

Emigrants & Lost Tribes 1820

*Selections from Letters Written During a tour through
The United States
In the Summer and Autumn of 1819 ;
Illustrative of
The Character of The Native Indians,
And of Their Descent from
The Lost Ten Tribes of Israel ;
As well as descriptive of
The Present Situation and
Suffering of Emigrants
And of The
Soil and State of Agriculture.*

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E. Howitt.

“ Let it be enquired, whether the first intention of those who are fluttering ; on the wing, and collecting a flock that they may take their flight, be to attain good or to avoid evil.”

JOHNSON.

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ADVERTISEMENT

THE numerous publications of American travels, within these few years, seem to supersede the necessity of any addition to their number ; and, were it not for the most important considerations, arising out of the present relative circumstances of this country and of the United States, they certainly would do so. But, when the fates of thousands of our countrymen are, in a great measure, dependant upon the nature of the intelligence they receive thence, no man can blamelessly withhold that information which he deems at once important and imperfectly diffused : and no information which is true, can be superfluous.

Some remarks of Dr. S. Johnson, in his Tour to the Hebrides, appear to him particularly applicable to the present causes and consequences of American emigration.

“ Those who have obtained grants of American lands, have, as is well known, invited settlers from all quarters of the globe. Whether the mischiefs of emigration were immediately perceived, may be justly questioned. They who went first, were probably such as could best be spared ; but the accounts sent by the earliest adventurers, whether true or false, inclined many to follow them ; and whole neighbourhoods formed parties for removal : so that departure from their native country is no longer exile. He that goes thus accompanied, carries with him all that makes life pleasant. He sits down surrounded by his kindred and friends ; they carry with them their language, their opinions, their popular songs and hereditary merriment : they change nothing but their place of abode, and of that change they perceive the benefit.

“ This is the real effect of emigration, if those that go away together settle on the same spot, and preserve their ancient union. But some relate, that these adventurous visitants of unknown regions, after a voyage passed in dreams of plenty and felicity, are dispersed at last upon a sylvan wilderness, where their first years must be spent in toil, to clear the ground, which is afterwards to be tilled ; and that the whole effect of their undertaking is only more fatigue and equal scarcity.

“ Some method to stop this epidemic desire of wandering, which spreads its contagion from valley to valley, deserves to be sought with great diligence.

“ Let it be enquired, whether the first intention of those who are fluttering on the wing, and collecting a flock, that they may take their flight, be to attain good or to avoid evil. If they are dissatisfied with that part of the globe which their birth has allotted them, and resolve not to live without the pleasures of happier climates ; if they long for bright suns, and calm skies, and flowery fields, and fragrant gardens, I know not by what eloquence they can be persuaded, or by what offers they can be hired to stay.

“ But if they are driven from their native country by positive evils, and disgusted by ill treatment, real or imaginary, it were fit to remove their grievances, and quiet their resentment : since, if they have been hitherto undutiful subjects, they will not much mend their principles by American conversation.

“ To hinder insurrection by driving away the people, and to govern peaceably by having no subjects, is an expedient that argues no great profundity of politics. To soften the obdurate, to convince the mistaken,—to mollify the resentful,—are worthy of a statesman ; but it affords a legislator little self-applause, to consider that where there was formerly an insurrection there is now a wilderness.”

On the subject of emigration, he has only to observe in conclusion, that he is aware that it has led him to state circumstances, and sketch features of society, which may by some be deemed as charged with a tendency to excite feelings of resentment and animosity in the minds of Americans. He can alone avow, that he regards strictures of that nature, wantonly made, as deserving the utmost reprehension ; and if it has fallen to his lot to touch upon matters which could not be read, beyond the Atlantic, with the most perfect equanimity of temper, he has done it with a reluctance which nothing but the most solemn regard to truth, and the most anxious wishes for the welfare of those who may hereafter be affected by them, could overcome. His object has been, whenever such topics have occurred, to give those proposing to emigrate, a correct idea of things which they would inevitably meet with. And he would wish it to be distinctly understood, that the bulk of his remarks apply to that range of society which occupies newly-settled tracks. But settlers themselves may be supposed as speaking with greater impartiality than a mere passing traveller, he therefore gives the following extract of a letter from an acquaintance.

“ On my arrival in America, my spirits were exceedingly depressed by the bad news I heard on all sides, respecting the back country ; however, I pushed forward, and have no reason to repent.—I arrived at Birkbeck’s settlement on the 11th of September, and purchased land in a few days ; but the boys I brought with me have occasioned me a great deal of trouble and uneasiness. The one I engaged on my passage, I was obliged quickly to discharge,—and the one I brought with me from England, and whom I thought nothing would have induced to leave me, has turned out the most hardened, wicked wretch imaginable. We are surrounded by numbers of back woods-men, whom Birkbeck truly calls “ Half savage hunters :” these he has left my cabin, in my absence, to join; wishing myself, his father,

mother, brother, and all Englishmen, the most hearty curses ; declaring he was in a free country, where he could plunder and do as he pleased : for, the back-woodsmen have a strange notion, that they are too strong for the law, except in cases of money transactions. You hear of desperate characters in London ; but these men beat them hollow, in all species of crime. These are the men with whom Henry has associated himself, and particularly with a young but most desperate character, who fancies himself freed from all moral obligations. He has espoused Henry's cause, and set the whole tribe of hunters in hostility against me. I have every reason to believe they have killed one of my horses, and that Henry is lurking about my plantation, to destroy the other. The reasons he alledged for leaving me were,—that I had teased him with learning him to read and write, and reproved him for getting intoxicated ; which they teach him are intolerable insults. It has been added, that I have beaten him ; but every one, acquainted with this country, knows I dare not have touched a hair of his head : for children, from the age of six, are taught to resent such an injury with a *stab*,—and are seldom seen here without a knife for this purpose.

That word LIBERTY, but which I call LICENTIOUSNESS, is a curse to this country. Here, children of six and seven years old, set their parents at defiance, and are supported in their rebellion by their neighbours. This State represents a melancholy picture of human depravity : parents encouraging their children in vice,—and children threatening their parents, like dogs. Law and order are odious to them.

“ In all new States, there is a code of laws ; but it takes some years to put them in force,—and these characters, too strong for the gallows and the whipping-post, indulge themselves in the most horrible crimes. I have mortally offended them, by reprobating some of their evil propensities, and not permitting them to come to my house, to get drunk. Last winter but one, they shot twice at an Englishman, in his own house, for such a refusal ; and one of the very men has since been made a magistrate :—*a murderer made a magistrate !*

“ Last Christmas, I expected the same fate ; but I stood all day in the defensive, and I believe the number of my arms deterred them. They, however, denounce my destruction, and that of my cattle, which I expect going first,—and, for myself, I have been under the necessity of lying during the night with my arms by me, and my sword in my hand, for a long time together. I am five miles from Birkbeck, and therefore out of the reach of immediate assistance. My situation you will think a desperate one,—and you must not be surprised to hear that they have shot me, or I some of them.

“ As our settlement increases, how ever, this nuisance will cease : for these fellows retire before the advance of population, with the rest of the noxious animals. To my face, they are very civil, when it serves their interest : for I am their lawyer and doctor, and have given them every assistance in my power, on all occasions, without charge ; but they are men with no ideas of gratitude,— the Indians and wild beasts are far before them.”

j. c.

*Wanborough, (English Settlement,)
State of Illinois, 11th Jan. 1820.*

With respect to the origin of the Indians, it is unnecessary to say more here, than that the author has merely wished to excite a desire in those into whose hands this work may fall, to examine the question at large, in the able work whence he has drawn the principal extracts on that subject.

Mansfield, 8th month, 10th, 1820,

LETTER I.

CROSS from Liverpool to Dublin.—Voyage from Dublin to New York.—Feelings on leaving land.—Ship scenery in a gale.—The fine effects of a vessel passing in mid-ocean.—Visit to a French vessel.—Appearance of land, and first impressions.—American museum.—Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, in New York.—Elias Hicks.—Preparations for a journey to Susquehanna County.—Impositions on emigrants.

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LETTERS FROM AMERICA.

LETTER I.

New York, 5th mo. 28th, 1819.

YOU have no doubt thought it very long before you heard from us ; and I can assure you we have been as anxious to communicate to you the knowledge of our safe arrival. No earlier opportunity has how ever occurred, and we now hasten to assure you of our health and safety, and to give some passing account of our proceedings to this time. On the 1st of the 4th month we crossed over from Liverpool to Dublin, and having terminated our concerns there, we finally embarked on the 11th on board the *Hibernia*, Captain Walteling, for New York, having directed my goods to be shipped for Philadelphia. We had on board about 30 passengers in the steerage, and in the cabin one female and ourselves. For the first few days our voyage was delightful, at least to such as were exempt from sickness ; the novelty of the scenes around us, the view of the retiring Irish shores, the wide expanse of waters ruffled by the rising gale, and the porpoise sporting amongst its billows, absorbed the attention of us who were little acquainted with the sea, and doubt less contributed to soften the asperity of many a tender and melancholy feeling in the hearts of those, whom disappointment, distress, or the wild spirit of curiosity and adventure were leading to the Great Western Wilderness. This pleasant scene was quickly succeeded by a violent gale of wind, which shewed us a mixture of the terribly sublime and comical, inconceivable except to a spectator. The reeling and tumbling of the vessel—the waves dashing over the fore-castle—the tremendous thunder of the sea along the sides of the ship—the shrieks of the passengers and the indifference of the seamen—taught us in a moment the terrible majesty of a storm. Below were as many sources of the ludicrous as above of the sublime. Every thing moveable in agitation or topsy-turvey ; men staggering, tumbling, catching hold of one another, or of any thing next ; sickness, curses, scalding with spilt soup, and a set of figures and faces in noble style for the droll painter. This was the prelude to the rough passage which the sailors predicted as we advanced into the Atlantic from the birds of old Mother Carey. These birds, which are a curiosity in Natural History, are said never to be seen near land. The sailors seem to regard them with superstitious reverence, believing like the fabled *Halcyon*, they build upon the waves, and ride there the certain oracles of storms. The predictions of the seamen however proved too true, for we had a most turbulent passage, the Captain declaring he had crost the Atlantic 20 times in Winter, but never had a passage like this.

We had however some intervals of fine weather and festivity, and now and then an opportunity of observing in the passing of a distant vessel, how much the abstraction of general objects, adds to those that remain. A noble vessel sailing out of harbour is a magnificent object. But the same vessel beheld in the mighty solitude of mid-ocean, when the eye meets nothing besides, but the vast canopy of heaven stretched over the immense monotony of waters, assumes a magic beauty and grandeur to be imagined and felt only in such a situation. The associations in the minds of the passengers, swell their feelings to enthusiasm.

The two vessels pass like the sole objects in a wide creation. The thoughts of the land whence they came, and of the friends whither they are going, rush into the soul with their first appearance, and the eye, sharpened by these considerations and wearied with the long prospect of the solitary sea, hangs upon the departing sail till it sees it only in imagination.

I had on the 3d of the 5th month, the particular gratification of being permitted to go on board a French vessel, *Le Jeune Alfred de Fecamp*, which lay becalmed about 3 miles off, in N. L. 44° 51 W. L. 41° 32—Myself, a steerage passenger, and a sailor visited her in the little boat. After an hour's hard rowing, during which time a smart breeze arose and endangered our ever recovering our own vessel or reaching this, we gained it, and passing round to the leeward boarded her without ceremony or a word. The mate threw us a rope, and the crew assisted us to mount. Our reception was such as justified the character of the French for politeness. Their provisions—their Bourdeaux brandy were at our service, and I was surprised to find that none of the sailors would accept of any present. I shall not soon forget the kindness, the generosity, and the mutual affability of that interview. Alas ! thought I, as we departed, and these are the men whom we are taught to consider as national enemies, or to regard with the jealous eye of petty rivalry. How lamentable, that the ambition of a few individuals, or the narrow and erroneous policy of ill-calculating statesmen should prevent the intercourse of friendship amongst whole nations, and cherish the poison of discord in dispositions otherwise prone to sociability and mutual good-will. What would have been the result of such an interview a few years ago ? Now, we experience nothing but the greatest civility and are compelled to return debtors to their generous hospitality.

On the 17th of the 5th month we discovered land at 8 o'clock in the morning, and at nine we had a clear view of this country, the object of adventurous hope to so many thousands of our distressed countrymen. On the 20th the pilot came on board, at 3 in the morning, and at 10 we reached the highlands at the mouth of the North River. The hill sides were covered with noble timber ; cedar and white oak on both sides the bay, interspersed with gentlemen's houses and cottages in every direction. The oak in the vallies was beginning to bud and look green, that on the hills white, and the hill sides themselves appeared of a sandy colour. The fields were covered with green and luxuriant herbage, the surface of the noble river up which we were sailing, was scarcely ruffled with a breeze, and the sun threw a splendor over the whole, which finished one of the most enchanting and beautiful scenes I ever beheld. You will imagine its delicious effect upon our minds, after the long tossing of the ocean. The next morning we gladly set foot on this land of boasted liberty. Every thing about us contributed to inspire us with the idea, that the relations of the beauty and prosperity of this country were untrue, only as they had failed to reach the level of reality. The season of the year and the gaiety of mind resulting from the thought that our voyage and all its tedium and danger were past, augmented the charm of novelty, and presented the scene before us as a perfect paradise. The poplars along the streets were in their freshest foliage,—the tulip and lilac were in their full bloom and beauty exhibited for sale. The markets were plentifully supplied with beef, fish, and an abundance of wild fowl, asparagus, green peas, radishes, &c. The ladies, in dresses of uncommon elegance and richness, were walking on the noble and airy promenades. Every thing wore an air of pleasure and plenty. Such were our first impressions ! you will make due allowance for the change from the solitude of our voyage to the bustle of the city, which doubtless did not lose its influence upon our opinion of its wealth, respectability, and commercial importance.

The next day we visited the American museum. It contains a great variety of the natural curiosities of this country, amongst which a stuffed bear strikes the spectator perhaps most forcibly. The animal was killed within 40 miles of the city, and weighs 700lbs. There is an excellent collection of Indian tools, dresses and weapons of war.

I have to reckon amongst the most gratifying circumstances of my journey, that of having arrived in New York just in time to witness the yearly Meeting of Friends for that State, The meeting, which continued four days, was numerously attended. The fine opportunity it afforded me of taking a wide view of the character and habits of American friends, the importance and variety of its discussions, the display of talent and American freedom of opinion it produced, and the universal demonstration of kindness and hospitality given us, induce me to set down this period as one of the happiest of my life. I was particularly impressed with the boldness and decision of American conference, and the extent of modification which the discipline of the Society has received in this country to adapt it to its views and circumstances. In some instances that modification is striking. It is here the custom to hold no meeting of worship previous to one for discipline A request from one Quarterly Meeting to depart from this established custom, occasioned a long and ably, conducted debate, and the request was finally negatived. It was argued, for the omission of such meetings, that a considerable number of persons frequently took advantage of the great body of friends assembled, to remain amongst them during the succeeding meeting of church discipline. That friends likewise often wished to bring their acquaintances with them to the meeting of worship, who were under the necessity of returning alone, or occasioning the friends to leave the early part of the meeting to accompany them if strangers, and these friends returning at various times, occasioned much disturbance to the proceedings.

Most of the other subjects were such as occur in our Meetings in England. In the course of the transactions, I particularly noticed Richard Jordan and Henry Hull, who visited England some time ago, Richard Mott and Elias Hicks. In a most interesting debate on the general state of the Society, Richard Mott delivered a speech, perhaps never surpassed for argumentative power and consummate eloquence. The tomb-like silence of the meeting bore a deep and solemn testimony to its effects, and all seemed to feel its appeal irresistible. Elias however did not think so. He arose and replied, with a boldness and originality of sentiment that mark his character, and threw an aspect so different upon it, that it was obliged to be referred to a committee. This friend is deemed by many the first minister in the Society in the U.S. I attended the meeting in Pearl Street, the day previous to the yearly meeting. As he was expected, according to his usual custom, to be there, we went nearly half an hour before the usual time, but we found the place crowded to excess. Such is the remarkable character of this friend and his ministry, that wherever he holds a meeting this is the case. Possessed of a strong and intrepid mind, unenervated by the restraints and modulations of an academical education, he gives no measure or direction to the avowal of his sentiments, but such as he conceives is prescribed by the spirit of the Almighty. His appearance is simple, old fashioned, and patriarchal, and he pours forth in his public discourses, in an astonishing and animated flow of plain, but powerful and penetrating language, a train of argument that lightens, and sentiment that warms upon whatever it touches. No person, situation, or circumstance can awe him to the suppression of a word that he feels inclined to speak. He harkens alone to his own heart's suggestions of his duty, and he does it. That sophistry must be artful indeed that eludes his discriminating glance; he seems to grasp in a moment the compass and bearing of the subject, and unravels its intricacies with a perspicuity peculiarly his own. No custom, however sanctioned by its antiquity, or doctrine, however supported by public opinion, ever meets with respect from him, if they originate not in sound reason and sound religion. The professors of other creeds often feel the giant stroke of his oratorical power, yet they do homage to his talents, they venerate his virtues, and though they have shrunk beneath the terrors of his castigation, they court his society and crowd to his meetings.

The yearly meeting being over, we were anxious to pursue our primary object, that of discovering a tract of land in some situation, combining the promise of a market, health, and

fertility. A situation to which we could unhesitatingly invite our European friends. In New York our friends have universally recommended us to visit the British settlement of Susquehanna County. My brother is returned from a trip to Long Island, bringing specimens of game &c. He visited William Cobbet's residence three days previous to its being burnt down, and, with the enthusiasm of recent emigrants, describes the country in romantic colours. We waited on the President of the British Emigrant Society, a friend who has furnished us with a map of the country, and a letter of recommendation to the settlers. We have not however found every thing so far, smooth and without difficulty. In our attempt to purchase a horse and waggon for our journey, we have begun to understand the mystery of emigrants continuing so long in the cities. Birkbeck in his notes condemns their lingering in the eastern towns, and continually exclaims, "Push on !" A man however, who has but a few precious dollars in his pocket, is desirous of economising as much as possible in his equipage for his journey. But he will find, when he goes to make his purchase, that the Yankees are prepared to take every advantage of his ignorance or his haste. An Englishman is recognised in a moment. The want of the real Yankee slang or tone is sufficient, but their appearance is a still prior informant. You immediately distinguish English from Americans, who are generally dressed in light clothes, trowsers down to their heels, and broad-brimmed chip hats. Mostly tall, thin, yellow-looking men, who have stood the test of a parching climate. But the English exhibit stout, robust frames, and fresh complexions : their clothes heavy, and themselves labouring under the stimulus of a heated atmosphere, and exhausted with intense perspiration. Amongst the active slim citizens, they look clumsy and idle. Thus readily known and supposed to be anxious to prosecute their route, they are asked most exorbitant prices for every thing they want. For a horse, we were asked from 100 to 300 dollars, and it has not been till nearly the loss of a week, with much fatigue and chagrin, that we have purchased a horse for 70 dollars, and a waggon for 65 dollars. This species of waggon is made as light or more light than our English gentlemen's carriages. To emigrants, on their arrival, it is difficult to give advice that may enable them to escape gross imposition. Many a poor fellow, who has collected a trifle with the sweat of many years labour, here beholds it quickly sacrificed by his precipitance, or ignorance of the character of this people. Those who may have friends here will do well to entrust their transactions to them ; but to those who have not, I can only recommend deliberate caution and vigilant circumspection. We are intending to set out for the British Settlement to-morrow or the next day. When you will here of us again is most uncertain, but we shall not fail to seize every opportunity of writing, and of sending you a simple and faithful detail of our remarks, perils, and peregrinations.

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LETTER II.

*Montrose, Susquehanna County, S. Pennsylvania,
6th Mo. 9th.*

AN emigrant, returning from this place to New York, will convey this letter to the hand of a friend there, to be forwarded by the first line ship to England. We ourselves are on the point of returning, but it is not improbable that we may make some deviation from the direct road which will occasion considerable delays, and we are anxious not to neglect the smallest glimpse of a possibility of conveying our communications to you. I shall not entertain you here with much declamation, in praise or dispraise, of what we have seen, but simply transcribe facts from my journal, to speak for themselves. We commenced our journey hither the 29th of 5th month. G. L. a friend from Bristol, whose mother (E. L.) was drowned some time ago in the Irish Sea, having agreed to accompany us, we put his knapsack into our waggon, but by mischance we never met at the rendezvous appointed, and we did not see him till a

few days ago. For crossing the north river in a steam boat, we paid 87½ cents. As the night proved very clear and moon-light, we travelled till nine o'clock, entertained with a novel kind of music, the croaking of tree frogs and the chirping of wood-cricket ! We had scarcely unloaded our things and made our bed in the waggon, when clouds gathered, and obliged us to throw our tent over us ; but the dampness of the air, the noises of the birds, and the barking of our dog, prevented us from sleeping. At 3 it began to rain, and we rose and prepared to depart. As we passed through Belville and New Barbadoes, every one who saw us and conversed with us, expressed his sorrow that we were going to be the dupes of interested speculators,—yet was equally fond of giving advice of his own. As we approached Patterson, the scenery somewhat appeared to resemble that of Matlock, in Derbyshire : high and perpendicular rocks, overhung with wood and seen to a considerable distance. This village is noted for its cotton manufactories, on the Passaic, near the great falls of that river. Here we were immediately known for old countrymen, by the manufacturers who flocked around us, making lamentable complaints of the deceptions practised upon them by false representations of this country,—and saying they would sacrifice every thing to get back to England.

As this distressing scene and recital were extremely discouraging, and evidently affected the spirits of my brother, and much more his man, we hurried away as fast as possible. To find the labouring manufacturers in this miserable situation, was totally unexpected by me. Immediately on leaving this place, we found ourselves in a country mountainous and barren, and the roads not only excessively steep, but terribly rough. In the evening, we called at the farm house of a Dutchman, who told us he was in Susquehanna county last fall, and that it was a poor country, the very sight of which would frighten us. He described the soil as much inferior to his, which he valued at 60 dollars per acre, and which, I am sure, in England would not be worth half that sum. This was a strange account, after what we had heard from so many quarters and so many respectable persons, and yet we were inclined to believe it : on the other hand, we felt that it was the interest of this man, and such as he, to damp our hopes, because he wished to sell his own land ; we therefore determined to proceed, while the servant began to exclaim bitterly against the accounts which brought us here. Travelling forward, it began to rain, and as no house was near, we took refuge in an old, miserable, deserted barn, for the night. Every thing was so extremely damp, that after an hour's fruitless attempt to raise a fire, we were nearly giving it up in despair,—but the wet and chilliness of the night, and our hunger after a laborious day's travel over those tremendous rough roads, compelled us to resume our exertions, and we at length succeeded in raising a flame, the comforts of which, in such a situation, are indescribable. We next had an anxious hunt, in the dark, to find water,—and, after obtaining it, we boiled our kettle, and frizzled some ham upon a pointed stick : a dirty, miserable repast, you think,—but we thought most luxurious. My brother took the first turn to watch. Our dog was completely wearied out with travelling and barking all night, at every sound, and slept soundly beside myself, John, and the horse. At midnight, some wild animal, which the extreme darkness of the night prevented us seeing, came trotting into the barn, and to our bed-side. The dog lay still, but my brothers call to him alarmed our visitor, and he made his retreat. Sleep broken in this manner, affords little refreshment. Travellers new to the woods, hear every little noise made by the night-birds, and the tinkling of the bells upon the cow's necks on the mountains, by which the herdsmen find their cattle.

The next day, we passed the Dutch settlement at Prakaness, around which the land has been cleared for some time, and free from stumps : a rare sight ! A few miles onward is the village of Pompton, with three or four genteel white houses ; the windows painted pea green. It is situated in a flat, and well watered with small streams, upon which are several beautiful falls. Indeed, in this neighbourhood, we have observed a remarkable number of falls

and eligible mill-seats, more particularly on the river upon which (we were informed) our late queen had extensive iron-works carried on, under the firm of "The English Co." previous to the revolution ; whence it has since been called Charlottenburgh. Immense rocks, which rise to the sky, are beautifully hung with timber to the very summit, and though no soil is seen on even some of the flats near, yet fine trees are growing most luxuriantly amongst them, the greater part perfectly unknown to us at present.

This afternoon, completely drenched with rain, we staid at a tavern newly erected, called Newfoundland. Here we procured a small private room and a good fire, dried our clothes, and got tea very comfortably. Our landlord, a very intelligent man, spent the evening with us, and related several interesting anecdotes of General Washington, with whom he was personally acquainted. I observed, he was always addressed with the title of Squire,—being a magistrate. Bears, deer, and wolves, are very numerous in this neighbourhood, in the fall. Our Squire had eighteen sheep last summer, which are now reduced to seven,—the rest being lost in the woods or devoured. A barn, not exceeding 60 feet by 30, costs here about 125 dollars ; shingles or wood tiles, 15 to 20 dollars per thousand. The whip-poor-will we heard for the first time, at this place, repeating its plaintive notes through the whole night. Our accommodations at this place were very comfortable, and our charge, including hay, one peck of Indian corn, our room, fuel, liquor, one pound of butter, what milk we chose, and tar and tallow for our waggon, $\frac{3}{4}$ of a dollar. I gave our kind host one dollar, which he accepted with reluctance ; and, at our setting off, he prepared us a quantity of egg-nog,—a mixture of apple-spirit, eggs, and milk.

Terrible roads still ; and the bridges over the small streams nothing more than poles laid across : those over the large ones, of framed timber and covered with 2-inch plank,—which soon wears through, and endangers the horses legs. White oak, elm, and chesnut, seem to flourish best, though trees of every kind are in abundance, and amongst them the pinxter honeysuckle and *calmia-latifolia*, are elegant ornaments of the woods. The most plentiful living creatures we have seen this way, are snakes and squirrels. From Newfoundland to H. Bemer's tavern, a course of twenty miles, we saw but two small villages, (Snufftown and Deckertown,) a few iron-forges, a tan-yard, two or three saw and grist mills. We noticed several fine mill-seats ; but the country is so rough and rocky, that few settlers venture to fix on them. Near this town, which is situate at the foot of the Blue Mountains, land cleared sells for 20 dollars per acre ; and though rough and stoney, and cultivated in the slovenly manner of the Americans, will produce twenty bushels of wheat, twenty of rye, and forty of Indian corn, on an average. The tree frog, about this place, makes a continued noise in the evening, which may be heard at a great distance. I discovered one of them with great difficulty, notwithstanding their numbers : for they so exactly resemble the bark of the tree, that when you are close by them, (and their shrill voice seems to strike through you,) you must have good eyes to perceive them.

Ascending the mountain the next morning we found it almost inaccessible. The distance to the Delaware was nine miles, and we accomplished it in seven hours. Both the ascent and descent of this stupendous mountain was equally steep and rough. A path just the width of a carriage is cleared of timber, but not one of the craggs of which the road is full, is removed or broken. This mountain, covered with timber and rock-stones of an immense size, and presenting scarcely a vestige of vegetation capable of supporting any living creature, is yet the rendezvous of vast numbers of wild animals, especially deer, fox, wolf, raccoon, wild cat, and panther. At Milford, we crossed the Delaware in a flat, leaving the state of New Jersey for that of Pensylvania—fare $\frac{1}{4}$ dollar. Here we met with a French emigrant, ignorant of the English language, who had arrived four months ago ; he had brought with him watches and shoes, the former he sold at 3 dollars, and the latter at 1 dollar per pair, which realized him a

profit. I asked him, in his own tongue, if he preferred this country to France. He replied Oh ! non ! non ! non ! He spoke with enthusiasm of Napoleon. The road on the Pensylvanian side we found a good deal improved, yet hilly and the land quite as stoney. Here were a few sheep of the mountain breed, quite equal to the soil. Wool worth ½ dollar per Ib. for home use.

At the tavern where we staid to night, we found the landlord plowing near his own door, with 2 little mules like asses. His children were almost naked, without shoes or stockings. His wife and self commended it as best for their health, and strongly enforced it by their own example. This description will apply to the generality of settlers we have yet seen. Sixth month 3rd, we past the Sheholy falls and accidentally met with an old hunter, equipped with his rifle and other necessary accoutrements, for an encounter with buck or bear. He wore a large buckskin leather coat, finely decorated with leather tassels on his shoulders and arms. His rifle lock was neatly covered with the skin of a musk rat to keep it dry. A large belt went over his right shoulder and under his arm, on which was suspended a leathern bag for his bullets, a large horn for his powder, and a case knife curiously hafted by him self with a buck's horn. He told us he had killed last fall upwards of 200 deer, 7 in one day, and that in his time he had encountered and killed more than 1000 bears.

The last house upon this new road (as they call it) was that of an Irishman, just fixing. He readily sold us a few oats that he had, for our horse, and invited us to partake his dinner of dried venison, which, as a novelty, we did. Beyond this house for 5 miles we found an opening through these wild and dreadful rocky woods. But our horse was so much fatigued that we found it next to impossible to proceed, and should gladly have pitched our tent there for the night, could we have found some mode of escaping the fury of the muquitos, and the dread of the snakes, more numerous there than in any place we had seen. Our horse's ears appeared complete lumps of clotted blood with the bites of the musquitos, and his head was perfectly covered with those maddening tormentors. I walked forward to see if I could discover a friendly hut, and at length heard the music of a woodman's axe. We got our horse and waggon up the hill with much difficulty, for the waggon as well as our boxes, was very much broken and shivered by the rocks and stumps over which we had travelled. The good man found comfortable accomodations for our jaded horse, and gave us some encouragement, by telling us he believed we had past some of the worst road in the United States.

Our man did nothing but complain of the villany of folks, who could entice people from England into such a country as this. " But (said he) I hope you'll tell the truth about it, and not deceive folks a this fashion." A young man overtook us this evening, who had been with some rye to be ground at a mill 28 miles distant. His waggon light as ours, and a load not half the weight, drawn by two horses abreast, was broken down upon the rocks. He therefore staid all night, to rest and refit ; and it was wonderful to see with what facility he supplied his loss, by cutting down a fine young white oak, and shaping it into a new axle.

The woodman informed us, that the dens in these rocks abounded with rattle-snakes. He broke into one the last winter, near his house, and found 38 of these deadly reptiles, all coiled together. Indeed, we saw little else but snakes thereabouts. The hemlock spruce grows there, to a large size, but not equal to the pine,—one of which we measured that evening, which was 128 feet long.

Sixth month, 4th. we crossed the river Lackawackson, which is navigable for lumber, that is, fine timber, chiefly pine, which is fastened together in rafts, and sent down the Delaware to Philadelphia. This river, though wide, is fordable at the place where we crossed. There is a place or two on its banks, which look comfortable ; one with a neat framed house upon it, a good barn, 95 acres of flat land cleared, and a fine thriving orchard of 5 acres : a sort of little

Eden in this wilderness. We found the owner, like all besides, was anxious to sell : he told us, that some time ago he was offered for his whole track, of which fourteen hundred acres were not cleared, nine thousand dollars. He now asked six thousand, and finally proffered it at 4,500 dollars,—being but 3 dollars per acre, with all his improvements. He had a decent flock of sheep then in the barn, which his son was shearing as they *stood* ; the wool his daughters spin, and afterwards weave into cloth, and make clothes of it for the family. This was by far the cheapest place we had seen ; but the roads are too terrible to leave much temptation to purchase. The place we purposed to reach, on setting off in the morning, was Bethany, 15 miles distant ; but being overtaken by a most awful thunder-storm, we again took refuge in a barn. The owner was a hunter, and his family presented one more of those dismal spectacles which daily add to the conviction of the miserable poverty of this part of the United States. The woman and children were particularly real objects of pity, with looks as wild as the wilderness they in habit, and unsightly as the lizard that crawls into their houses ; their hair hangs as naturally as a long unmolested growth will let it, and their stockings and shoes never wear out,—for they are of nature's own providing.

Sixth month, 5th, we hired a horse to assist ours to Bethany,—a considerable village on the borders of the Beech Woods, containing about 3 taverns, 3 stores, and 12 or 14 neat houses. The sugar maple grows here, mostly 60 feet high to the first branches, producing from 6 to 30 gallons of sap each tree, and every 6 gallons 1 lb. of sugar. This has been a bad season. Our horse was so completely exhausted, that on gaining the top of the hill which we had permitted him to walk up, without assisting to draw the waggon, he fell, and was only recovered by great care and exertion. I remained there all night, with the waggon, and my brother and John turned into the woods to hunt.

Sixth month, 6th.—Being 1st day, we concluded to stay and rest at a small tavern not far off, to get our horse out to grass a few days, and to proceed on foot. Here we also agreed to leave John, till our return.—The bread used all on this track, is rye and Indian corn ; we have not tasted wheat since we left New York, more than a week ago. I have associated as much as possible with the settlers, as we have travelled on, and endeavoured to procure a correct account of their situation. So far, I am well convinced, the condition of the poorest English farmer is incomparably better. A man first buys a track, as it is called, that is,—steep, wild, rocky wood-land, at from 2 to 5 dollars per acre, consisting of four or five hundred acres. In the first place, it is a perpetual incumbrance to him : for the policy of the state has so divided it into lots, that not more than 1-5th can be cultivated at all, and yet the whole is rated to the state tax : he is therefore paying continually for what will never benefit him or his posterity. In the next place, he is absolutely in a state of pauperism, with the possession of it. He has most likely a wife and several children, depending solely upon his exertions. His first object is, to clear some land, and sow some Indian corn for his family : this is all he can possibly do the first year. He has no sheep, and consequently no clothing, nor any means of providing it ; his rifle can only supply him with the luxuries of life,—wild cats, racoons, and squirrels : their skins he must exchange for ammunition. But, what are these privations to those of his family ? He is free ! he can rove when and where he pleases ! till an execution for arrears of purchase-money or taxes be brought against him, and his whole farm is sold.—This is the common routine of a settler's fate. Enter a tavern ; there you see scores of advertisements of sales of land, to pay taxes. My brother often exclaims vehemently against this country, and declares he would prefer an English workhouse to any part he has seen.

I have persevered in my journey against every discouragement,—and the most trying of all is, the dejection of my companions,—in order to form a full and personal observation. I have seen many gradations in the condition of society ; but this week has shewn me more perfect wretchedness than I ever before witnessed. We have travelled upwards of one hundred

miles on foot,—lain out exposed to the heavy mists that fall here by night,—and by day walked over the most harrassing road, under a consuming sun, with two meals a-day ; but still this would be tolerable, could we discover any thing like what we heard of America when in England, and of this part of New York. Hitherto, however, all is one scene of savage wilderness, sterility, and abject poverty. At the sight of an emigrant, all flock to proffer their farms ; to an American, it is useless. If they are offered goods, they reply they want them, but they have no money. Talk of the times,—they murmur ; there is something amiss they cannot account for : one attributes it to the pride of the cities, whose inhabitants can wear nothing but silks, for which they drain the country of specie ; another charges it to the banking system,—and a third, to the war. Some are democrats, some are federalists; but all are kings and nobles,—every man a ruler, and yet nothing pleases. Such is the happiness of this country. Here, at least, it is a dream and a phantom ; and the further we seek it the further we are behind.

In the afternoon of the next day, we reached Centreville,—a small, neat village, having three taverns and two or three stores. The land, as it lies in grass, seems pretty good ; but the rye, the only grain grown there, looks miserably. As we travelled from that place, we saw a number of houses deserted, and grass land unoccupied,—A poor omen !

Sixth month, 7th.—Left the tavern at Tunchannock creek, at four o'clock, and travelled seven miles to breakfast : a few spots cultivated and looking better ; but no grain, except rye, to be seen. We want to see good wheat, barley, oats, and Indian corn : English men like good things,—especially good bread. We reached Montrose in the evening : several trades are just started, and about forty houses erected. The site of the town, however, is a very bad one : no river near, and the soil about it extremely poor.

On the 8th, we got to Britannia : the site of this place is better selected, having the advantage of water and a better soil. We found four temporary houses erected, and about sixty half-acre lots marked out for settlers. Here we had an interview with Dr. Rose, the proprietor, and complained to him of the fallacious description given of this settlement in Dr. Johnson's book and by the Emigrant Society, which represented it as possessing fine land, excellent water, and, in short, every advantage. The Dr. wished to persuade us that the statement was true ; that a little more observation would convince us of it :—but we had seen too much. We are only like many of our deluded countrymen,—the dupes of unprincipled speculators,—but happily we are not like too many, obliged to remain so. We therefore determined to return immediately ; and after travelling all day through the different tracks, and observing a few miserable half crops of rye, we sat down, completely fatigued, at a small tavern. After a supper of tea and salt pork, we retired. We calculated upon having walked upwards of thirty miles that day, and therefore were not in a disposition to quarrel with homely accommodations.—My brother was soon in bed ; but, preparing to follow him, I observed more company than I chose to lie down with : in fact, such were the swarms of bugs in the bed, on the walls, and in every part of the room, that, weary as we were, we lost no time in quitting our quarters. Our dispatch, however, was not sufficient to prevent us carrying away in our clothes a populous colony of those social vermin. Our feet were so sore with walking over the rough stones and burning ground, that we could scarcely bear to touch it. There was no other tavern nearer than Montrose, (9 miles ;) but we did not feel disposed to adopt the plan of an English traveller, who said, that if he could not sleep the first night in an American tavern, he always could the second : for the whole night's exercise of fighting those troopers, prepared him for a second night's sleep, that nothing could disturb :—we therefore paid our bill and decamped at ten o'clock. We walked till near 2 o'clock, during which time I actually slept a good deal, and had it not been for the swarms of toads and lizards, crawling in every direction, I should certainly have lain in the road. Two miles from Montrose, we found a broken-

down waggon, into which we crept and slept deliciously till four o'clock,—when we awoke very chilly. Heavy, cold dews invariably succeed hot days here. At six o'clock we reached Montrose, (as you will imagine,) in a miserable condition.

At the last-mentioned tavern, we met with a B. from New Radford, whose mother and sisters are milliners there. He had bought 60 acres of land, which he was beginning to clear. He came to this country with B. of Calverton, whose mortification and repentance, he described in melancholy colours. His wife (as he calls her) vents the acrimony of her rage and disappointment on him plentifully. I should like cousin M. to know this. Here we met with G. Lovel, who missed us at setting out from New York. We found him highly exasperated and out of humour, at being so sadly duped. He had been into the western country and back on foot ; and it is very amusing to hear him calculate his expenses, so as to save half a dollar in two or three weeks' travelling. His knapsack, together with many of our own things, had been jolted out of our waggon, or stolen. Here too was a person from Nottingham, with a family, who had travelled from Philadelphia, at the expense of 100 dollars, and were anxiously wishing to return, but unable ! A friend purchased a track here, in the winter; returned to Philadelphia, to buy 2 yoke of oxen and implements, with grain and potatoes for his family, —brought his family with him—sowed his grain—set a quantity of potatoes—paid his deposit—staid one month, sacrificed all, and left yesterday morning for Philadelphia again. This man was considered an excellent farmer. These are a few instances, out of great numbers, of the dupes of interested speculators, who have been lured by splendid descriptions, to this settlement, to suffer incredible hardships, to see themselves not only mocked in their expectations, but robbed of their little property, and many of them left without a possibility of escaping out of this devouring wilderness, or of rendering it subservient to the first demands of nature. Here we are then, in a fine land of promise to be sure ! but remember, by the time you read this, we shall, I hope, have regained the more enviable eastern shores, and perhaps penetrated into some other part of this vast continent. I have no time to make any comments. If you are disappointed in reading this, you must, as we do, hope for better tidings.

Selections from letters written during a tour through the United States, in the summer and autumn of 1819 ; illustrative of the character of the native Indians, and of the descent from the lost ten tribes of Israel ; as well as descriptive of the present situation and sufferings of emigrants, and of the soil and state of agriculture (1820)

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