

as you go along, and join in the chat with observations of my own, which can't be done t'other way."

Thinks I to myself, that's just the disagreeable part of it, for interruptions spile all; but when a feller has just given me a snug travellin' job onasked, and done the handsome thing, it aint any great return arter all, to let him put his oar in sometimes, even if he does catch crabs now and then, as the sailors say, and half cover you with spray.

"Exactly," sais I. "I count it a great profit to have the benefit of your remarks; for a man don't rise to the tip-top of the truck-head of the mast of the ship of state as you have, President, without onderstandin' the ropes, that's a fact. For the statesman's ship is different from the merchant's ship in this; you can't jump in at the cabin-window in one, as you can if you are the owner's son in the other, but must begin before the mast in a regular way, for then you know what every hand's work and duty is, and how to keep 'em at it."

"There is a great deal of truth in that, Mr. Slick," said he. "I sarved my time to larn politics, first to town meetins, which I call the statesman's nursery, then at corporations and mass meetins; arterwards in state legislatures and conventions, and wound up for the finishin' touch in Congress, besides larnin' the word of command in volunteer companies, and sarvin' a campaign agin the Florida Indgians. Heroes are at a premium, and sages at a discount with us. Throwin' others in the shade makes one stand out the prominent figure himself, as Artimus Wheelock, the great American painter, used to say. I think you understand that beautiful figure of speech, Mr. Slick, for if I don't disremember, you are a dab at paintin' in iles yourself, aint you?"

"Rather a daub," sais I, with some pretended diffidence, for that is a subject I rather pride myself on.

"You are too modest, Mr. Slick," said he, quite patronizin' like: "you hide your light."

Modest, sais I to myself; come that aint bad. If I aint hanged till that charge is proved, I guess my neck is safe from a rope, at any rate. Modest! Oh, Lord! and I thought I should have haw-hawed right out.

"Well, President," sais I, "I ought to be a modest man, that's a fact; for I've had some highsts in my day, when goin' too confident on slippery ground, that was enough to shake the consait out of any man, I can tell you. Oh, what a rise the great Daniel Webster took out of me onet. He sold me, that's a fact, and almost sent me down south like a nigger. I felt streaked enough, you may depend. It is a caution to sinners, I do assure you, and may be a warnin' to others."

"Slick," said President, "Danel was a man that could beat us