

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE MUSTACHE.

We open our eyes in this living world around us, in a wonder land, peopled with dreams, and haunted with wonderful shapes; and every day dawns upon us in a medley of new marvels. We are awakened from these dreams by contact with hard, stubborn facts, not rudely and harshly, but gradually and tenderly. So much that is bright and beautiful, and full of romance and wonder, passes away with the earlier years of life, that by the time we are able to earn our first salary we hold in our hands only the crumpled, withered leaves of childhood's simple creeds and loving superstitions. Year after year, the iconoclastic hand of earnest, real life, tears from the lofty pedestals upon which our loving fancy had enshrined them, the gods of gold that crumble into worthless clay at our feet. We live to lose faith, at last, in "Puss in Boots;" we cease to weep over the sad tragedy of "Cock Robin;" there comes a time when we can read "Arabian Nights," and then go to bed without a tremor; with one heart-breaking pang at last we give up darling "Jack the Giant Killer," and acknowledge him to be the fraud he stands confessed; it is not long after that we learn to look upon William Tell as a national myth, and then we come to know, in spite of all that orthodox theology has taught us to the contrary, that Adam was not the first man—that raised a mustache. Adam was too old—when he was born—to care very much about what our grander and more gradually developed civilization considers the crowning facial ornament. And after his natural human idleness got him into perfectly natural human trouble, he was kept too busy raising something to put under his lip, to think much about what grew above it. If Adam wore a mustache, he never raised it. It raised itself. It evolved itself out of its own inner consciousness, like a primordial germ. It grew, like the weeds on his farm, in spite of him, and to torment him. For Adam had hardly got his farm reduced to a kind of turbulent, weed-producing, granger fighting, regular order of things—had scarcely settled down

to the quiet, happy, care-free, independent life of a jocund farmer, with nothing under the canopy to molest or make him afraid, with everything on the plantation going on smoothly and lovelily, with a little rust in the oats; army worm in the corn; Colorado beetles swarming up and down the potato patch; cutworms laying waste the cucumbers; curculio in the plums and borers in the apple trees; a new kind of bug that he didn't know the name of, desolating the wheat fields; dry weather burning up the wheat, wet weather blighting the corn; too cold for the melons, too dreadfully hot for the strawberries; chickens dying with the pip; hogs being gathered to their fathers with the cholera; sheep fading away with a complication of things that no man could remember; horses getting along as well as could be expected, with a little spavin, ring bone, wolf teeth, distemper, heaves, blind staggers, collar chafes, saddle galls, colic now and then, founder occasionally, epizootic when there was nothing else; cattle going wild with the horn ail; moth in the bee hives; snakes in the milk house; moles in the kitchen garden—Adam had just about got through breaking wild land with a crooked stick, and settled down comfortably, when the sound of the boy was heard in the land.

Did it ever occur to you that Adam was probably the most troubled and worried man that ever lived? We have always pictured Adam as a care-worn looking man; a puzzled looking granger who would sigh fifty times a day, and sit down on a log and run his irresolute fingers through his hair while he wondered what under the canopy he was going to do with those boys, and whatever was going to become of them. We have thought too, that as often as our esteemed parent asked himself this conundrum, he gave it up. They must have been a source of constant trouble and mystification to him. For you see they were the first boys that humanity ever had any experience with. And there was no one else in the neighbourhood who had any boy, with whom Adam, in his moments of perplexity, could consult. There