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INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

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Slickville, April, 185-.

MY DEAR SQUIRE,

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SINCE I parted with you I have led a sort of wanderin', ramblin' life, browsin' here to-day, and there to-morrow, amusin' myself arter my old way, studyin' human natur', gettin' a wrinkle on the horn myself for some that I give others, and doin' a little bit of business by the way to pay charges, and cover the ribs of my bank book; not to say that I need it much either, for habit has more to do with business now with me than necessity. *The bread of idleness in a gineral way is apt to be stale, and sometimes I consait it is a little grain sour.*

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Latterly I have been pretty much to Slickville, having bought the old humstead from father's heirs, and added to it considerable in buildin's and land, and begin to think sometimes of marryin'. The fact is, it aint easy to settle down arter itineratin' all over the world so many years as I have done without a petticoat critter of one's own for company; but before I ventur' on that partnership co'rn I must make another tour in the provinces, for atween you and me, I reckon they raise handsomer and stronger ladies than we do in Connecticut, although we do crack for everlastin' about beatin' all the world in our "geese, galls, and onions."

Oh dear, when I think of them trips I had with you, Squire, it makes me feel kind of good all over; but there will be amusement enough left for another tour, you may depend. Fun has no limits. It is like the human race and face; there is a family likeness among all the species, but they all differ. New combinations produce new varieties. Humour puts me in mind of the kaleidoscope, or pattern-makers' box; give it a shake up, and there is a new figure every time—that is, if the box aint empty. If it is, you can neither shake anything in or out of it, as many a schoolmaster knows to his cost. But a man who has an eye for fun sees it in everythin'—verily, even the demure Quaker catches and enjoys it.

The worst of it is, it is hard to remember it long; for the mind is like a slate—one thing gets rub'd out for another. The only way is to enter it down at the foot of the day's work; so I guess I'll keep a journal, and send it to you. It would make a new book for you, such as "Wise Saws and Modern Instances," or "Sam Slick in Search of a Wife," or some such name.