

CHRONICLES "EN ROUTE."

BY T. D. F.

On, on, on,—with a rapid, breath-taking motion, speeds this wonder of the nineteenth century, this annihilation of time and space; now hurrying through lovely groves, insensible to the unwritten, yet exquisitely harmonious music of the wind, as it breathes through the wooing branches of the tall elms, and rustles the silvery leaves of the quaking aspen. On, on, on—flitting with spirit speed, through the white-cottaged villages which lie hill-embosomed in its path; like a banshee, uttering its warning cry, shrieking out yells, which would well become those disembodied wretches, who are first made aware, when too late, of the power of conscience, which holds up before them wasted opportunities, neglected privileges, wrongs done to their own natures, and injuries heaped upon those they were bound to love and cherish.

A pleasant day this is, and promises to continue, and it is well to chronicle its aspects and changes; to catch, if possible, the various traits and forms as they pass. I will endeavour, with my pencil in hand, to be the sun, while my paper shall be the prepared plate, on which to daguerrotype the passing incidents.

'Tis early morning; we have just left the city, bustling even in its matin hours. Thanks to a stupid coachman, we were almost too late, and rode the last five minutes in torture, fearing to lose the cars, which is one of the greatest miseries of life, quite equal to a mercantile failure, in these days of patched up credit; but fortunately we got our two feet upon the steps of the car just as the shrill whistle was uttered, and the iron horse started off, snorting and fuming away on his fiery course. We staggered in, and found one nice luxurious seat unoccupied, evidently reserved for us, and *we* (the grey-goose quill permits us to pluralize ourselves sometimes) are now seated in a quiet corner, with a window all to ourselves—blessed privilege!—to open or shut as we please, and on looking round, can find nothing to disturb us but a black eyed gentleman opposite, who seems disposed to exercise the privilege of his eyes, and find out our thoughts, feelings, and occupations. We defy him to do it, however.

He is reading the morning paper now, and the sun shines very brightly, so I will sketch his

outward form—true index to the inner man: broad forehead, straight nose, good colour, nicely defined whiskers, hair black as the raven's wing, but cut with Puritan-like precision, not one solitary lock daring to fly out of place; were it not for his mouth, he would be very good looking. Indeed *quite* young ladies would call him handsome, and his wife (if he has one) would think him an Adonis; but that mouth destroys the whole harmony of his face; it is a perfect contradiction to the noble features, so unrefined and unintellectual; it marks his character to my mind; for, in spite of all phrenologists may say, one glance at the mouth will give a truer impression of the character than all the organs of the skull, or the watchings of the quick flitting expression of the eyes. These will show the passing feeling of the moment; they answer to yours, if warm or cold, earnest or distracted, as the feeling prompts; they are the mirror of the mind; but the mouth is the plastic clay which receives the form and impress of the character, the heart, the habitual tone of thought, the temper; when these are once formed, then the expression remains, and affords an unerring index. Look at it first, examine its lines, read in its compressed form firmness; or in the flexible drooping lip, indecision; in its curves, upward or downward, you will mark peace and contentment, or the spirit of unrest.

But a sudden stop—the ring of the engine-bell, the entrance of new passengers. Oh! my black-eyed friend has disappeared; a sweet young bride, for such I am sure she is, has taken his place; the white riband twisted around her simple straw-hat, marks her as such, but not so much as the sweet confiding expression, with which she looks up at her companion, a fine stalwart youth, with brown hair hanging in profusion around his healthy-hued face. I hope they will be with us all day; it is a pleasure to watch them. How the rain pours down—what a change! A few moments ago all was bright, beautiful, and joyous; nature was rife with the melody of the birds, and the thousand harmony-breathing sounds and influences; and now the feathered songsters have sought their nests, and are spreading their soft wings over their young loved ones, to protect them from the damp, and all is hushed;