

ened by thick dark clouds. The doctor and a companion, one of the steam-brethren also, took their departure on their poor and sorry animals, with their small black saddle-bags stowed with phials and cayenne pepper. The pedestrians commenced their wet and floundering journey anew through mud and mire; the landlord returned to his bar, and we alone were left to await "Uncle Jack's" pleasure, who spun out his five minutes to three quarters of an hour; and then, having reported all right, we also once more pursued our route towards the setting sun, over a road where there was no road, over bridges where it would be much safer to ford the stream, and through a country rich only in stones and stumps; where land would be no bargain at half a dollar per acre. Half an hour before sunset, when we gained the summit of a long dreary hill, the great orb of day burst through the clouds in all his setting glory, and the thin vapours were seen rising from the woods and valleys beneath us, and floating gradually away before the fast subsiding gale. The road, too, at the same moment improved, running over a firm earthen track; the driver cracked his whip, and, smiling, observed that "we should be in by an hour after sun-down yet." The horses trotted merrily along; we threw aside our wet cloaks and coats; while every thing to us wore a different appearance, and we now saw some beauty in the vast and endless forests which encircled us on every side, save here and there a solitary patch of cleared land, the effects of the industry of some hardy settler, who, one would almost imagine, had quarrelled with the whole world by seeking so secluded a spot; but we were now in a humour to be pleased with every thing.

Our gleams of sunshine and good fortune were only transitory; for in a few minutes we again dived into the dark, thick pine forest, whose ragged branches and tall straight trunks had but a few minutes before formed so fine a contrast against the lighter foliage of some other natives of the grove. Ascending higher ground, too, we were once more enveloped in the heavy damp clouds, and, as night set in, the road became worse, and the habitations of men and all signs of cultivation disappeared.