

possible legs and arms, waving equally impossible banners; there were also guns, swords, pistols, horses with wonderful riders, and a multitude of curious animals not to be found described in any natural history then or now extant. So the molasses candy of the period was fashioned into baskets, hats, dolls, and manifold kinds of figures. Jumping-jacks, or "supple sawneys," were made of pasteboard, and worked their arms and legs through the medium of a cotton string. Rag doll-babies with eyes, noses, and mouths of ink were in great favor in the absence of those of wax or china; while here and there was the ever-welcome Noah's Ark with its menagerie of animals and its crew of men and women, all curiously carved out of pine-bark. Indestructible linen books for the little ones were made of pieces of cotton-cloth stitched together, on which were pasted pictures cut from old illustrated papers and magazines. Knitted gloves, suspenders, comforters, wristlets, and the like filled up the measure of the Christmas gifts.

Yet none the less gayly for the privation and distress standing so near at hand did the girls of that era trip it in the dances of the Christmas-tide with their brave soldier partners whenever opportunity offered; and none the less beautifully for the hard times did the red holly-berries of the season show from their waxen green, or the mistletoe hang overhead, in the light of the endless candles. For the

young women of the South, full of vim and life and spirit, the period of the war was in many respects a happy one. The girls and their lovers danced, as the soldiers fought, with all their might, and enjoyed it while it lasted. But with them, as with their elders, sorrows crowded on each other's heels, and the bride of yesterday was often the widow of to-day. They affected military dress, and wore brass buttons and epaulets whenever attainable. The demands of society upon them made sad havoc with many relics of earlier days which had been religiously preserved up to that time. The chests of every garret were ransacked; and morocco shoes and satin slippers of a by-gone generation, that had never tripped a livelier measure than a minuet, were held a veritable treasure-trove, and were dragged forth and danced in merrily. Many a lassie at the military "hops" showed her white arms and shoulders above the moth-eaten velvets and time-stained silks that had been worn by her young-lady grandmother.

Out of sight and hearing the hard times in the Confederacy have vanished. The recollection of them is attuned to melancholy; there is many a touch of bitter sorrow and of sharp regret in the strain; but the lapse of years has softened the once familiar air until the minor notes of joy are eloquent amidst the chords of grief.

A. C. Gordon.

THE MOUNTAINEERS ABOUT MONTEAGLE.



AMONG the first signs that the exhausted and poverty-stricken South of 1866 was neither dead nor paralyzed were her attempts to utilize certain natural resources, little valued or considered in the old easy-going antebellum days. One of the early movers along this line was a Tennessee company that opened some coal mines in the neighborhood of Monteagle, and then stretched up a daring arm from the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway, skirting the mountain's base, to their possessions on its summit. Then came the announcement that a house for summer boarders was opened near the arm's terminus.

Responding to this challenge, our party left the Nashville and Chattanooga Railway at Cowan, and from its primitive ticket-office followed a sooty train-man down the track, past several long coal-trains and into a queer

little box of a car, that had, however, its cushioned seats, its polite conductor (not yet visible), its painted tin cooler with the refreshing liquid ice-water, and its nickel-plated cup safely chained — all in grimy completeness.

Two passengers already were sharing these accommodations. One was a big-jointed, long-featured, shrewd-eyed, middle-aged man, dressed in a new suit of blue homespun, while his grave face and iron-gray hair were queerly surmounted by a small parti-colored straw hat — one of the sort oftener seen abloom on the head of some future sovereign, where its pristine freshness is wont to mark such high festivals as "the day of the big show."

On the opposite side of the aisle a small "pyeart" old lady in a brown and white calico dress, and with a large white kerchief folded about her shoulders and crossed over her bosom, sat with bared gray head by an open window.

Before we had had time to choose our seats

after the shift-for-yourself fashion of travelers, our old lady had assumed the duties of hostess and was receiving us with a cordial hospitality the like of which, I venture to say, never before had been seen in a railway car.

"Yes, thes take a seat an' set down onter this yer settle—lemme bresh off the sut an' truck, ur 't 'u'd smudge yer frock. Hit 's sorter shaddery an' cool on this side er the kyar, an' a little wind a-stirrin'. Now yer perlisse an' yer redicule ken go right up hyer, yer bonnet too, ef yer a mind ter go 'thout'n hit whilse yer a-ridin'."

Her own black splint sun-bonnet hung from a hook above her seat, a striped shawl carefully rolled in a brown paper and tied with a white cotton string lay in the rack, and on the seat beside her was a curiously braided home-made basket.

"An' you—all back there—ken retch up an' fix yoren thes the same, right 'bove yer own heads. Mighty handy they 're got it fixed off—all 'round too. Lige Tait, ez used ter work fer us an' now 's got hired ter help steer the kyars,—thes a-haftin' ter watch out, an' ter run backurds an' foruds on top, a-screwin' one ur nuther place down tight, soster hol' the wheels percizely onter their tracks,—he was a-showin' me all 'bout'n the 'rangements whilse I wair a-riden' down in this yer kyar lais week."

"Ah, then you live on this mountain. I 'm glad we have met you; because we are going to spend a little time up there. If this has been your first visit to the lower country, you must have found it interesting."

"An' so it have been, real excitin'; what with some ur nuther new piece er quar-ness, a everlastin'y a-comin' jam up agyins the one thes ahead'n it, an' the nex' a-jamin' agyins me both afore airy one could skeeter out 'n the way, so 't my min' 's in cunsider'ble er a jumble.

"Yes, I 've ended up my visit an' air now sot out on my back trip torge home. An' Square Cash there, a neighbor er our'n, ez wus a-goin' ter go an' take a journey down ter Winchester ter mind aiter some er his business, an' which bein' 't I had n't got no man-pyerson ter carry me home, he thes promust ez he 'd make out ter be ready agyins I wair, an' 'u'd inshore ter be in time before the kyars wus ter start, bein' a-aimin' ter ride back inside the kyar hissself. Square Cash knows all 'bout'n the kyars, an' 's a monstrous handy pyerson ter be along er."

But by this time 'Squire Cash hardly needed these commendations. The friendliness of his long arms and large hands in reaching racks, adjusting seats, and shading windows had convinced our young ladies that he was indeed

a handy person to be along with; and a half-concealed twinkling of his gray eyes suggested that he might be an entertaining one besides.

"You look some like yer head mout be a threat'nin' ter go an' set in fer a regler throbbin'," said this born hostess, as I leaned my head back and shut my eyes. "Lemme wet yer hankerch an' put thes a drib er sampfire—"

"Oh, no, thank you. I 'm not suffering—only a little tired."

"Well, I hyearn some valley folks a-goin' on mightily 'bout'n the mounting a-bein' a prime place fer restin'. I could n't skasely make out in my mind how folks 't did n't never haff ter do no scutlin' roun' a-yearnin' a livelihood—on 'count er bein' ez rich ez pine—could naiterly be so dreadful bad off fer a rest. But aiter stewin' roun' in that swulterin' valley fer nigh onter a week—lettin' alone fer a whole in-dyo-rin', livelong lifetime—I feel ez slimpsy ez a dish-rag. An' I hain't been a-doin' a smidgen er work, ur airy formed thing ez orter, in reason, ter tire a body; 'lessen you 'd count a little fiddlin' 'roun, aiter the victuals wus all done cooked an' et up, a-reddin' up the dishes; ur else a-blairin' er my eyes at quar sights an' amazin' er my noggins at quar doin's."

Some one suggested that she would enjoy getting back to the mountain and having a good rest.

"That 's percizely what I 'm 'lowin' ter do, ef loppin' down an' lollin' 'roun makes restin'. But I wair thes a-studyin' ter myself, Mis',—Mis'— Now, don't hit 'pyear ruther onhandy not a-knowin' no names ter call one nuther by? Mine air Mis' Larkins, Aint Bashiby Larkins, folks mostly saiz."

Here, as I am glad to remember, my sense of courtesy prompted me to give, in addition to my own, the full name of every member of our party, with some short explanatory paragraphs, biographic and historical, attached to each. These recitals called out, now and then, equally interesting items in regard to numerous friends and kinsfolk of her own.

By the time that interchange of civilities was concluded and the various bags and bundles of our party had finally settled themselves into their several "handy places," and poor little Thad, after having been hustled out of three seats and fidgeting himself out of three others, at last had got his small person satisfactorily deposited beside 'Squire Cash, our train began to move. Almost immediately we found ourselves ascending the mountain—our little car clinging to a long empty coal-train that, in its turn, held fast to the puffing, straining locomotive as, far before and above us, it climbed a zigzag track up the mountain's side. The sight was a novel one even to those

of our number who repeatedly had crossed by railway the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains, giving, as all felt, a startlingly distinct impression of *climbing*. In fact, as we watched the locomotive, first from this side and then from that, now recklessly clattering along the brow of a precipice far up to the left, and now away off to the right fairly crouching for the spring to another height, it hardly seemed to belong to the tame lowland species suited to smooth ground and a level track. It was easier to fancy it some fierce gigantic savage, as well fitted out for life in the mountain wilds as any other "varmint."

But we had not a monopoly of that sentiment, as we soon learned.

Mrs. Larkins was now sitting a little apart from any of us but near to 'Squire Cash, and as we slowed up at a water-tank we heard her voice above the lessening noise.

"I 'd never 'a' drump hit, afore I seen an' hyearn it 'ith my own eyes an' yers, ez anything 't ain't a livin', knowin' creetur could 'a' clum the mounting like that air engine do. Yer see hit a-staivin' 'long, 'thout nuther horn nur huff, a-pullin' an' a-catecornerin' this yer ways an' yander ways, so powiful knowin' 'bout'n all the steep places, hit thes puts me in mind er Uncle Peter Beans's idy — 'lowin' 't ef they warn't a live, livin' varmint shet up insides, 't wuz ez plain ter be seed ez a Jack-i-lantern 'n a dark night 'at the Ole Nick hisself hed tinkered up the patur — I reckon you hyearn 'bout'n hit, Square Cash?"

"Yes, I hyeard 'em a-tellin' er it. I ginerly listen at any jawin' 'bout what Uncle Peter Beans hes been a-sayin'; purty cute notions now an' agyin comes out er that quar ole head er his'n."

"Oh, please tell us about it — about him and what it was that he said about the locomotive," pleaded a listener.

"Well, I don't reckon 't 'u'd be skeersly time ter mighty little more 'n interjuce 'im, so ter speak, tell the train 'll start on, 'thout hit 's hendered longer 'n common," he replied.

"An' yer cain't hear yer own yers then, 'th all the hills a-boundin' er the noises all back-urds an' ever' which aways through other, like they keep a-doin'," said Mrs. Larkins. And she added, "Hit 's ruther agravatin' a-haftin' ter shet up an' be outdone that away."

But 'Squire Cash, like other good talkers, evidently appreciated an interested audience.

"Anyways," said he, "I 'm a good mind ter set in an' tell you ladies some little 'bout 'm, an' then some day ef ary y' all 'u'd jes recullec' ter put Aint Bashiby en mind er 'im she 'd be up ter tellin' a heap more."

"Yes," Mrs. Larkins agreed, "I 'll be roun' ever' wonst an' awhile ter whur y' all ul be a-

boardin' out, at a-tradin' off my butter 'n' aiggs, an' liker 'n not we 'll fall in 'long er one nuther agyin 'n' agyin."

"Ter start on," began 'Squire Cash, as he lifted his little patchwork-pattern hat from its incongruous perch and reaching down carefully balanced it on some rusty saddle-bags at his feet — "ter start on, I reckon 't Uncle Peter Beans is some different frum anybody 't you all ever seen. He lives on the fur side er this yer rainge in a little cove, purty well shet in all roun', whur they say the Beanses hes lived ever sence the Revolution — 't any rate, it 's named Beans's Cove; an' only three ur four more families lives in it. They don't neighbor much with nobody besige theirselves, — bein' so shet in like, — an' they say some er the women, an' even middlin'-sized boys, hain't never been nowhurs outsides."

"Raise their children, boys and all, shut up there that way for years an' years," interjected Thad, in a tone of deep disgust — "make them go to some little snippy sort of a Sunday-sch —"

"If they have really found a way to keep boys shut up they can make a fortune on the patent," came in a sharp treble voice from the third seat back.

But Thad's lucky head was proof against all such pop-gun missiles as that; it hardly checked his comment. I have not taxed the reader with a description of our prosaic party of "women folks"; but I have a mind to risk half a dozen lines on Thad. Not that he was in any sense a peculiar specimen of the budding American sovereign, but because — well, because he was *Thad*; and, like most other young animals, was an interesting object to watch, though not always a convenient one to have around. And a vigorous, thriving, natural young animal he was too; with, moreover, some embryonic human traits of a not unkindly sort. But his one point of distinction was his good-humor; a certain sturdy, equable, self-sufficient, and apparently self-generating buoyancy that forty times a day I looked to see collapse, and forty times a day saw rebound without the sign of a puncture. Beneficent Nature had given him a good, thick, snub-proof cuticle that (as there is scientific warrant for stating) she had specially hardened up to suit the exigencies of his environment. Perhaps it should be added that the word *environment* is intended here to refer to a family of critical older sisters who — ah, I had forgotten — who are not to be thrust upon the reader's attention, and therefore need not be described.

But to return to Thad. As I afterward found out, he had stowed away somewhere in his round head — that, like his pockets, was

an unassorted museum of queer odds and ends—a pretty correct idea of a *cave*; and at the word *cove*, that dark apparition had popped up like a Jack from his box, to symbolize before Thad's mental vision Uncle Peter Beans's place of abode—the place where they "kept boys shut up, year in and year out."

I caught only enough of his last sentence to infer that it expressed no good opinion of a set of folks who chose to keep themselves, more particularly their boys, shut up so all their lives—"keeping up a snippy little Sunday-school and everything off to themselves inside their old cove-hole, rather than let the boys out even on Sundays."

'Squire Cash looked down at him a moment, apparently conscious that he was a little hazy as to the boy's point of view, and then replied at random, addressing the ladies rather than Thad:

"No, don't reckon they hold no meetin's in the Cove, none er 'em a-bein' exhorters ur class-leaders. But the circuit-rider holds his 'p'intment jes a few miles roun' the knob, ginerly ever' four weeks; an' some er the young folks goes, pertickler when the big two-days' time comes roun'. The ole folks hain't never tuck much ter meetin'-goin'; but that's nuther here nur there, ez ter techin' on the story I 'm a-aimin' at.

"Ez fer Uncle Peter though, he's 'mazin' fond er seein' an' hearin' what-all's goin' on roun' the mount'n—jes kinder collectin' up the news an' a-sortin' it out fer the use er his settlement. Off he puts thes a-ways ur thet a-ways, whurever anythin' 's happened, an' picks out the identical fax on it, 'cordin' ter *his* judgment, an' wraps 'em up inter a snug little budget, so ter speak, an' goes a-toatin' er 'em back ter Beans's Cove, bent on makin' shore 't the Cove folks gits the raal truck ur none 't all. 'Lows thet 's what he 's spared ter 'em fer, jes ter watch out 'n they hain't befooled inter swallerin' no lies.

"Fer a good long while now he's been the oldest man-pyerson in the Cove, an' he 'lows 't the folks jest naiterly believes what he tells 'em ter an' shets their yers at all the rest. 'T ain't percizely that away, but the Cove folks thinks a cunsider'ble chance er Uncle Peter, an' never out 'n' out contends against his judgment.

"Well, now, when the word was fust tuck ter Beans's Cove 'bout what a' onaccountable, rampagin' cunsarn the company hed gone an' brung ter the mount'n, ez Ainsie Hawes saiz, Uncle Peter wus in a powiful pucker—'lowin' 'at Jim Counts, ez hed brung the word, wus everlaistin'y a-hatchin' up somepin out 'n nothin'; leastwise a-gettin' er it hine end for-must ur wrong sides outurds, so 's 't 'u'd naiterly

look quar, ef not skyeery. Not ez he reckoned 't Jim Counts p'intedly laid off ter tell sich whoppers; like 's not he 'd fooled hisself; liker too, that cimlin head er his'n a-bein' nigh er about ez green ez a gourd."

"Pretty rough on Jim Counts—like callin' 'im a fool was the best could be—"

"Now, Thad, there you go again. I'll give you a quarter to hold your tongue till we get up the mountain." And a second voice added, "Seen and not heard is the word for you, youngster. Please go on, 'Squire Cash."

"But Uncle Peter," continued 'Squire Cash, as he handed Thad a stout stick of striped candy and returned the parcel—a bulky one, some eight inches long—to the outside pocket of his blue coat; "but Uncle Peter 'lowed hit mout 'a' been wuss. S'posin' this wus week afore lais, an' his right knee ez stiff ez still-yurds, an' nigh 'n' about a-threat'nin' ter come onjinted ever' time 't wus teched, on account er that rumatiz ring roun' the moon; stidder like hit wus now, an' ever' laist one er 'em dependin' an' a-restin' easy beca'se they jedged an', in a manner, know'd 't he 'd naiterly concluded ter up an' go an' git a holt er the straight 'n it hisself.

"Fur hit warn't in reason 'at he wus a-goin' ter go an' set roun' on his hunches and see the Cove fairly et up alive wi' the oudaciouses pack er lies ez hed ever been let loose onter 'em. He 'd treed a middlin' good chance er that sort er varmints in his day an' time; an' he reckoned he 'd haf ter keep on a-trackin' 'em up an' a-reddin' 'em out ez long ez his ole laigs could waiggle. He 'd let that smarty gang ez hed befooled Jim Counts know 't the Cove hed ginerly been counted ez a-haf-in' a head ur so 'mong's 'em 't wus some better 'n a fros'-bit cimlin; an' 'at the whole settlement did n't set roun' 'ith their mouth a-hangin' open, bent on swallerin' ever'thin' 't wus dropped inter 'em. But he hoped in the name er common sense 't aiter this Jim Counts 'u'd thes set in an' lay hisself out ter naiterly harden up that sap-head er his'n, so 's never aygin whise the yeth stands still, ter git hisself inter airy nuther sech a flounder.

"So, nex' mornin', long'nough afore crowin' time, up he bounces an' 'thout a-waitin' fer nuthin' but a swig er coffee—an' Aint Prindy had ter scuttle roun' middlin' pyeart less'n she would n't er got that b'iled in time—an' a-swallerin' er one cold snack an' a-puttin' unuther 'n inter 'is pocket, out he puts fer the mines."

"Must 'ave been a pretty long ride. I wonder how far," began Thad.

"Oh, bother, we can hear you when we can't hear anything else! No, don't answer him, Mrs. Larkins; papa says every answer

you throw to Thad just knocks down half a dozen more questions." But Mrs. Larkins, leaning over towards Thad, was saying, "'I wus a walk stidder a ride, sonny. An' how fur 'u'd you count hit, Square Cash?'"

"Well," said 'Squire Cash, leaning back in a deliberative attitude, "frum eleven miles ter a right smart upurds both there an' back, 'pendin' on which a-ways he 'd 'ave went. Now the direction 't Uncle Peter mostly takes, a-follerin' the reg'lar waggin track down roun' by the two Creelses, a-skyartin' 'long the aige er Owl's Holler, an' a-crossin' er the main park er Squaw Creek someurs 'bouts the deer-lick, an' then a-b'arin' out — I don't kyeer how sharp nur how direck he 'd b'ar out, ter strike the big road 't runs all the way across clean ter Ailtemount 't 'u'd be a monstrous good thirteen miles. But ef he had jes 'ave tuck a straight shoot foruds, an' right up across the knob, an' then 'a' slainted off a leetle north-way-like frum the p'int, torge Treasyer Cove, an' frum anywhurs long o' there ter the left er that ole b'ar-walker' 'a' struck a bee-line right spang through the Big Woods, an' on inter that snaigly strip ersorter mixed chestnut timber — likely a-needin' ter lean out some little north-ways agyin jes here, so 's ter miss the jump-off 't the head er Deep Gulch, tell he 'd 'ave come out onter the mill-road sorter catecornerin' across frum the ole Damurus clearin' — why, 't would n't skursly 'a' been, lemme see," — then looking up at the top of the car with the air of one making a very nice calculation, — "'t would n't nohow 'a' been — hit *could n't* 'a' been — mighty little upurds er a bare elevin an' a half, nuther a-goin' nur a-comin'."

"But Uncle Peter 'lows 't when he 's got the day ahead er 'm he don't mind a few miles more ur less. An' the nigh cut a-bein' ruther lonesome wi' no paissin' nur repaissin', he 'd ruther take his time, an' a mighty good chance ter strike up 'long er someun wonst an' awhile on the big road — hit mout be a stranger all the way from Pelham ur Ailtemount. An' then a-comin' home he can drap in on Granny Creels, an' may-be take a cheer an' draw up fer a sup er Miss Peniny's coffee."

"Well, now, that night aiter the mornin' ez he 'd struck out fer the mines, 'long betwixt roostin' time an' candle lightin', when 't wus most time fer him ter be a-showin' 'isself, Ainse Hawes an' Jim Counts tuck it onter theirselves ter be a-startin' out a coon-huntin' 'long the waigin road 't he 'd be a-comin' by. An' what with foolin' 'long at a slow sainter, an' a-restin' ever' wonst an' awhile, they hed n't got fur tell they seen 'im a-comin'. An' ez soon ez they 'd got up nigh 'nough apart ter make out 'is looks they knowed 't he was might'ly out er kilter — a-blairin' straight

ahead'n him ez vig'rous ez a wild-cat, an' that crabbed 'at he 'd skursly let on ter nodis 'em aiter they 'd up an' told him good-evenin' jes ez swiftly an' respectin' ez they knowed how. But they tagged 'long aiter 'im, a-makin' out ez how they 'd foun' the night wus too dark fer huntin', an' ez they 'd done tuck the back track afore he come along.

"Then aiter a while they venterd ter sidle up besige 'im an' ter 'low ter 'im how 't the Cove folks wus all a-stewin', not to say a fairly a-sizzlin', ter hear what wus his concludin's 'bout that air fool cunsarn ez the company hed hatched up — ef 't wus wuth talkin' 'bout."

"Then Jim Counts says he jes' flew all ter flinders. 'Lowed he 'd never laid off ter have no kunjurin's nur kulloquin's hisself, a-lettin' alone ez ter out 'n out dealin's an' compax; an' he hed n't no call yit ter go ter mommuckin' up his brains 'bout'n them ez hed — nuther their works. But he jedged they mout 'a' kivered up their tracks (which he mout thes ez well say horns an' huffs) better 'n they hed done, ef they 'd made out ter 'a' used a few grains more sense; — ef they hed 'ave says 't wair some vig'rous varmint ez they 'd got shet up insides, a-doin' er the pullin', same ez the puffin' an' the bellerin', hed 'a' been a sensible lie. An' he hoped fer the gracious sakes they war n't airy naiterl born simple nowhurs roun' Beanses Cove ez 'u'd go ter makin' a pesterment fer theirselves 'bout'n a' onhuman cuntrivance, which he 'd resk goin' so fur ez ter jedge ez nairy single mortrel creetur ez hain't a mind ter sell out baig an' baiggin won't never see through the inerds on it — not ef they wear theirselves ter solid frazzles a-tryin'."

"Someurs 'long 'bouts here Uncle Peter stumpt 'is toes agyins one er them snaigly little saissafra sprouts, an' keeled over inter the gully. An' by the time the boys 'd got 'im hauled out an' onter 'is feet, an' the begaumin's er the mud scraped off — you see it was sorter'n a loblolly at the bottom er that gully — he 'd 'a' cooled off a cunsider'ble, an' likely begun ter skyeer hisself, less'n longer furgittin' ter be kyeerful in 'is goin's on he mout 'ave went a leetle too fur. An' so up an' at it he goes ter work a-smoothin' it up sorter this a-ways."

"Says ze, 'Not ez I wuz uther a-saissin' ur a-floutin' ur a-bemeanin' at anybody which hit 's a part er their reg'lar business, 'long er bein' onhuman thei'self an' naiterly a-havin' a' onhuman sort er sense."

"'Pintedly,' says ze, 'I hain't got nothin' agyin *him*, an' I don't aim ter never say nothin' agyin 'im; an' ef ever he wus ter go an' git riled up ter come a-slashin' agyins me, like ez how 't he blieved he owed me a spite, 't 'u'd be on the a'count er a misonderstandin' 'bout'n who I was a-aimin' at.'"

Here a brakeman came up to speak with 'Squire Cash; but Mrs. Larkins chinked up the opening made by this break in the story to good advantage.

She said, "Uncle Peter is powiful skyeery 'bout gittin' the Ole Un sot agyins 'im, an' takes a heap er pains, mostly, ter keep on the good side er 'im; stidder blamin' er meanesses onter him ur a-callin' 'im by bad names sich ez Ole Harry, Ole Scratch, an' the like ez 'u'd gyin him a spite."

"'An' what 's more,'" said 'Squire Cash, going on with his quotation from Uncle Peter,— "'What 's more, 't ain't in reason ez anybody orter blame 'im fer his dealin's 'long er them ez banterers 'im ter trade that away.

"'But hit 's a 'mazin' mean trick er them banterers; aiter he 's went an' made a' up-an'-down square bargain with 'em, an' a-goin' right straight 'long in 'is dealin's, he 's went on ter fix up a' onaccountable cuntrivance fer 'em,—leastwise he 's tinkered up all hits main p'int,—an' then they thes ups an' goes ter flairin' er theirselves all over the top side er creation, a-paradin' roun' an' a-showin' off the cunsarn, an' actilly a-goin' so fur ez ter p'intedly claim the credit on it; a lettin' on like 't they thes naiterly studied it all up theirselves an' hatched the whole cunsarn bodacious out'n the insides er their own heads.

"'Well, I wus deturmd ter not go ter startin' up no jowerin's 'long er 'em, which they 'd 'a' bin the whole tribe ter 'a' j'ined in on me, besige er havin' er their dealin's an' their compax ter back 'em up. But 'thout a-purtendin' ur a-lettin' on ter counterdick 'em, I thes up an' 'lowed ter the feller ez hed done the main chance er the praincin' roun', how 't them all was mighty fine p'inters fer showin' off an' like 's not they growed naiterl ez chinkipins whur that cuntrivance wus hatched up, but how ez I 'd hycarn tell 't outsiders had ter do some monsturs tall tradin' afore they 'd git a holt er 'em.

"'What sorter p'inters you a-meanin'?' sez ze.

"'Now ef I had n't 'ave kep' a' oncommon gripe onter ever' lais one er my seven senses I 'd 'a' actilly 'a' b'ilt over at 'is imperdence — a-upin' an' a-aixin' er me what sorter p'inters I wus a-meanin', right spang in the face er that air 'dacious piece er quarness, a-tearin' up the very yeth 'ith its fire an' its smoke an' its bellerin's, an' its stavin' 'long 'ith the wheels all a-whirlin' 'thout nuthin' a-pullin' nur nuthin' a-pushin', an' that air one termenjus quar-lookin' eye a-stairin' straight ahead, an' which them ez hes seed hit fer theirselves ull swor' afore the magister how ez hit ups an' blazes out like the moon afire ever' dark night.

"'But you all take nodis now who I 'm a-

lettin' out at. Ez I wus a-sayin', I don't aim no saissin's nur floutin's nur bemeanin's at the one ez orter git the credit er the job. An' which I 'm a-layin' off ter allus stand up p'intedly fer 'im, bein' 't he hain't never done me no harm an' I hain't never knowed him ter meddle 'ith nobody ez did n't fust meddle 'ith him — uther a-banterin' ur a-agravatin' er him.'

"'Now, don't you ladies say 't Uncle Peter 's got a right cute ole head er his own, an' watches out middlin' sharp? Some ruther makes fun er 'is doctrine techin' the Ole Scratch an' 'is works, but fer all that hit 's a doctrine ez hes some mighty good p'inters,'" concluded 'Squire Cash with immovable gravity of features as he went toward the door, "a-bein' fer one thing powiful handy 'bout gittin' roun' pesterments. Why, it styeers Uncle Peter clean apaist a whole raift-load er de-fic-ulties ez a plenty er folks flounders at."

"'How? Please tell' — But by this time he was out, and soon we saw him taking long strides up the curving track on which stood our train, while Thad's short legs close behind "had to waggle themselves like everything," as he afterward expressed it. Some one suggested that they might be left, that it must be about time for our train to start.

"'No, I don't reckon it can start on yit awhile,'" replied Mrs. Larkins. "Lige Tait was a-tellin' Square Cash how 't some kyars ahead'n us hed got off'n their tracks, an' he counted 't 'u'd be a right smart while afore our'n could budge."

After a while one of our party expressed the belief that 'Squire Cash had been playing on our credulity, that he had made up that whole story as he went, and appealed to Mrs. Larkins: "Do you think Uncle Peter Beans or anybody else believed such things?"

"'Tubbe shore, tubbe shore,'" said she; "some does. A men-yer and a men-yer one is sorter skittish an' skyeery like 'bout'n haints an' signs an' so on. But mighty few has it all studied up an' fixed out reg'lar in their minds like Uncle Peter does." Then, in a very gentle and dispassionate but mildly argumentative tone she added:

"'But hit 'pears ter me, hit shorely 'pears ter me, ef I wair a-goin' ter haf ter go an' swaller any sich doctrun, I'd ruther take it all strung tergether in Uncle Peter's way, so 's 't 'u'd look some like sense, ur leastwise like hit aimed ter be sense, nur thes ter take up wi' snips an' patches er quarness which even Uncle Peter hissself would n't pertend ez they hed a grain er sense ur reason ter 'em — like a-bein' skyeered at a rabbit a-crossin' yer track, ur afyerd ter eat if they happens ter be thirteen, an' a-das-entin' ter begin no jobs on Friday, an' a 'lowin' 't which away they see the moon over one ur



UNCLE PETER BEANS.

er t' other shoulder ull have a heap ter do 'long which an' t' other a-happnin' that month. But lawsy ter massy, yer mout thes ez well argy at the man in the moon, 'gyinst sailin' roun' nights, ez ter waste yer breath on them ez takes up er sich notions.

"I hain't a-pes't'rin' my noggin nuthin' much 'bout'n 'em; they ken swaller hit in snips an' patches, ef they 'd ruther, fer all er me.

"An' Uncle Peter, he ken count ez they thes got the main p'int er that air engine 'long er their kulloquin's; ur he ken hold ez 't wair out 'n' out tradin' an' a-signin' over er their-selves ez bought hit all done tinkered up an' topped off,—primed an' triggered fer a-runnin' up hill ur down,—ur them ez wants ter ken 'low 't they 's a vig'rous varmint shet up in-sides, an' they won't none er 'em git up no jowerin's 'long er me.

"I 'll thes go 's fur ez ter say, ef 't ain't a-livin' an' a-knowin', hit 's shorely a-bein' an' a-doin', like that valley school-keepin' woman has it in her rigmarole over 'n' over agyin. An' hit 's bein' an' doin' suits me middlin' well, 's 'long

ez it 's a-hisetin' we all out'n that air br'ilin' valley. Blazes, jes ter think er all them nigger folks a-slatherin' roun' through the sun, an' the sweat a fairly sizzlin' out'n 'em, an' that mop er swunged wool atop er their heads—you 'd 'a' thought they wus naiterly boun' ter swulter. But they kep' ez pycart ez crickets, a laughin' an' a-jawin' ter one nuther like they felt ez cool ez a kercumber. Quar, though, ter see their heads all swunged up thet away 'thout a-bein' burnt so 's ter blister."

"I don't understand about their being singed," said I, with vague thoughts of an accident floating through my brain. But in another half-minute these had given place to an idea that proved to be nearer the truth.

"Had you not seen negroes before, Mrs. Larkins, and don't you know their hair is naturally different from ours—woolly?"

"Yes, I 'd hycarn how 't their heads was kivered with wool 'stidder raal hair. But what I tuck pertickler nodis at, wus it all a-bein' scorched inter crisps, like evum black wool would n't naiterly be.

Did n't you all see none er their heads 't showed ez they 'd been swunged sense the hot weather come on?"

"No, we did n't think of such a thing."

"Well, 't looked quar. But now I mind how dreadful quick any yarn truck ull ketch a scorch,—'nough sight quicker 'n cotton ur flax, airy one,—'t ain't no wonder 't their heads 'u'd be more ur less swunged. Some er 'em wus a heap sight wuss 'n yuthers. Two ur three boys 't I seed hed got sich a scorchin'—may be longer bein' kyeerless an' goin' 'thout'n their hats over 'n' over agyin—'t was swunged clear down ter the roots, an' that brickly 't nigh 'n' about ever' laist smidgen on it wus breshed off tell their heads wus positive naked, 'less'n thes now an' agyin little sindery streaks an' spots lef'. Looked some like an ole field aiter hit 's been blazed over in a dry spell; which y' all know how 't 'u'd be mostly all burnt off plum down ter the yeth, and thes wonst an' awhile little black patches er scorched up stubble a-showin'."

At last I remembered having seen heads that looked just that way; and I was almost

afraid of seeming stupid in not having thought of the sun's singeing them as the cause.

"There they come — yes, that 's 'Squire Cash leading the way; and there 's Thad at his heels. Of course Thad kept within question range. Now our train 'll start."

"Well," commented Mrs. Larkins, "hit 's time, I judge. No, my patience ain't wore out, but hit 's a-beginnin' ter frey roun' the aiges. I never staid away from home but two nights hand runnin' afore; an' now 't I 've been a-jaintin' better 'n a week, I feel tolible keen ter git back. Besige, I 'd like the smell er some coffee."

"We might have got a cup of coffee at Cowan, if we had thought of being detained," said I.

"Well, fer my part I thes ez leve 'a' waited ez er drunk any er their'n — liver, too, I allow. Nuthin' 'u'd do Lige Tait ez soon ez we got inter Cowan the day I rid down in this kyar, but he must put right out an' borry a cup an' saisser an' fetch me some coffee from the tavern. Flattish truck Lige said he 'lowed 't wair afore he brung hit, but I reckoned ter 'im they was different fashions fer coffee, an' like 's not them ez follered that 'n' 'u'd count our'n sorter out'n date. An' I forced down a cun-sider'ble on it, 'long er my snack, aiter Lige 'd went on an' laid 't all off ter me, how 't I 'd haf ter thes set in an' set roun' the whole indyorin' day a-waitin' an' a-waitin' fer the carryall 't hauls folks backurds an' foruds ter Winchester, besige it a-bein' that ag'ravatin' ter be hendered so, an' 't I wair boun' ter be wore threadbare. But threadbare hain't no name fer it, Miss R——; I wair plum frazzled out. Hafin' ter work goes mighty agyins the grain sometimes, but 'tain't a circumstance ter hafin' ter do nothin'. Hit 's a positive fac', I 'd a-gyin a purty fer evum a little knittin' ter piddle at."

"Well, I reckon y' all are jest about tired out, but we 'll get off dreckly now," said 'Squire Cash, coming in.

One of our young ladies reminded him that he had treated us rather badly in breaking off just where he did — that if Uncle Peter's way was such a good one, we wanted to hear its advantages explained.

"Lemme see now; whurabouts was I? Why, yes, now I ricollect. I orter 'a' p'inted out the advantages, ef y'all don't see 'em a'ready. But 't won't take you ladies more 'n seven secunts ter see the sense er the main p'int ef you could wonst git a good look at it."

"Pore little creetur, he 's all frazzled out," said Mrs. Larkins. "See how his head 's a-doddlin'."

Then it was a sight worth seeing when 'Squire Cash gently lowered Thad's limber-

necked head (with forehead drawn into a mimic frown and sunburnt nose thickly be-studded with small beads of perspiration) to a shawl-strap bundle and lifted his dusty, dangling little feet to the seat.

As he reseated himself on the other side of the aisle he began, "'T won't take you ladies more 'n seven secunts —" But the clatter of our train now in motion drowned his voice.

Talking, or rather hearing, being now impossible, all gave themselves up to enjoyment of the surrounding scene. In the shadowy solemnity of the mountain forest, the many colored wild-flowers, the long tendrils swaying from precipitous gray cliffs, even the clumps of azaleas here and there bursting into bloom, seemed, not gay, but tender and hallowed, like decorations in a cathedral.

As we rose higher and higher, now and then where the craggy cliffs receded a friendly opening in the forest permitted us to look far out across an illuminated sea of shimmering, silvery air that rolled in enchanted billows over all the lower world; or down through its blue-gray depths to where, pictured in miniature, lay the farms and hamlets, orchards and gardens, dark woods, and golden harvest fields of the wide-spreading valley. 'Squire Cash now had taken a stand on the platform. But Lige Tait (as we had come mentally to name our silent brakeman) signaled us to be on the lookout before coming to each of these openings. Then with the non-committal face and manner that are the common heritage of so many of his race, his pathetic eyes would watch our faces while we gazed. But he heard all comments and admiring explanations with a grave silence that seemed to say: "It is just as it always has been and always will be. It will do you good to see it, and you are welcome to the sight; but your praise is not needed."

As our car ran very slowly past the largest of these forest windows, and all silently drank in the wonderful beauty, Aunt Bashiby's strong face grew soft below the scanty gray hair that a breeze was slightly stirring, and after a long-drawn breath she said:

"Hit 's a beautiful sight to see. Don't look like they orter be anybody uther a-frettin' er theirselves ur a-bein' mean ter one nuther an' a-livin' in sich a world. An' the mounting shows grand from the valley too. I wush you could see hit, Miss R——, frum Clarinda's back door. Powiful diffurnt, tubbe shore; but 't 'u'd puzzle a body ter say 't airy one 's better 'n t' other."

"Makes me think er folks, Aint Bashiby," said 'Squire Cash, taking his seat, "how they hain't obligated ter be all ezackly alike ur else they won't be the right sort, 'cordin' ter what



MR. CASH AND AUNT BASHIBY.

some 'pears ter reckon. Fur 's I ken see, I jedge they 's sever'l right sorts same ez they 's sever'l wrong sorts."

"Well," said Aunt Bashiby, after a pause, "I never studied 'bout'n hit that away afore; but they 's a heap er sorts er most ever'thin', animal creeters, an' varmints, an' trees, an' gyarden truck; an' one tree ur one creeter a-bein' one way, an' the nex' tree ur the nex' creeter thes t'other way, hain't no sorter sign 't airy one er 'em ain't percizely like hit orter be."

This mountain-top scenery is a curious mixture; wide forests, level as a prairie, and long, sloping hills that stretch out to the sun, being as characteristic of the region as are its beetling cliffs and craggy chasms. One can easily fancy these level forests and sunny slopes to be remnants of booty, captured in titanic maraudings from the quiet valley below—in that dim past of "far-off, wild, and lawless times, when tempting plunder did warrant pillage."

Now we are in the heart of one of these captured forests. In a solitude that seems primeval it stretches away on every hand, and— But our train is stopping; and I hear Mrs. Larkins saying, "Shore 'nough, Jimsy an' the naig 's a-waitin'."

Looking out we see a sedate little horse accoutered in an ancient side-saddle and bestrode by a small barefoot, shirt-sleeved laddie; the last descriptive compound being literal, so far as the little blue cotton shirt is allowed any visible part in the costume. That primary garment is suppressed, and territory belonging to the absent "wescut" overrun by a coalition of forces, some transversely striped "galluses" of surprising width having made common cause with the small, high-shouldered butternut trowsers for the conquest.

The setting sun is sending a few long, level shafts through the tree-tops as from our slowly moving train we watch them down a narrow road into the forest. 'Squire Cash is striding ahead and the solemn little "naig" circumspectly following, with Mrs. Larkins sitting very erect, while Jimsy's queer little figure is outlined on her back like an immense fancy buckle clasping the blue girdle of his arms about her waist.

As the quaint figures disappear, I try to picture the little homes with the peach-trees about them. But my imagination fails to evoke any sort of human habitation from the darkening depths of the forest.

Martha Colyar Rosebord.