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A. WARD.

XIV.

AFFAIRS ROUND THE VILLAGE GREEN.

It isn't every one who has a village green to write about. I have one, although I have not seen much of it for some years past. I am back again, now. In the language of the duke who went round with a motto about him, "I am here!" and I fancy I am about as happy a peasant of the vale as ever garnished a melodrama, although I have not as yet danced on my village green as the melo-dramatic peasant usually does on his. It was the case when Rosina Meadows left home.

The time rolls by serenely now—so serenely that I don't care what time it is, which is fortunate, because my watch is at present in the hands of those "men of New York who are called rioters." We met by chance, the usual way—certainly not by appointment—and I brought the interview to a close with all possible despatch. Assuring them that I wasn't Mr. Greeley, particularly, and that he had never boarded in the private family where I enjoy the comforts of a home, I tendered them my watch, and begged they would distribute it judiciously among the labouring classes, as I had seen the rioters styled in certain public prints.

Why should I loiter feverishly in Broadway, stabbing the hissing hot air with the splendid gold-headed cane that was presented to me by the citizens of Waukegan, Illinois, as a slight testimonial of their esteem? Why broil in my rooms? You said to me, Mrs. Gloverson, when I took possession of those rooms, that no matter how warm it might be, a breeze had a way of blowing into them, and that they were,

withal, quite countryfied; but I am bound to say, Mrs. Gloverson, that there was nothing about them that ever reminded me, in the remotest degree, of daisies or new-mown hay. Thus, with sarcasm, do I smash the deceptive Gloverson.

Why stay in New York when I had a village green? I gave it up, the same as I would an intricate conundrum—and, in short, I am here.

Do I miss the glare and crash of the imperial thoroughfare? the milkman, the fiery, untamed omnibus horses, the soda fountains, Central Park, and those things? Yes, I do; and I can go on missing 'em for quite a spell, and enjoy it.

The village from which I write to you is small. It does not contain over forty houses, all told; but they are milk-white, with the greenest of blinds, and for the most part are shaded with beautiful elms and willows. To the right of us is a mountain—to the left a lake. The village nestles between. Of course it does. I never read a novel in my life in which the villages didn't nestle. Villages invariably nestle. It is a kind of way they have.

We are away from the cars. The iron-horse, as my little sister aptly remarks in her composition *On Nature*, is never heard to shriek in our midst; and on the whole I am glad of it.

The villagers are kindly people. They are rather incoherent on the subject of the war, but not more so, perhaps, than are people elsewhere. One citizen, who used to sustain a good character, subscribed for the *Weekly New York Herald*, a few