

On the Wing.

ARKANSAS—NO. 3.

In the July number of 1878 we gave you the second article on our visit to the above-named State. A typographical error appeared in that article; the monster vine spoken of there should have read thirty feet instead of three.

We arrived at Little Rock on Monday. The Sunday previous to our arrival two of the editors of different party papers met at one of the corners of the principal street, drew their revolvers and blazed away at each other for some time. One was shot in the arm, the other had a ball passed through the rim of his hat.

The landlady of the house at which we stayed had a brother a Minister of the Gospel; he never used to enter the pulpit without his loaded revolver. Her daughter, quite a child, had seen two people shot. At the railway station we heard the report of a pistol, saw a crowd rush at a man and wrench a pistol out of his hand; he tried to shoot a railway official that had supplied his place by another person. The law in the State prohibits the carrying of fire-arms, but it is winked at by those in position and power. The Sunday duel or skirmish was witnessed by the Sheriff, constables, &c., but no one interfered. A farce of a trial ensued to blind the eyes of the world, but the law-breakers were allowed to go unpunished. The tone of the people was this: "It is their own business and leave them alone."

We spent one Sunday at Little Rock. In the morning we took a walk. The beautiful Magnolia trees, with their exquisitely beautiful flowers, looked charming. The mocking birds were warbling in nearly every tree; the roses, honeysuckles, etc., filled the air with their perfume. The novelty pleased us. We attended divine worship in the morning, and after dinner took a drive into the country. We passed the burying grounds of the slain during the Rebellion; many thousands were buried here. The burying ground of the Confederates was a wilderness of trees, the fence decayed, and no signs that interments had taken place. The burying ground of the Federals was well fenced, neatly kept, and a marble monument placed at the head of every grave. What sad, sad thoughts this awakens! The once wealthy planters' sons, the owners of this land, lay unregarded, while the graves of the conscript hirelings are marked with honor and kept up at an enormous expense to the Government.

We had previously been introduced to one of these old planters, a Mr. Woodruff. He resides in Little Rock, has a three storey, handsome, spacious brick mansion, like an Englishman's country seat, with fine, large, handsome trees, vines, drives and walks—a perfectly charming place to us. The old gentleman appeared between eighty and ninety, in good health, and having a clear, sound intellect—a perfect gentleman. He informed us that he always opposed the Rebellion, and he never felt so sad as on the day he heard the Confederates had commenced the war. His family and property were nearly all swept away, and now he could not pay the taxes on the little left. We heard of other heart-rending tales from other farmers. You can have but the slightest idea of the real hardships these poor creatures have endured. You should be thankful you are under the Union Jack. There are circumstances existing in the United States that foreshadow a yet greater war than they have yet had. We do not mean that the South can ever rise again, but the excited political feeling in the North and South, East and West, is like gunpowder. The best men in the States will not enter into political life. The low resorts and unprincipled tactics used are demoralizing; the title of Honorable in this part of the

world does not often imply the right term to parties prefixing it to their names.

To proceed on our journey. We drove over such a rocky road and up such hills as we never had seen a vehicle travel before. We came to a vineyard belonging to an Englishman from Devonshire. This individual had been here many years, and was enterprising and successful. He had 20 acres in vines, made wine and sold to good advantage. The land on which the vines grew was covered with stones. One could hardly imagine how they could take root, but they grew and thrived. On our return we took a level road, passing large cotton plantations. The crop in some places was up and had been cultivated; in other places the seed was not yet planted. We passed numerous negro residences, and here were again surprised, for at every house (and sometimes the houses were far apart) such a family of young negroes and negroes were to be seen about the same size, that we looked and looked again for more houses, or some other signs for their production than a negro woman. We should almost think they were hatched, judging from their numbers and small, even size. Every house had its quota, and a healthy, thriving lot they were. It is all nonsense to talk of the negroes dying out there; not as long as there is corn in the crib or chickens on the roost. There were 27 prisoners taken to Little Rock one day when we were there, mostly for petty larcenies, such as chicken-stealing. The white inhabitants wish to break them of that habit, consequently they make an occasional raid on the darkies. As we were driving along we heard the sounds of hymn-singing. We stopped the horses and walked to the log house from whence the sounds proceeded. We went to the rear of the house, or rather double house, with a covered space between, and stoop or rough verandah at the back. There was an assemblage of colored people at their devotional exercises. Their singing was pleasing, and the prayer which followed may have been to them. The main operator yelled and thundered. His words flowed in such rapid succession that it was difficult to catch all. He was kneeling. His head would be at one instant nearly on the ground, and the next erect, about as quick as lightning, and his hands and arms in all directions as quick as thought. He was evidently enraged at some opposition preacher who had opened business in that neighborhood, as he brought many imprecations against him. The other negroes and negroes sometimes moaned, sighed and howled most dismally. You may talk about having seen negroes in Canada. We have seen hundreds of colored people with a kind of dingy look, but in Arkansas they fairly shine like polished boots.

The houses in this part of the country are constructed entirely different to our houses in the north. In fact, they have two houses, one for living in, the other for cooking and working in, with a large covered space between, which is open at the two sides. In this space they take their meals, sit, dance or hold meetings in the warm weather. These openings are necessary, as the heat is too great to live in confined rooms. Some of the negroes build their houses after the same principle, but of logs. The planters' houses are built of brick or frame work.

We proceeded on our journey and called at the house of one of the best market gardeners in this part of the State. But, oh! the soil, the drouth, the lack of moisture or fertility, or proper air! We never dreamed of raising crops under such adverse circumstances as exist at this place—where cotton, corn, the peach tree, vine, wild rose and magnolia trees thrive—where the mocking bird sings. But grass will not grow—that is, grass like

we have; only a poor miserable species called Buffalo Grass, which is worse than any weed we have and not good for anything. Good pasture grass will not grow in this State, and where that will not grow our vegetables will not thrive. Not a pasture field to be seen along the road-side; no grass. The working teams have to be kept in pens or fed corn all summer, or on praires; hay has to be brought from long distances. We never saw a sheep; only a few poor hogs and the most miserable apology for cows, and these at only one place.

It was nearly seven o'clock when we reached Little Rock. We went directly to our residence, one of the most comfortable in the city, hungry as an Englishman after 14 miles ride and long walks up mountain sides, over plantations and attending meetings. But we wanted more food, and went to the dining-room. Not a vestige of supper appeared, nor any symptoms of such—fire out in the kitchen. We saw no hope, so we took another stroll. No cake shop was open, but the saloons were and were doing an excellent business. The negroes and whites were all cleanly and well attired, and all appeared peaceable and quiet. We saw no drunken person while in this State.

We then attended divine service, but very few were found in any of the churches. We returned home expecting a late supper. We talked and chatted till nearly eleven o'clock, but no one said food. We thought we could submit to this and do as others did, but we tell you we were hungry. We realized that that State would not be a happy one for an Englishman. The next day at dinner-time we asked about the customs of that State, and found that no tea or supper on Sunday was the Sunday-custom. We do not agree with that kind of theology at all, at all. Our landlady had been extremely attentive to our requirements, and the best luxuries that the market could afford were procured. Venison in this hot weather, and any vegetable or fruit was on our table. We thanked our hostess for her extreme kindness and requested her not to put herself to such trouble, as we knew she was doing so much to make us comfortable. Her laconic reply was brief and to the point, viz.: "We do not seem to succeed very well. Oh poor unlucky me!"

The State may have advantages, but we have mentioned most of them. From what we have seen we would rather have 25 acres of land in Canada to live on than one thousand acres of the best land that we have seen in that State, and there are millions in it that we do not think will be worth one cent in our life time. We may give you more about this trip at some future time.

Summer Fallowing.

Fallowing has not at any time been so general in this Western World as it has been in Europe, nor is it so much practiced even there as it was some time since. The introduction of turnip culture in Great Britain has rendered the necessity for fallowing less there than when hoed crops were less known. But it cannot be wholly dispensed with. It is especially necessary that heavy, tenacious clay land receive a thorough summer fallow betimes. There are stores of plant-food in the soil that under certain circumstances can only be made available by exposing it as much as possible to the influence of the sun and air. Certain chemical changes can only be effected by such powerful influences, and this, added to the ammonia absorbed from the atmosphere, has been found to produce heavy wheat crops, of superior quality, on land that had been growing wheat for years. As a great object to be obtained by summer fallowing is to expose the plowed soil to the sun, the greater the surface so exposed so much the more is the object accomplished. In order to do this the land