

present a succession of picturesque landscapes, while the swollen James, muddy with the drainage of the rich red soils of the tobacco plantations of this section of the State, flows swiftly by. The railway soon led us away from the hills bordering the James into the level land of Southern Virginia, to the Valley of the Appomattox, where the apple tree stands under which Lee surrendered. Around Petersburg, on the banks of this river, were the closing struggles of the rebellion, but now a brisk trade in tobacco has replaced the former military ardour among the inhabitants, and the town is a thriving mart of that traffic. To the southward there is much pine wood and poor agriculture, the worn-out farms having primitive cabins, which the pigs and little darkey "piccaninnies" appeared to hold in joint tenancy. A vicious agricultural system, combined with the planter's poverty, has ruined most of the plantations in this region, so that the sparse population may be said to exist rather than to live. New blood must be infused before there can be much improvement. The people—whites and blacks together—cluster at the "cross-roads" grocery, and discuss politics and the news of the neighborhood. The whites do as little work as possible, while the negroes lazily endeavor to coax an apology for a crop out of the poor soil by the rudest culture. Broad stretches of pine barrens cross the level land, and on the paths through the woods an occasional ox team plods along, or a stray horseman can be seen going home with the supplies from the store—not forgetting the whiskey-jug hung from the saddle-bow. At each little railway station, where the train holds up for a moment, is generally the "saloon" or "bar" where the population of both colors—all men being now free in America—are impartially supplied with patriotism in a liquid form; and thus Virginia imperceptibly blends into North Carolina, and the "first families of Virginia" are replaced by the "tar heels" of the latter commonwealth. We soon cross the deep valley of the Roanoke river, and after a brief halt at the town of Weldon enter upon a monotonous journey through the flat and uninteresting pine belt for many miles. This belt borders the Atlantic coast from New