

many more before a change will come for the better. I see nothing but distress around me; my neighbours' faces exhibit only discontent and alarm—business is bad—the times are out of joint, and I am dying with *ennui*. In fact it is time, high time, that I were closing up my concerns too, and making arrangements to follow to a better land." And Mr. Excitable turned and paced the floor rapidly, as he cogitated long and intensely with himself upon the propriety of taking this important step.—The day continued gloomy enough, favouring very much his train of thought, and by the time he was ready to go to tea he had about made up his mind to close business and be off.

This determination, however, as yet vague and indefinite, was almost instantly driven from his mind by the domestic scene that, as usual, awaited him at his home. We have before stated that Mr. Excitable possessed a lovely family. We repeat the statement; and when Mr. Excitable entered his house, and beheld his smiling partner waiting, as usual, to receive him, and conduct him to the family board, that was set out in his snug little parour, laden with its accustomed delicacies, and around which already were gathered two blooming daughters and a laughing, chubby little boy, who saluted him on his entrance, in a noisy, but welcome voice, by an endearing epithet, it requires no stretch of the fancy to conceive how quickly the parent's and husband's mind was changed from its gloomy, discontented mood, to a state of pleasure, and delightful satisfaction, on meeting his family circle. His heart condemned him for indulging a fanciful unhappiness, when there was so much real happiness in store for him, and of which he tasted every day. Instantly forgetting his troubles in his chat with the members of his family, he no longer deemed himself a lonely man. Fortunately, the following day was warm and pleasant, the storm having given place to a mild air, and softening sun, sweet presages that summer had, at length actually set in. This change in the weather seemed to confirm the change in Mr. Excitable's mind, for he settled himself quietly to business, and thought no more of going to the west during the whole summer, his neighbours being too busy with their agricultural operations to spend time to talk with him on subjects that did not immediately affect their particular callings, and he being himself too much engrossed with his garden, his business, and the amusements of the season, to allow of his mind wan-

dering to distant scenes and prospects for comfort or consolation.

But this delightful season, (as Canadian summers generally are,) could not always last.—Late fall came, alas! too soon, with its long rains and deep mud, to cut short the pleasures of summer; and dark, dismal November, with its sleets, frosts, and high winds, ushering in old winter, ere the poor husbandman had fully secured his hard and precarious earnings.—Happy would it have been for Mr. Excitable, had he been able to muster sufficient resolution to shake off the symptoms of his returning malady during this trying season. But this he could not do. As the dreary months, when to leave the house was a thing almost impossible—when business was at nearly a dead stand, and men sought the comfort of their heated stoves, or fire-places, passing their time as best they might, when the blasts of winter swept triumphantly over the plain—as these dreary months advanced, and they were not short, Mr. Excitable felt a renewal of his despondency, *ennui*, and discontent, with redoubled force. He strove—vainly strove—to combat his disease, and overcome it by turning his attention to the arrangement of his books, and looking up old accounts; and when this resource was exhausted, by reading political papers, and, finally, novels and romances; but all would not do. He had once given way to the demon discontent; he had once suffered the syren fancy to poison his mind's peace; he had once allowed the imagination to transport him from the things of reality to the regions of air and nothingness, to seek happiness and consolation; and all his powers were not now sufficient to shake off the illusive approaches. Every return of bad weather—every word of complaint uttered by a disappointed neighbour, and every wayward thought that carried his imagination to the land of happiness, where his friends, *by report*, were enjoying the fruits of their enterprise, brought him to a painful sense of his misery, and aroused the flame of his discontent; and several times before the opening of spring, had he made up his mind to emigrate, and as often had he been turned from his purpose by the same powerful cause before related; but at every succeeding time, however, with less decision and certainty, until he had at last arrived at the conclusion of the traveller, who, coming to two roads leading in different directions, is indifferent which to take, and decides the point by raising his cane to let it fall to the ground, and the road it favours in its fall to pursue.