

inhabited by a sturdy Dutch yeomanry, and is the agricultural mother of Catskill, Saugerties and Kingston. The upland on the west for about forty miles is rugged, dreary and thinly settled, but the winding valley of Schoharie beyond is possessed of many charms peculiarly American. The mountains themselves are covered with dense forests abounding in cliffs and waterfalls, and for the most part untrodden by the footsteps of man. Looking at them from the Hudson, the eye is attracted by two deep hollows, which are called "Closes." The one nearest to the Mountain House, Kauterskill Clove, is distinguished for a remarkable fall, which has been made familiar to the world by the pen of Bryant and the pencil of Cole; but this Clove is rapidly filling up with human habitations; while the other, Plauterkill Clove, though yet possessing much of its original glory, is certain of the same destiny. The gorge whence issues the Esopus, is among the Shandaken mountains, and not visible from the Hudson.

My nominal residence, at the present time, is at the mouth of Plauterkill Clove. To the west, and only half a mile from my abode, are the beautiful mountains, whose outlines fade away to the north, like the waves of the sea when covered with a visible atmosphere. The nearest, and to me the most beloved of these, is called South Peak. It is nearly four thousand feet high, and covered from base to summit with one vast forest of trees, varying from eighty to an hundred feet in height. Like its brethren, it is a wild and uncultivated wilderness, abounding in all the interesting features of mountain scenery. Like a corner-stone, does it stand at the junction of the northern and western ranges of the Catskills; and as its huge form looms against the evening sky, it inspires one with awe, as if it were the ruler of the world:—yet I have learned to love it as a friend. I have pondered upon its impressive features when reposing in the noontide sunshine, when enveloped in clouds, when holding communion