

mine. They were mad, they were wild, for oil. You wouldn't have supposed there was half so much money in the town as they dug out of their old stockings to invest in oil. I was surprised, I assure you: Well, the Continental went up, and they had to be angry with somebody; and although I held more stock than any of them, they took a fancy that I had defrauded them, and so they came together to wreak their impotent spite on me. That's the sum and substance of the whole matter.

"Reporter: And that is all you have to say?"

"Answer: Well, it covers the ground. Whether I shall proceed in law against these scoundrels for maligning me, I have not determined. I shall probably do nothing about it. The men are poor, and even if they were rich, what good would it do me to get their money? I've got money enough, and money with me can never offset a damage to character. When they get cool and learn the facts, if they ever do learn them, they will be sorry. They are not a bad people at heart, though I am ashamed, as their old fellow-townsmen, to say that they have acted like children in this matter. There's a half-crazy, half-silly old doctor there by the name of Radcliffe, and an old parson by the name of Snow, whom I have helped to feed for years, who lead them into difficulty. But they're not a bad people, now, and I am sorry for their sake that this thing has got into the papers. It'll hurt the town. They have been badly led, inflamed over false information, and they have disgraced themselves.

"This closed the interview, and then Col. Belcher politely showed the *Tattler* reporter over his palatial abode. 'Taken for all in all,' he does not expect 'to look upon its like again.'

"None see it but to love it,  
None name it but to praise."

"It was 'linked sweetness long drawn out,' and must have cost the gallant Colonel a pile of stamps. Declining an invitation to visit the stables—for our new millionaire is a lover of horse-flesh, as well as the narcotic weed—and leaving that gentleman to 'witch the world with wondrous horsemanship,' the *Tattler* reporter withdrew, 'pierced through with Envy's venomous darts,' and satisfied that his courtly entertainer had been 'more sinned against than sinning.'"

Col. Belcher read the report with genuine pleasure, and then, turning over the leaf, read upon the editorial page the following:

"COL. BELCHER ALL RIGHT.—We are satisfied that the letter from Sevenoaks, published in yesterday's *Tattler*, in regard to our highly respected fellow-citizen, Colonel Robert Belcher, was a gross libel upon that gentleman, and intended, by the malicious writer, to injure an honorable and innocent man. It is only another instance of the ingratitude of rural communities toward their benefactors. We congratulate the redoubtable Colonel on his removal from so pestilent a neighborhood to a city where his sterling qualities will find 'ample scope and verge enough,' and where those who suffer 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' will not lay them to the charge of one who can, with truthfulness, declare 'Thou canst not say I did it.'"

When Mr. Belcher concluded, he muttered to himself, "Twenty dollars!—cheap enough." He had remained at home the day before; now, he could go upon 'Change with a face cleared of all suspicion. A cloud of truth had overshadowed him, but it had been dissipated by the genial sunlight of falsehood. His self-complacency was fully restored when he received a note, in the daintiest text on the daintiest paper, congratulating him on the triumphant establishment of his innocence before the New York public, and bearing as its signature a name so precious to him that he took it to his own room before destroying it and kissed it.

## CHAPTER XV.

WHICH TELLS ABOUT MRS. DILLINGHAM'S CHRISTMAS  
AND THE NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION AT THE PAL-  
GRAVE MANSION.

A BRILLIANT Christmas morning shone in at Mrs. Dillingham's window, where she sat quietly sunning the better side of her nature. Her parlor was a little paradise, and all things around her were in tasteful keeping with her beautiful self. The Christmas chimes were del-

uing the air with music; throngs were passing by on their way to and from church, and exchanging the greetings of the day; wreaths of holly were in her own windows and in those of her neighbors; and the influences of the hour—half-poetical, half-religious—held the unlovely and the evil within her in benign though temporary thrall. The good angel was dominant within her, while the bad angel slept.

Far down the vista of the ages, she was looking into a stable where a baby lay, warm in its swaddling-clothes, the mother bending over it. She saw above the stable a single star, which, palpitating with prophecy, shook its long rays out into the form of a cross, then drew them in until they circled into a blazing crown. Far above the star the air was populous with lambent forms and resonant with shouting voices, and she heard the words: "Peace on earth, good-will to men!" The chimes melted into her reverie; the kindly sun encouraged it; the voices of happy children fed it, and she was moved to tears.

What could she do now but think over her past life—a life that had given her no children—a life that had been filled neither by peace nor good-will? She had married an old man for his money; had worried him out of his life, and he had gone and left her childless. She would not charge herself with the crime of hastening to the grave her father and mother, but she knew she had not been a comfort to them. Her wilfulness; her love of money and of power; her pride of person and accomplishments; her desire for admiration; her violent passions, had made her a torment to others and to herself. She knew that no one loved her for anything good that she possessed, and knew that her own heart was barren of love for others. She felt that a little child who would call her "mother," clinging to her hand, or nestling in her bosom, could redeem her to her better

self; and how could she help thinking of the true men who, with their hearts in their fresh, manly hands, had prayed for her love in the dawn of her young beauty, and been spurned from her presence—men now in the honorable walks of life with their little ones around them? Her relatives had forsaken her. There was absolutely no one to whom she could turn for the sympathy which in that hour she craved.

In these reflections, there was one person of her own blood recalled to whom she had been a curse, and of whom, for a single moment, she could not bear to think. She had driven him from her presence—the one who, through all her childhood, had been her companion, her admirer, her loyal follower. He had dared to love and marry one whom she did not approve, and she had angrily banished him from her side. If she only had him to love, she felt that she should be better and happier, but she had no hope that he would ever return to her.

She felt now, with inexpressible loathing, the unworthiness of the charms with which she fascinated the base men around her. The only sympathy she had was from these, and the only power she possessed was over them, and through them. The aim of her life was to fascinate them; the art of her life was to keep them fascinated without the conscious degradation of herself, and, so, to lead them whithersoever she would. Her business was the manufacture of slaves—slaves to her personal charms and her imperious will. Each slave carried around his own secret, treated her with distant deference in society, spoke of her with respect, and congratulated himself on possessing her supreme favor. Not one of them had her heart, or her confidence. With a true woman's instinct, she knew that no man who would be untrue to his wife would be true to her. So she played with them as with puppies that might gambol around her, and fawn before her, but might not smutch her robes

with their dirty feet, or get the opportunity to bite her hand.

She had a house, but she had no home. Again and again the thought came to her that in a million homes that morning the air was full of music—hearty greetings between parents and children, sweet prattle from lips unstained, merry laughter from bosoms without a care. With a heart full of tender regrets for the mistakes and errors of the past, with unspeakable contempt for the life she was living, and with vain yearnings for something better, she rose and determined to join the throngs that were pressing into the churches. Hastily prepared for the street, she went out, and soon, her heart responding to the Christmas music, and her voice to the Christmas utterances from the altar, she strove to lift her heart in devotion. She felt the better for it. It was an old habit, and the spasm was over. Having done a good thing, she turned her ear away from the suggestions of her good angel, and, in turning away, encountered the suggestions of worldliness from the other side, which came back to her with their old music. She came out of the church as one comes out of a theatre, where for hours he has sat absorbed in the fictitious passion of a play, to the grateful rush and roar of Broadway, the flashing of the lights, and the shouting of the voices of the real world.

Mr. Belcher called that evening, and she was glad to see him. Arrayed in all her loveliness, sparkling with vivacity and radiant with health, she sat and wove her toils about him. She had never seemed lovelier in his eyes, and, as he thought of the unresponsive and quiet woman he had left behind him, he felt that his home was not on Fifth Avenue, but in the house where he then sat. Somehow—he could not tell how—she had always kept him at a distance. He had not dared to be familiar with her. Up to a certain point he could carry

his gallantries, but no further. Then the drift of conversation would change. Then something called her away. He grew mad with the desire to hold her hand, to touch her, to unburden his heart of its passion for her, to breathe his hope of future possession; but always, when the convenient moment came, he was gently repelled, tenderly hushed, adroitly diverted. He knew the devil was in her; he believed that she was fond of him, and thus knowing and believing, he was at his wit's end to guess why she should be so persistently perverse. He had drunk that day, and was not so easily managed as usual, and she had a hard task to hold him to his proprieties. There was only one way to do this, and that was to assume the pathetic.

Then she told him of her lonely day, her lack of employment, her wish that she could be of some use in the world, and, finally, she wondered whether Mrs. Belcher would like to have her, Mrs. Dillingham, receive with her on New Year's Day. If that lady would not consider it an intrusion, she should be happy to shut her own house, and thus be able to present all the gentlemen of the city worth knowing, not only to Mrs. Belcher, but to her husband.

To have Mrs. Dillingham in the house for a whole day, and particularly to make desirable acquaintances so easily, was a rare privilege. He would speak to Mrs. Belcher about it, and he was sure there could be but one answer. To be frank about it, he did not intend there should be but one answer; but, for form's sake, it would be best to consult her. Mr. Belcher did not say—what was the truth—that the guilt in his heart made him more careful to consult Mrs. Belcher in the matter than he otherwise would have been; but now that his loyalty to her had ceased, he became more careful to preserve its semblance. There was a tender quality in Mrs. Dillingham's voice as she parted with him for the evening, and

a half-retained, suddenly relinquished response to the pressure of his hand, which left the impression that she had checked an eager impulse. Under the influence of these, the man went out from her presence, flattered to his heart's core, and with his admiration of her self-contained and prudent passion more exalted than ever.

Mr. Belcher went directly home, and into Mrs. Belcher's room. That good lady was alone, quietly reading. The children had retired, and she was spending her time after her custom.

"Well, Sarah, what sort of a Christmas have you had?"

Mrs. Belcher bit her lip, for there was something in her husband's tone which conveyed the impression that he was preparing to wheedle her into some scheme upon which he had set his heart, and which he felt or feared, would not be agreeable to her. She had noticed a change in him. He was tenderer toward her than he had been for years, yet her heart detected the fact that the tenderness was a sham. She could not ungraciously repel it, yet she felt humiliated in accepting it. So, as she answered his question with the words: "Oh, much the same as usual," she could not look into his face with a smile upon her own.

"I've just been over to call on Mrs. Dillingham," said he.

"Ah?"

"Yes; I thought I would drop in and give her the compliments of the season. She's rather lonely, I fancy."

"So am I."

"Well now, Sarah, there's a difference; you know there is. You have your children, and ——"

"And she my husband."

"Well, she's an agreeable woman, and I must go out sometimes. My acquaintance with agreeable women in New York is not very large."

"Why don't you ask your wife to go with you? I'm fond of agreeable women too."

"You are not fond of her, and I'm afraid she suspects it."

"I should think she would. Women who are glad to receive alone the calls of married men, always do suspect their wives of disliking them."

"Well, it certainly isn't her fault that men go to see her without their wives. Don't be unfair now, my dear."

"I don't think I am," responded Mrs. Belcher. "I notice that women never like other women who are great favorites with men; and there must be some good reason for it. Women like Mrs. Dillingham, who abound in physical fascinations for men, have no liking for the society of their own sex. I have never heard a woman speak well of her, and I have never heard her speak well of any other woman."

"I have, and, more than that, I have heard her speak well of you. I think she is shamefully belied. Indeed, I do not think that either of us has a better friend than she, and I have a proposition to present to you which proves it. She is willing to come to us on New Year's Day, and receive with you—to bring all her acquaintances into your house, and make them yours and mine."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes; and I think we should be most ungrateful and discourteous to her, as well as impolitic with relation to ourselves and to our social future, not to accept the proposition."

"I don't think I care to be under obligations to Mrs. Dillingham for society, or care for the society she will bring us. I am not pleased with a proposition of this kind that comes through my husband. If she were my friend it would be a different matter, but she is not. If I were to feel myself moved to invite some lady to come here and receive with me, it would be well enough; but

this proposition is a stroke of patronage as far as I am concerned, and I don't like it. It is like Mrs. Dillingham and all of her kind. Whatever may have been her motives, it was an indelicate thing to do, and she ought to be ashamed of herself for doing it."

Mr. Belcher knew in his heart that his wife was right. He knew that every word she had spoken was the truth. He knew that he should never call on Mrs. Dillingham with his wife, save as a matter of policy; but this did not modify his determination to have his own way.

"You place me in a very awkward position, my dear," said he, determined, as long as possible, to maintain an amiable mood.

"And she has placed me in one which you are helping to fasten upon me, and not at all helping to relieve me from."

"I don't see how I can, my dear. I am compelled to go back to her with some answer; and, as I am determined to have my house open, I must say whether you accept or decline her courtesy; for courtesy it is, and not patronage at all."

Mrs. Belcher felt the chain tightening, and knew that she was to be bound, whether willing or unwilling. The consciousness of her impotence did not act kindly upon her temper, and she burst out:

"I do not want her here. I wish she would have done with her officious helpfulness. Why can't she mind her own business, and let me alone?"

Mr. Belcher's temper rose to the occasion; for although he saw in Mrs. Belcher's petulance and indignation that his victory was half won, he could not quite submit to the abuse of his brilliant pet.

"I have some rights in this house myself, my dear, and I fancy that my wishes are deserving of respect, at least."

"Very well. If it's your business, why did you come

to me with it? Why didn't you settle it before you left the precious lady, who is so much worthier your consideration than your wife? Now go, and tell her that it is your will that she shall receive with me, and that I tamely submit."

"I shall tell her nothing of the kind."

"You can say no less, if you tell her the truth."

"My dear, you are angry. Let's not talk about it any more to-night. You will feel differently about it in the morning."

Of course, Mrs. Belcher went to bed in tears, cried over it until she went to sleep, and woke in the morning submissive, and quietly determined to yield to her husband's wishes. Of course, Mr. Belcher was not late in informing Mrs. Dillingham that his wife would be most happy to accept her proposition. Of course, Mrs. Dillingham lost no time in sending her card to all the gentlemen she had ever met, with the indorsement, "Receives on New Year's with Mrs. Col. Belcher, — Fifth Avenue." Of course, too, after the task was accomplished, she called on Mrs. Belcher to express her gratitude for the courtesy, and to make suggestions about the entertainment. Was it quite of course that Mrs. Belcher, in the presence of this facile woman, overflowing with kind feeling, courteous deference, pleasant sentiment and sparkling conversation, should feel half ashamed of herself, and wonder how one so good and bright and sweet could so have moved her to anger?

The day came at last, and at ten Mrs. Dillingham entered the grand drawing-room in her queenly appareling. She applauded Mrs. Belcher's appearance, she kissed the children, all of whom thought her the loveliest lady they had ever seen, and in an aside to Mr. Belcher cautioned him against partaking too bountifully of the wines he had provided for his guests. "Let us have a nice thing of it," she said, "and nothing to be sorry for."

Mr. Belcher was faithfully in her leading. It would have been no self-denial for him to abstain entirely for her sake. He would do anything she wished.

There was one thing noticeable in her treatment of the lads of the family, and in their loyalty to her. She could win a boy's heart with a touch of her hand, a smile and a kiss. They clung to her whenever in her presence. They hung charmed upon all her words. They were happy to do anything she desired; and as children see through shams more quickly than their elders, it could not be doubted that she had a genuine affection for them. A child addressed the best side of her nature, and evoked a passion that had never found rest in satisfaction, while her heartiness and womanly beauty appealed to the boy nature with charms to which it yielded unbounded admiration and implicit confidence.

The reception was a wonderful success. Leaving out of the account the numbers of gentlemen who came to see the revived glories of the Palgrave mansion, there was a large number of men who had been summoned by Mrs. Dillingham's cards—men who undoubtedly ought to have been in better business or in better company. They were men in good positions—clergymen, merchants, lawyers, physicians, young men of good families—men whose wives and mothers and sisters entertained an uncharitable opinion of that lady; but for this one courtesy of a year the men would not be called to account. Mrs. Dillingham knew them all at sight, called each man promptly by name, and presented them all to her dear friend Mrs. Belcher, and then to Col. Belcher, who, dividing his attention between the drawing-room and the dining-room, played the host with rude heartiness and large hospitality.

Mrs. Belcher was surprised by the presence of a number of men whose names were familiar with the public—members of Congress, representatives of the city gov-

ernment, clergymen even, who were generally supposed to be "at home" on that day. Why had these made their appearance? She could only come to one conclusion, which was, that they regarded Mrs. Dillingham as a show. Mrs. Dillingham in a beautiful house, arranged for self-exhibition, was certainly more attractive than Mary, Queen of Scots, in wax, in a public hall; and she could be seen for nothing.

It is doubtful whether Mrs. Belcher's estimate of their sex was materially raised by their tribute to her companion's personal attractions, but they furnished her with an interesting study. She was comforted by certain observations, viz., that there were at least twenty men among them who, by their manner and their little speeches, which only a woman could interpret, showed that they were entangled in the same meshes that had been woven around her husband; that they were as foolish, as fond, as much deceived, and as treacherously entertained as he.

She certainly was amused. Puffy old fellows with nose-gays in their button-holes grew gallant and young in Mrs. Dillingham's presence, filled her ears with flatteries, received the grateful tap of her fan, and were immediately banished to the dining-room, from which they emerged redder in the face and puffier than ever. Dapper young men arriving in cabs threw off their overcoats before alighting, and ran up the steps in evening dress, went through their automatic greeting and leave-taking, and ran out again to get through their task of making almost numberless calls during the day. Steady old men like Mr. Tunbridge and Mr. Schoonmaker, who had had the previous privilege of meeting Mr. Belcher, were turned over to Mrs. Belcher, with whom they sat down and had a quiet talk. Mrs. Dillingham seemed to know exactly how to apportion the constantly arriving and departing guests. Some were entertained by

herself, some were given to Mr. Belcher; some to the hostess, and others were sent directly to the refreshment tables to be fed.

Mr. Belcher was brought into contact with men of his own kind, who did not fail to recognize him as a congenial spirit, and to express the hope of seeing more of him, now that he had become "one of us." Each one knew some other one whom he would take an early opportunity of presenting to Mr. Belcher. They were all glad he was in New York. It was the place for him. Everything was open to such a man as he, in such a city, and they only wondered why he had been content to remain so long shut away from his own kind.

These expressions of brotherly interest were very pleasant to Mr. Belcher. They flattered him and paved the way for a career. He would soon be hand-in-glove with them all. He would soon find the ways of their prosperity, and make himself felt among them.

The long afternoon wore away, and just as the sun was setting, Mrs. Belcher was called from the drawing-room by some family care, leaving Mr. Belcher and Mrs. Dillingham together.

"Don't be gone long," said the latter to Mrs. Belcher, as she left the room.

"Be gone till to-morrow morning," said Mr. Belcher, in a whisper at Mrs. Dillingham's ear.

"You're a wretch," said the lady.

"You're right—a very miserable wretch. Here you've been playing the devil with a hundred men all day, and I've been looking at you. Is there any article of your apparel that I can have the privilege of kissing?"

Mrs. Dillingham laughed him in his face. Then she took a wilted rose-bud from a nosegay at her breast, and gave it to him.

"My roses are all faded," she said—"worth nothing to me—worth nothing to anybody—except you."

Then she passed to the window; to hide her emotion? to hide her duplicity? to change the subject? to give Mr. Belcher a glance at her gracefully retreating figure? to show herself, framed by the window, into a picture for the delight of his devouring eyes?

Mr. Belcher followed her. His hand lightly touched her waist, and she struck it down, as if her own were the velvet paw of a lynx.

"You startled me so!" she said.

"Are you always to be startled so easily?"

"Here? yes."

"Everywhere?"

"Yes. Perhaps so."

"Thank you."

"For what?"

"For the perhaps."

"You are easily pleased and grateful for nothing; and, now, tell me who lives opposite to you?"

"A lawyer by the name of James Balfour."

"James Balfour? Why, he's one of my old flames. He ought to have been here to-day. Perhaps he'll be in this evening."

"Not he."

"Why?"

"He has the honor to be an enemy of mine, and knows that I would rather choke him than eat my dinner."

"You men are such savages; but aren't those nice boys on the steps?"

"I happen to know one of them, and I should like to know why he is there, and how he came there. Between you and me, now—strictly between you and me—that boy is the only person that stands between me and—and—a pile of money."

"Is it possible? Which one, now?"

"The larger."

"But, isn't he lovely?"

"He's a Sevenoaks pauper."

"You astonish me."

"I tell you the truth, and Balfour has managed, in some way, to get hold of him, and means to make money out of me by it. I know men. You can't tell me anything about men; and my excellent neighbor will have his hands full, whenever he sees fit to undertake his job."

"Tell me all about it now," said Mrs. Dillingham, her eyes alight with genuine interest.

"Not now, but I'll tell you what I would like to have you do. You have a way of making boys love you, and men too—for that matter—and precious little do they get for it."

"Candid and complimentary," she sighed.

"Well, I've seen you manage with my boys, and I would like to have you try it with him. Meet him in the street, manage to speak to him, get him into your house, make him love you. You can do it. You are bold enough, ingenious enough, and subtle enough to do anything of that kind you will undertake. Some time, if you have him under your influence, you may be of use to me. Some time, he may be glad to hide in your house. No harm can come to you in making his acquaintance."

"Do you know that you are talking very strangely to me?"

"No. I'm talking business. Is that a strange thing to a woman?"

Mrs. Dillingham made no reply, but stood and watched the boys, as they ran up and down the steps in play, with a smile of sympathy upon her face, and genuine admiration of the graceful motions and handsome face and figure of the lad of whom Mr. Belcher had been talking. Her curiosity was piqued, her love of intrigue

was appealed to, and she determined to do, at the first convenient opportunity, what Mr. Belcher desired her to do.

Then Mrs. Belcher returned, and the evening, like the afternoon, was devoted to the reception of guests, and when, at last, the clock struck eleven, and Mrs. Dillingham stood bonneted and shawled ready to go home in the carriage that waited at the door, Mrs. Belcher kissed her, while Mr. Belcher looked on in triumph.

"Now, Sarah, haven't we had a nice day?" said he.

"Very pleasant, indeed."

"And haven't I behaved well? Upon my word, I believe I shall have to stand treat to my own abstinence, before I go to bed."

"Yes, you've been wonderfully good," remarked his wife.

"Men are such angels!" said Mrs. Dillingham.

Then Mr. Belcher put on his hat and overcoat, led Mrs. Dillingham to her carriage, got in after her, slammed the door, and drove away.

No sooner were they in the carriage than Mrs. Dillingham went to talking about the little boy, in the most furious manner. Poor Mr. Belcher could not divert her, could not induce her to change the subject, could not get in a word edgewise, could not put forward a single apology for the kiss he intended to win, did not win his kiss at all. The little journey was ended, the carriage door thrown open by her own hand, and she was out without his help.

"Good-night; don't get out," and she flew up the steps and rang the bell.

Mr. Belcher ordered the coachman to drive him home, and then sank back on his seat, and crowding his lips together, and compressing his disappointment into his familiar expletive, he rode back to his house as rigid in every muscle as if he had been frozen.



"Is there any such thing as a virtuous devil, I wonder," he muttered to himself, as he mounted his steps. "I doubt it; I doubt it."

The next day was icy. Men went slipping along upon the sidewalks as carefully as if they were trying to follow a guide through the galleries of Versailles. And in the afternoon a beautiful woman called a boy to her, and begged him to give her his shoulder and help her home. The request was so sweetly made, she expressed her obligations so courteously, she smiled upon him so beautifully, she praised him so ingenuously, she shook his hand at parting so heartily, that he went home all aglow from his heart to his fingers' ends.

Mrs. Dillingham had made Harry Benedict's acquaintance, which she managed to keep alive by bows in the street and bows from the window—managed to keep alive until the lad worshipped her as a sort of divinity, and, to win her smiling recognition, would go out of his way a dozen blocks on any errand about the city.

He recognized her—knew her as the beautiful woman he had seen in the great house across the street before Mr. Belcher arrived in town. Recognizing her as such, he kept the secret of his devotion to himself, for fear that it would be frowned upon by his good friends the Balfours. Mr. Belcher, however, knew all about it, rejoiced in it, and counted upon it as a possible means in the accomplishment of his ends.

## CHAPTER XVI.

WHICH GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF A VOLUNTARY AND AN INVOLUNTARY VISIT OF SAM YATES TO NUMBER NINE.

MR. BELCHER followed up the acquaintance which he had so happily made on New Year's Day with many of the leading operators of Wall Street, during the remainder of the winter, and, by the careful and skilful manipulation of the minor stocks of the market, not only added to his wealth by sure and steady degrees, but built up a reputation for sagacity and boldness. He struck at them with a strong hand, and gradually became a recognized power on 'Change. He knew that he would not be invited into any combinations until he had demonstrated his ability to stand alone. He understood that he could not win a leading position in any of the great financial enterprises until he had shown that he had the skill to manage them. He was playing for two stakes—present profit and future power and glory; and he played with brave adroitness.

During the same winter the work at Number Nine went on according to contract. Mike Conlin found his second horse and the requisite sled, and, the river freezing solidly and continuously, he was enabled not only to draw the lumber to the river, but up to the very point where it was to be used, and where Jim and Mr. Benedict were hewing and framing their timber, and pursuing their trapping with unflinching industry. Number Ten was transformed into a stable, where Mike kept his horses on the nights of his arrival. Two trips a week were all that he could accomplish, but the winter was so long, and he was so industrious, that before the ice broke up, everything for the construction of the house