

The smoke of the scattered villages curled slowly upwards, and was the only sign of human life: not a voice was heard save of the solitary wood-bird, and at last that gave place to the lower hum of tiny insects. At a later hour, down in a deep dark valley, where not long since had stood a piece of forest, stout-limbed and many leaved, there were a thousand smouldering fires smoking and sparkling away as the midnight air fanned the red masses into fresh life, as though they were the ghosts of the forest kings vowing to have one more struggle ere they passed away. And then the cool breeze freshened, and the fires grew hotter and redder, looking like the two thousand glaring eyes of a thousand fierce old giants disturbed from their mountain haunts by the busy hand of restless, pigmy man. The deep hush is at last broken by a sound, a cry—'tis my wife! I rush into the rest-house and find that one of the children had fallen out of the bed between it and the wall. The syrup of squills was in instant demand, but not to be found amidst the heaps of things about us, so I had recourse to the old remedy of brandy and salt.

After dreaming all sorts of dreams about all sorts of dangerous passes I awoke in the morning, turned out all hands, bundled in the traps, swallowed a basin of hot blacking paid for under the name of coffee, and away we went again with many an anxious foreboding of our journey up "the pass." I was most agreeably surprised to find that Pigtail showed no signs of rushing in the excitement of the moment over the precipices, as Glibb had prophesied, but I supposed that we were not then at a sufficient height. Land-slips we had seen nothing of, and I fervently hoped we should not, as they would considerably spoil the pleasure of the day. When we had gone about half way up, as I fancied, I got off my poney and walked, determining no longer to risk a dash into futurity, particularly as I noticed Pigtail getting fidgetty. But we couldn't at that time have been more than a third of the way up; on and on we went, there seemed to be no end of the turnings, and so dull and dreary every thing began to grow, that I fancied we must have passed Nuwera Ellia, and got into undiscovered lands. Such melancholy-looking trees, and the rocks, too, as Mrs. Brown justly remarked, they all wanted a good scrubbing-brush about them; and so they did. It appeared to me that they had been a sending up all their old worn-out scraggy trees from the low country for the benefit of their constitutions. There they was, and there they stood, like an old lot of Greenwich pensioners cut at the elbows. Some of 'em had evidently had attacks of liver from the abscesses in their sides; others were troubled with spinal complaints, gone in the back, but most of 'em were consumptive, and had run up tall, thin, asthmatical old fellows; you could fancy as the wind whistled amongst 'em that you heard them cough and wheeze. Precious cold they looked; many of 'em to keep themselves warm a bit, had been a putting on aprons, not of leaves, for they hadn't any to spare, but of thin dirty moss, for all the world like horse-hair; every now and then a gleam of the sun would peep down upon some of them, forcing a way through the tops of the mountains over head, and then you could see their few brown-paper leaves