

except in the United States, have villages and towns and cities had such hurried growth.

The most eccentric person about Riverbend was Mr. Sylvanus Yardstick, the merchant-poet. He was subject to great depressions of spirit, followed by wonderful ebullitions of feeling. He would sometimes be entirely disheartened; then again he would be as cheerful as a sunbeam and buoyant as the fleecy clouds that float upon the evening zephyrs in the month of June.

Whenever one of his cheerful spells came over him, he would mount his Pegasus, and fly off into the regions of poesy. On such occasions, whatever object had last made an impression on his mind, would give direction to his thoughts and stamp itself upon his verse.

On one occasion, a couple of his lady customers, who lived eight or ten miles distant, came to the store. One of them had a basket of eggs, and the other had a crock of butter. The women were tired, and Sylvanus had been very busy all the morning, and he was somewhat jaded and felt a little peevish. When he told the women that, since their last visit, butter had gone down one cent per pound and eggs two cents per dozen, they were sorely displeased. One of them let her tongue loose on him, and said some very tantalizing words about grinding the face of the poor and growing rich on the hard work of other people.

When she stopped, Sylvanus started. He had just got to the middle of a very unsoothing sentence when John Bushman came in at the door. Feeling ashamed