

up his form, and yet I linger. Why lingerest thou? Farewell! and again I say, farewell!"

Mr. Belcher had very carefully covered all his tracks. He had insisted on having his name omitted from the list of officers of the Continental Petroleum Company. He had carefully forwarded the names of all who had invested in its stock for record, so that, if the books should ever be brought to light, there should be no apparent irregularity in his dealings. His own name was there with the rest, and a small amount of money had been set aside for operating expenses, so that something would appear to have been done.

The day approached for his departure, and his agent, with his family, was installed in his house for its protection; and one fine morning, having first posted on two or three public places the announcement of a second monthly dividend to be paid through his agent to the stockholders in the Continental, he, with his family, rode down the hill in his coach, followed by an enormous baggage-wagon loaded with trunks, and passed through the village. Half of Sevenoaks was out to witness the departure. Cheers rent the air from every group; and if a conqueror had returned from the most sacred patriotic service he could not have received a heartier ovation than that bestowed upon the graceless fugitive. He bowed from side to side in his own lordly way, and flourished and extended his pudgy palm in courtly courtesy.

Mrs. Belcher sat back in her seat, shrinking from all these demonstrations, for she knew that her husband was unworthy of them. The carriages disappeared in the distance, and then—sad, suspicious, uncommunicative—the men went off to draw their last dividend and go about their work. They fought desperately against their own distrust. In the proportion that they doubted the proprietor they were ready to defend him; but

there was not a man of them who had not been fairly warned that he was running his own risk, and who had not sought for the privilege of throwing away his money.

CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH JIM ENLARGES HIS PLANS FOR A HOUSE,
AND COMPLETES HIS PLANS FOR A HOUSE-KEEPER.

WHEN, at last, Jim and Mr. Benedict were left alone by the departure of Mr. Balfour and the two lads, they sat as if they had been stranded by a sudden squall after a long and pleasant voyage. Mr. Benedict was plunged into profound dejection, and Jim saw that he must be at once and persistently diverted.

"I telled Mr. Balfour," said he, "afore he went away, about the house. I telled him about the stoop, an' the chairs, an' the ladder for posies to run up on, an' I said somethin' about cubberds and settles, an' other thingem-bobs that have come into my mind; an' says he: 'Jim, be ye goin' to splice?' An' says I: 'If so be I can find a little stick as'll answer, it wouldn't be strange if I did.' 'Well,' says he, 'now's yer time, if ye're ever goin' to, for the hay-day of your life is a passin' away.' An' says I: 'No, ye don't. My hay-day has jest come, and my grass is dry an' it'll keep. It's good for fodder, an' it wouldn't make a bad bed.'"

"What did he say to that?" inquired Mr. Benedict.

"Says he: 'I shouldn't wonder if ye was right. Have ye found the woman?' 'Yes,' says I. 'I have found a genuine creetur.' An' says he: 'What is her name?' An' says I: 'That's tellin'. It's a name as oughter be changed, an' it won't be my fault if it ain't.' An' then

says he : ' Can I be of any 'sistance to ye ? ' An' says I : ' No. Courtin' is like dyin' ; ye can't trust it to another feller. Ye've jest got to go it alone.' An' then he laughed, an' says he : ' Jim, I wish ye good luck, an' I hope ye'll live to have a little feller o' yer own.' An' says I : ' Old Jerusalem ! If I ever have a little feller o' my own,' says I, ' this world will have to spread to hold me.' "

Then Jim put his head down between his knees, and thought. When it emerged from its hiding his eyes were moist, and he said :

" Ye must 'scuse me, Mr. Benedict, for ye know what the feelin's of a pa is. It never come to me in this way afore."

Benedict could not help smiling at this new exhibition of sympathy ; for Jim, in the comprehension of his feelings in the possible event of possessing offspring, had arrived at a more vivid sense of his companion's bereavement.

" Now, I tell ye what it is," said Jim. " You an' me has got to be brushin' round. We can't set here an' think about them that's gone ; an' now I want to tell ye 'bout another thing that Mr. Balfour said. Says he : ' Jim, if ye're goin' to build a house, build a big one, an' keep a hotel. I'll fill it all summer for ye,' says he. ' I know lots o' folks,' says he, ' that would be glad to stay with ye, an' pay all ye axed 'em. Build a big house,' says he, ' an' take yer time for't, an' when ye git ready for company, let a feller know.' I tell ye, it made my eyes stick out to think on't. ' Jim Fenton's hotel ! ' says I. ' I don't b'lieve I can swing it.' ' If ye want any more money'n ye've got,' says he, ' call on me.' "

The idea of a hotel, with all its intrusions upon his privacy and all its diversions, was not pleasant to Mr. Benedict ; but he saw at once that no woman worthy of Jim could be expected to be happy in the woods entirely deprived of society. It would establish a quicker and

more regular line of communication with Sevenoaks, and thus make a change from its life to that of the woods a smaller hardship. But the building of a large house was a great enterprise for two men to undertake.

The first business was to draw a plan. In this work Mr. Benedict was entirely at home. He could not only make plans of the two floors, but an elevation of the front ; and when, after two days of work, with frequent questions and examinations by Jim, his drawings were concluded, they held a long discussion over them. It was all very wonderful to Jim, and all very satisfactory—at least, he said so ; and yet he did not seem to be entirely content.

" Tell me, Jim, just what the trouble is," said his architect, " for I see there's something wanting."

" I don't see," said Jim, " jest where ye're goin' to put 'im."

" Who do you mean ? Mr. Balfour ? "

" No ; I don't mean no man."

" Harry ? Thede ? "

" No ; I mean, s'posin'. Can't we put on an ell when we want it ? "

" Certainly."

" An' now, can't ye make yer picter look kind o' cozy like, with a little feller playin' on the ground down there afore the stoop ? "

Mr. Benedict not only could do this, but he did it ; and then Jim took it, and looked at it for a long time.

" Well, little feller, ye can play thar till ye're tired, right on that paper, an' then ye must come into the house, an' let yer ma wash yer face ; " and then Jim, realizing the comical side of all this charming dream, laughed till the woods rang again, and Benedict laughed with him. It was a kind of clearing up of the cloud of sentiment that enveloped them both, and they were ready to work. They settled, after a long discussion, upon the

site of the new house, which was back from the river, near Number Ten. There were just three things to be done during the remainder of the autumn and the approaching winter. A cellar was to be excavated, the timber for the frame of the new house was to be cut and hewed, and the lumber was to be purchased and drawn to the river. Before the ground should freeze, they determined to complete the cellar, which was to be made small—to be, indeed, little more than a cave beneath the house, that would accommodate such stores as it would be necessary to shield from the frost. A fortnight of steady work, by both the men, not only completed the excavation, but built the wall.

Then came the selection of timber for the frame. It was all found near the spot, and for many days the sound of two axes was heard through the great stillness of the Indian summer; for at this time nature, as well as Jim, was in a dream. Nuts were falling from the hickory trees, and squirrels were leaping along the ground, picking up the stores on which they were to subsist during the long winter that lay before them. The robins had gone away southward, and the voice of the thrushes was still. A soft haze steeped the wilderness in its tender hue—a hue that carried with it the fragrance of burning leaves. At some distant forest shrine, the priestly winds were swinging their censers, and the whole temple was pervaded with the breath of worship. Blue-jays were screaming among leathern-leaved oaks, and the bluer kingfishers made their long diagonal flights from side to side of the river, chattering like magpies. There was one infallible sign that winter was close upon the woods. The wild geese, flying over Number Nine, had called to Jim with news from the Arctic, and he had looked up at the huge harrow scraping the sky, and said: "I seen ye, an' I know what ye mean,"

The timber was cut of appropriate length and rolled

upon low scaffoldings, where it could be conveniently hewed during the winter; then two days were spent in hunting and in setting traps for sable and otter, and then the two men were ready to arrange for the lumber.

This involved the necessity of a calculation of the materials required, and definite specifications of the same. Not only this, but it required that Mr. Benedict should himself accompany Jim on the journey to the mill, three miles beyond Mike Conlin's house. He naturally shrank from this exposure of himself; but so long as he was not in danger of coming in contact with Mr. Belcher, or with any one whom he had previously known, he was persuaded that the trip would not be unpleasant to him. In truth, as he grew stronger personally, and felt that his boy was out of harm's way, he began to feel a certain indefinite longing to see something of the world again, and to look into new faces.

As for Jim, he had no idea of returning to Number Nine again until he had seen Sevenoaks, and that one most interesting person there with whom he had associated his future, although he did not mention his plan to Mr. Benedict.

The ice was already gathering in the stream, and the winter was descending so rapidly that they despaired of taking their boat down to the old landing, and permitting it to await their return, as they would be almost certain to find it frozen in, and be obliged to leave it there until spring. They were compelled, therefore, to make the complete journey on foot, following to the lower landing the "tote-road" that Mike Conlin had taken when he came to them on his journey of discovery.

They started early one morning about the middle of November, and, as the weather was cold, Turk bore them company. Though Mr. Benedict had become quite hardy, the tramp of thirty miles over the frozen ground, that had already received a slight covering of

snow, was a cruel one, and taxed to their utmost his powers of endurance.

Jim carried the pack of provisions, and left his companion without a load; so by steady, quiet, and almost speechless walking, they made the entire distance to Mike Conlin's house before the daylight had entirely faded from the pale, cold sky. Mike was taken by surprise. He could hardly be made to believe that the hearty-looking, comfortably dressed man whom he found in Mr. Benedict was the same whom he had left many months before in the rags of a pauper and the emaciation of a feeble convalescent. The latter expressed to Mike the obligations he felt for the service which Jim informed him had been rendered by the good-natured Irishman, and Mike blushed while protesting that it was "nothing at all, at all," and thinking of the hundred dollars that he earned so easily.

"Did you know, Jim," said Mike, to change the subject, "that owld Belcher has gone to New Yorrk to live?"

"No."

"Yis, the whole kit an' boodle of 'em is gone, an' the purty man wid 'em."

"Hallelujer!" roared Jim.

"Yis, and be gorry he's got me hundred dollars," said Mike.

"What did ye gi'en it to 'im for, Mike? I didn't take ye for a fool."

"Well, ye see, I wint in for ile, like the rist of 'em. Och! ye shud 'ave seen the owld feller talk! 'Mike,' says he, 'ye can't afford to lose this,' says he. 'I should miss me slape, Mike,' says he, 'if it shouldn't all come back to ye.' 'An' if it don't,' says I, 'there'll be two uv us lyin' awake, an' ye'll have plinty of company; an' what they lose in dhraimin' they'll take out in cus-sin',' says I. 'Mike,' says he, 'ye hadn't better do it, an' if ye do, I don't take no resk;' an' says I, 'They're all

goin' in, an' I'm goin' wid 'em.' 'Very well,' says he, lookin' kind o' sorry, and then, be gorry, he scooped the whole pile, an' barrin' the ile uv his purty spache, divil a bit have I seen more nor four dollars."

"Divil a bit will ye see agin," said Jim, shaking his head. "Mike, ye're a fool."

"That's jist what I tell mesilf," responded Mike; "but there's betther music nor hearin' it repaited; an' I've got betther company in it, barrin' Mr. Benedict's presence, nor I've got here in my own house."

Jim, finding Mike a little sore over his loss, refrained from further allusion to it; and Mr. Benedict declared himself ready for bed. Jim had impatiently waited for this announcement, for he was anxious to have a long talk with Mike about the new house, the plans for which he had brought with him.

"Clear off yer table," said Jim, "an' peel yer eyes, Mike, for I'm goin' to show ye somethin' that'll s'prise ye."

When his order was obeyed, he unrolled the precious plans.

"Now, ye must remember, Mike, that this isn't the house; these is plans, as Mr. Benedict has drawn. That's the kitchen, and that's the settin'-room, and that's the cubberd, and that's the bedroom for us, ye know, and on that other paper is the chambers."

Mike looked at it all earnestly, and with a degree of awe, and then shook his head.

"Jim," said he, "I don't want to bodder ye, but ye've jist been fooled. Don't ye see that divil a place 'ave ye got for the pig?"

"Pig!" exclaimed Jim, with contempt. "D'ye s'pose I build a house for a pig? I ain't no pig, an' she ain't no pig."

"The proof of the puddin' is in the atin', Jim; an' ye don't know the furrst thing about house-kapin'. Ye can

no more kape house widout a pig, nor ye can row yer boat widout a paddle. I'm an owld house-kaper, Jim, an' I know; and a man that don't tend to his pig furrst, is no betther nor a b'y. Ye might put 'im in Number Tin, but he'd go through it quicker nor water through a basket. Don't talk to me about house-kapin' widout a pig. Ye might give 'im that little shtoop to lie on, an' let 'im run under the house to slape. That wouldn't be bad now, Jim?"

The last suggestion was given in a tender, judicial tone, for Mike saw that Jim was disappointed, if not disgusted. Jim was looking at his beautiful stoop, and thinking of the pleasant dreams he had associated with it. The idea of Mike's connecting the life of a pig with that stoop was more than he could bear.

"Why, Mike," said he, in an injured tone, "that stoop's the place where she's agoin' to set."

"Oh! I didn't know, Jim, ye was agoin' to kape hins. Now, ef you're agoin' to kape hins, ye kin do as ye plase, Jim, in coorse; but ye musn't forgit the pig, Jim. Be gorry, he ates everything that nobody ilse kin ate, and then ye kin ate him."

Mike had had his expression of opinion, and shown to his own satisfaction that his judgments were worth something. Having done this, he became amiable, sympathetic, and even admiring. Jim was obliged to tell him the same things a great many times, and to end at last without the satisfaction of knowing that the Irishman comprehended the precious plans. He would have been glad to make a confidant of Mike, but the Irishman's obtuseness and inability to comprehend his tenderer sentiments, repulsed him, and drove him back upon himself.

Then came up the practical question concerning Mike's ability to draw the lumber for the new house. Mike thought he could hire a horse for his keeping, and

a sled for a small sum, that would enable him to double his facilities for doing the job; and then a price for the work was agreed upon.

The next morning, Jim and Mr. Benedict pursued their journey to the lumber-mill, and there spent the day in selecting their materials, and filling out their specifications.

The first person Mr. Benedict saw on entering the mill was a young man from Sevenoaks, whom he had known many years before. He colored as if he had been detected in a crime, but the man gave him no sign that the recognition was mutual. His old acquaintance had no memory of him, apparently; and then he realized the change that must have passed upon him during his long invalidism and his wonderful recovery.

They remained with the proprietor of the mill during the night.

"I jest call 'im Number Ten," said Jim, in response to the inquiries that were made of him concerning his companion. "He never telled me his name, an' I never axed 'im. I'm 'Number Nine,' an' he's 'Number Ten,' and that's all thar is about it."

Jim's oddities were known, and inquiries were pushed no further, though Jim gratuitously informed his host that the man had come into the woods to get well, and was willing to work to fill up his time.

On the following morning, Jim proposed to Mr. Benedict to go on to Sevenoaks for the purchase of more tools, and the nails and hardware that would be necessary in finishing the house. The experience of the latter during the previous day showed him that he need not fear detection, and, now that Mr. Belcher was out of the way, Jim found him possessed by a strong desire to make the proposed visit. The road was not difficult, and before sunset the two men found themselves housed in the humble lodgings that had for many years been

familiar to Jim. Mr. Benedict went into the streets, and among the shops, the next morning, with great reluctance; but this soon wore off as he met man after man whom he knew, who failed to recognize him. In truth, so many things had happened, that the memory of the man who, long ago, had been given up as dead had passed out of mind. The people would have been no more surprised to see a sleeper of the village cemetery among them than they would to have realized that they were talking with the insane pauper who had fled, as they supposed, to find his death in the forest.

They had a great deal to do during the day, and when night came, Jim could no longer be restrained from the visit that gave significance, not only to his journey, but to all his plans. Not a woman had been seen on the street during the day whom Jim had not scanned with an anxious and greedy look, in the hope of seeing the one figure that was the desire of his eyes—but he had not seen it. Was she ill? Had she left Sevenoaks? He would not inquire, but he would know before he slept.

“There’s a little business as must be did afore I go,” said Jim to Mr. Benedict, in the evening, “an’ I sh’d like to have ye go with me, if ye feel up to it.” Mr. Benedict felt up to it, and the two went out together. They walked along the silent street, and saw the great mill, ablaze with light. The mist from the falls showed white in the frosty air, and, without saying a word, they crossed the bridge, and climbed a hill dotted with little dwellings.

Jim’s heart was in his mouth, for his fears that ill had happened to the little tailoress had made him nervous; and when, at length, he caught sight of the light in her window, he grasped Mr. Benedict by the arm almost fiercely, and exclaimed:

“It’s all right. The little woman’s in, an’ waitin’ Can you see my har?”

Having been assured that it was in a presentable condition, Jim walked boldly up to the door and knocked. Having been admitted by the same girl who had received him before, there was no need to announce his name. Both men went into the little parlor of the house, and the girl in great glee ran upstairs to inform Miss Butterworth that there were two men and a dog in waiting, who wished to see her. Miss Butterworth came down from busy work, like one in a hurry, and was met by Jim with extended hand, and the gladdest smile that ever illuminated a human face.

“How fare ye, little woman?” said he. “I’m glad to see ye—gladder nor I can tell ye.”

There was something in the greeting so hearty, so warm and tender and full of faith, that Miss Butterworth was touched. Up to that moment he had made no impression upon her heart, and, quite to her surprise, she found that she was glad to see him. She had had a world of trouble since she had met Jim, and the great, wholesome nature, fresh from the woods, and untouched by the trials of those with whom she was in daily association, was like a breeze in the feverish summer, fresh from the mountains. She was, indeed, glad to see him, and surprised by the warmth of the sentiment that sprang within her heart in response to his greeting.

Miss Butterworth looked inquiringly, and with some embarrassment at the stranger.

“That’s one o’ your old friends, little woman,” said Jim. “Don’t give ’im the cold shoulder. ’Tain’t every day as a feller comes to ye from the other side o’ Jordan.”

Miss Butterworth naturally suspected the stranger’s identity, and was carefully studying his face to assure herself that Mr. Benedict was really in her presence. When some look of his eyes, or motion of his body,

brought her the conclusive evidence of his identity, she grasped both his hands, and said :

"Dear, dear, Mr. Benedict! how much you have suffered! I thank God for you, and for the good friend He has raised up to help you. It's like seeing one raised from the dead."

Then she sat down at his side, and, apparently forgetting Jim, talked long and tenderly of the past. She remembered Mrs. Benedict so well! And she had so many times carried flowers and placed them upon her grave! She told him about the troubles in the town, and the numbers of poor people who had risked their little all and lost it in the great speculation; of those who were still hoping against hope that they should see their hard-earned money again; of the execrations that were already beginning to be heaped upon Mr. Belcher; of the hard winter that lay before the village, and the weariness of sympathy which had begun to tell upon her energies. Life, which had been once so full of the pleasure of action and industry, was settling, more and more, into dull routine, and she could see nothing but trouble ahead, for herself and for all those in whom she was interested.

Mr. Benedict, for the first time since Jim had rescued him from the alms-house, became wholly himself. The sympathy of a woman unlocked his heart, and he talked in his old way. He alluded to his early trials with entire freedom, to his long illness and mental alienation, to his hopes for his boy, and especially to his indebtedness to Jim. On this latter point he poured out his whole heart, and Jim himself was deeply affected by the revelation of his gratitude. He tried in vain to protest, for Mr. Benedict, having found his tongue, would not pause until he had laid his soul bare before his benefactor. The effect that the presence of the sympathetic woman produced upon his *protégé* put a new thought

into Jim's mind. He could not resist the conviction that the two were suited to one another, and that the "little woman," as he tenderly called her, would be happier with the inventor than she would be with him. It was not a pleasant thought, but even then he cast aside his selfishness with a great struggle, and determined that he would not stand in the way of an event which would crush his fondest hopes. Jim did not know women as well as he thought he did. He did not see that the two met more like two women than like representatives of opposite sexes. He did not see that the sympathy between the pair was the sympathy of two natures which would be the happiest in dependence, and that Miss Butterworth could no more have chosen Mr. Benedict for a husband than she could have chosen her own sister.

Mr. Benedict had never been informed by Jim of the name of the woman whom he hoped to make his wife, but he saw at once, and with sincere pleasure, that he was in her presence; and when he had finished what he had to say to her, and again heartily expressed his pleasure in renewing her acquaintance, he rose to go.

"Jim, I will not cut your call short, but I must get back to my room and prepare for to-morrow's journey. Let me leave you here, and find my way back to my lodgings alone."

"All right," said Jim, "but we ain't goin' home to-morrer."

Benedict bade Miss Butterworth "good-night," but, as he was passing out of the room, Jim remembered that there was something that he wished to say to him, and so passed out with him, telling Miss Butterworth that he should soon return.

When the door closed behind them, and they stood alone in the darkness, Jim said, with his hand on his companion's shoulder, and an awful lie in his throat :

"I brung ye here hopin' ye'd take a notion to this little woman. She'd do more for ye nor anybody else. She can make yer clo'es, and be good company for ye, an'—"

"And provide for me. No, that won't do, Jim."

"Well, you'd better think on't."

"No, Jim, I shall never marry again."

"Now's yer time. Nobody knows what'll happen afore mornin'."

"I understand you, Jim," said Mr. Benedict, "and I know what all this costs you. You are worthy of her, and I hope you'll get her."

Mr. Benedict tore himself away, but Jim said, "hold on a bit."

Benedict turned, and then Jim inquired :

"Have ye got a piece of Indian rubber?"

"Yes."

"Then jest rub out the picter of the little feller in front of the stoop, an' put in Turk. If so be as somethin' happens to-night, I sh'd want to show her the plans in the mornin'; an' if she should ax me whose little feller it was, it would be sort o' cumbersome to tell her, an' I sh'd have to lie my way out on't."

Mr. Benedict promised to attend to the matter before he slept, and then Jim went back into the house.

Of the long conversation that took place that night between the woodsman and the little tailoress we shall present no record. That he pleaded his case well and earnestly, and without a great deal of bashfulness, will be readily believed by those who have made his acquaintance. That the woman, in her lonely circumstances, and with her hungry heart, could lightly refuse the offer of his hand and life was an impossibility. From the hour of his last previous visit she had unconsciously gone toward him in her affections, and when she met him she learned, quite to her own surprise, that her heart had

found its home. He had no culture, but his nature was manly. He had little education, but his heart was true, and his arm was strong. Compared with Mr. Belcher, with all his wealth, he was nobility personified. Compared with the sordid men around her, with whom he would be an object of supercilious contempt, he seemed like a demigod. His eccentricities, his generousities, his originalities of thought and fancy, were a feast to her. There was more of him than she could find in any of her acquaintances—more that was fresh, piquant, stimulating, and vitally appetizing. Having once come into contact with him, the influence of his presence had remained, and it was with a genuine throb of pleasure that she found herself with him again.

When he left her that night, he left her in tears. Bending over her, with his strong hands holding her cheeks tenderly, as she looked up into his eyes, he kissed her forehead.

"Little woman," said he, "I love ye. I never knowed what love was afore, an' if this is the kind o' thing they have in heaven, I want to go there when you do. Speak a good word for me when ye git a chance."

Jim walked on air all the way back to his lodgings—walked by his lodgings—stood still, and looked up at the stars—went out to the waterfall, and watched the writhing, tumbling, roaring river—wrapped in transcendent happiness. Transformed and transfused by love, the world around him seemed quite divine. He had stumbled upon the secret of his existence. He had found the supreme charm of life. He felt that a new principle had sprung to action within him, which had in it the power to work miracles of transformation. He could never be in the future exactly what he had been in the past. He had taken a step forward and upward—a step irretraceable.

Jim had never prayed, but there was something about

this experience that lifted his heart upward. He looked up to the stars, and said to himself: "He's somewhere up thar, I s'pose. I can't seen 'im, an' I must look purty small to Him if He can seen me; but I hope He know's as I'm obleeged to 'im, more nor I can teli 'im. When He made a good woman, He did the biggest thing out, an' when He started a man to lovin' on her, He set up the best business that was ever did. I hope He likes the 'rangement, and won't put nothin' in the way on't. Amen! I'm goin' to bed."

Jim put his last determination into immediate execution. He found Mr. Benedict in his first nap, from which he felt obliged to rouse him, with the information that it was "all right," and that the quicker the house was finished the better it would be for all concerned.

The next morning, Turk having been substituted for the child in the foreground of the front elevation of the hotel, the two men went up to Miss Butterworth's, and exhibited and talked over the plans. They received many valuable hints from the prospective mistress of the prospective mansion. The stoop was to be made broader for the accommodation of visitors; more room for wardrobes was suggested, with little conveniences for housekeeping, which complicated the plans not a little. Mr. Benedict carefully noted them all, to be wrought out at his leisure.

Jim's love had wrought a miracle in the night. He had said nothing about it to his architect, but it had lifted him above the bare utilities of a house, so that he could see the use of beauty. "Thar's one thing," said he, "as thar hain't none on us thought on; but it come to me last night. There's a place where the two ruffs come together that wants somethin', an' it seems to me it's a cupalo—somethin' to stan' up over the whole thing, and say to them as comes, 'Hallelujer!' We've done a good deal for house-keepin', now let's do somethin'

for glory. It's just like a ribbon on a bonnet, or a blow on a potato-vine. It sets it off, an' makes a kind o' Fourth o' July for it. What do ye say, little woman?"

The "little woman" accepted the suggestion, and admitted that it would at least make the building look more like a hotel.

All the details settled, the two men went away, and poor Benedict had a rough time in getting back to camp. Jim could hardly restrain himself from going through in a single day, so anxious was he to get at his traps and resume work upon the house. There was no fatigue too great for him now. The whole world was bright and full of promise; and he could not have been happier or more excited if he had been sure that at the year's end a palace and a princess were to be the reward of his enterprise.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHICH INTRODUCES SEVERAL RESIDENTS OF SEVEN-OAKS TO THE METROPOLIS AND A NEW CHARACTER TO THE READER.

HARRY BENEDICT was in the great city. When his story was known by Mrs. Balfour—a quiet, motherly woman—and she was fully informed of her husband's plans concerning him, she received him with a cordiality and tenderness which won his heart and made him entirely at home. The wonders of the shops, the wonders of the streets, the wonders of the places of public amusement, the music of the churches, the inspiration of the great tides of life that swept by him on every side, were in such sharp contrast to the mean conditions to which he had been accustomed, that he could hardly sleep. Indeed, the dreams of his unquiet slumbers were formed