

absence from friends and equals, a mere sojourn on the edge of the wilderness, or even an occasional visit by the 12 days' steamers, would establish and elevate thousands of their degraded countrymen, remove vast evils at home, create vast blessings abroad, and, what is worth taking into account at this time of day, would restore the lustre of faded rank, and answer the often repeated question,—What is the use of the British gentry?

“Of all the aristocracies in the world what so fitted for such an emprise? They despise indolence, do-nothingness, and good-for-nothingness. Here is something to do,—something worth thinking and talking about. They have a just abhorrence of over-refinement, and the small arts of superfluity. Here is rough utility. They deride mere romance, the idle dreams of incapable spirits, the perpetual prolusions of an imagination which never really grasps its object. Here is a reality. They delight in territory to the very verge of the infinite, in wildness even to solitude. They are ever expanding their lawns into prairies, their groves into forests, their ponds into lakes, their covers into jungles, their preserves into wildernesses. They collect and cherish the vermin which they hunt. They are continually reducing cultivated farms and smiling homesteads to a state of nature; marring the peaceful works of men with destructive birds and beasts of their own introduction; converting corn fields into warrens, and ploughmen into foresters. They infect the simple sons of husbandry with the tastes of the Indian, peopling the very skirts of the village with animals of a wild nature, and, by unhappy consequence, the village itself with lawless and predatory men. For the employments of the day they substitute the works of the night. What a corruption of great occasions and noble qualities! When one sees a field of fifty gentlemen, representing and consuming, may be, some two or three hundred thousand a-year, mounted every day of the week with a noble hunter fresh for the task, with all the other expensive appurtenances of the chase, how one could wish to see so much courage, so much energy, so much capital, more usefully employed in those real undertakings of which this is an empty shadow,—in the great border warfare ever waging, though waged so precariously and so ill, between civilization and the desert.

“Grievous to say, nothing is further from their thoughts. Emigration, to be sure, is a word frequently in their mouths. If a party of gentlemen meet for the improvement or protection of agriculture, emigration is sure to turn up in some way during the talk. But who will set the example? The country gentlemen stand at the head of the line, always ready to charge British America up to the very Pacific. But, like faint-hearted captains, they do not say ‘Come on,’ but ‘Go on,’ to the timorous multitude. They will advise and plan, and compel, and thrust and goad, but still not conduct the surplus population. The island is too full, so they point somewhere beyond the ocean, and then compel the redundant crowd ‘to walk the plank;’ for that is all their talk of emigration comes to. ‘Your room, not your company.’ Yet, in heathen antiquity, we read of a