us, sometimes misstates the case against him. For instance, he appears to attribute Becket's first quarrel with the King to the claims made by him for clerical exemptions, whereas it was due simply to a secular matter—the King's attempt to make the Danegelt a govern-