

fan the smouldering fires, and a heavy cloud of black smoke hung like a vast pall over the forest. Warned by their unerring instincts, deer and other wild animals fled from their coverts, and sought refuge in the opens, an example which was unfortunately not followed by the unsuspecting settlers. Towards evening a gale suddenly sprang up from the westward, and before eight o'clock it was blowing a hurricane. All at once there was heard a roar as of distant artillery, a sheet of flame shot high into the air, clouds of blinding smoke came sweeping along before the fierce blast—the work of destruction had commenced. Too late to fly to the sea coast, all that the wretched inhabitants could do was to rush into the nearest lake or river. It would be difficult to imagine anything more truly appalling than the position of these unfortunates on that October night. Hemmed in on every side by walls of flame, burning wood and cinders falling in clouds around them, suffocated with smoke, and up to their necks in water—since the destruction of Pompeii never were mortals in sorer plight. Rarely, by all accounts, has the sun risen on a scene of greater desolation than that which the lately verdant forest presented on the morning of the 8th. Six thousand square miles of fire-swept country, a blackened,