
MUSINGS BY CAMP-FIRE AND WAYSIDE

Musing the First

The Camp-Fire

MANKIND has never willingly relinquished the camp-fire. It is not preference, but necessity, that has driven him indoors. Even there he carried and rekindled its embers, and it became the hearth-fire: a flame, sister to the flame of love. So much he rescued from the loss of Paradise. It is not till the overcrowding of his own kind has exterminated the game and ravaged the forests with steel and fire, and not till the increase of competing herds has exhausted the pastures, that man will fence in for himself a patch of the wilderness, domesticate for himself a few of its birds and quadrupeds, and build for himself a castle. Civilization is to him a choice of evils, and he has never forgotten nor ceased to long for Paradise, with its unlimited breadth and freedom—with its camp-fires glimmering on distant hill or mountain-side or stream; their rays telling of fellowship, hospitality, and liberty. Civilization is tyranny. At its best it is the