

"Come, hear the woodland linnet!  
How sweet his music! On my life,  
There's more than wisdom in it."

There is liberty! To be free,—one feels the expansive vivacity of childhood again. Surely the air has a brilliancy all its own to-day. And the breeze—how fresh it is! One trips, one sings;—speech and slow pace are bondage at a time like this. The very passers-by in the streets are smiling. Are they, too, going home to-day? How the bells repeat it! "Home again! Home again!" says the great Cathedral chime beyond the Common, and the old College Bell in the chapel hour by hour responds "Home Home! Home again! Home!"

How time flies to-day! The forenoon is gone; the whistles all about the city are calling the noon hour. A moment for lunch, then to my packing. In they go—clothes, books, knick-knacks, pictures,—in they go. Disorder! They have not long to stay; to-morrow—But haste! There is just time for a last walk up by the old church elms, a spin across the river meadow, then home to supper. Jack was in this forenoon, and I can see Fred on my way down. The hackman has my trunks,—one, two, three; my traps are all right; and those books for G. F. J.—bless him. Fred can leave them. I am off; there's my car. Good-bye.

The long train stands ready to draw out, the ponderous engine fretting and chafing at its head. The cars are filling, valises and bags are stowed under the seats and piled in the corners; the porters hurry by with trunks and boxes for the baggage-car. The conductor walks up and down the platform glancing at his watch from time to time; windows are opened and shut; good-byes are said; hands waved; the engine frets more loudly, blowing off great puffs of steam. The conductor waves his hand; the last passengers spring aboard; the doors slam shut; the engine pants in sudden breaths; we are off. Off for Canada and home!

We steal out of the grimy depot as the bells are striking eight, while the last colors of sunset still linger in the sky. We cross the shining, sluggish Charles, with its oily waters creaming and curling about the river-stakes and sliding in long streaks past the weather-worn piers; we storm across smoky Charlestown with a roar of wheels and a rush of swirling smoke, spin through town after town in racing leaps, and soon have drawn away altogether from the skirts of Boston, and are speeding northward among low hills and placid sheets of water,—*ponds*—as these willful people persist in calling their beautiful little lakelets. For a while we have light enough to see the country we are passing through with distinctness; but soon the sunset light dies out of the west, drawing

with it the flush of color which the lakes had caught in their bosoms and the watching trees upon their turned leaves, and we flee onward into a night of stars.

As the dusk draws on, a weird change comes over the landscape. The objects along the way one after another take on a fantastic life, and join in the dance with us as we speed by, and in that border-land of night the dreams of the old philosophers become real, the earth is ensouled, throbbing with the existence of countless spirits, each with an appreciative life of its own. And as we pass along, a wave of this strange life seems to rise from the earth around us and rush onward on either side, pointing northward with a thousand fingers and bidding us God-speed upon our way. The houses and fences as we draw near come running in towards the line, peer at us breathlessly while we dash by, then fall back again to their proper places as we hurry away from them, with an almost audible sigh that they, too, are not hastening with us towards the northern Hills. Little lakes rise up from the parted earth before the train, and blink at us timidly with their eyes full of stars, then sink wonderingly back as we pass. And streams bubble up from unseen fountains at our side, and rush madly along by us until far outstripped, when they drop unconcernedly aside into some gossipy valley, where a murmurous river winds slowly down to the sea. The reeds and tall wayside grasses take hands and dance around us as we hang above them, nodding their heads gaily, and bidding us be of good cheer, as they wave their bright tresses in the wind. The little breezes perch in flocks upon the train, and sing about the coaches, darting in and out of the open windows, here roguishly tumbling the hair of a child who tries to catch them as they pass, there shyly touching a rose that nestles upon the breast of a maiden, and yonder dropping its fragrance from their shining wings as they fan the brows of a tired mother and her sleeping babe.

The trees lean towards us as we pass, and clap all their tiny hands at our speed; the groves and hills in their endless march backward pause a moment just abreast of us to look; and the black fantastic shadows move their long limbs grotesquely, tugging wildly at their substances the while, in the vain effort to join us in our flight; while overhead the little clouds fly on singly and in groups before us, beckoning us onward, northward and ever northward, till darkness comes down and swallows up the earth with its dancing scenes and its myriad life, and the many-eyed train plunges forward alone through the night.

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