

times are going to be worse than ever because of this that or 't'other," and that about the whole of their conversation. I have listened to reams and bushels of it in the last few weeks. You can ride down the street any hour of the day, and if you did not know the men, you would think our tradesmen and business men were idlers and tramps—or perhaps hobos imported for the next election. Does it make you as ashamed as it does me? I feel like blushing for every blessed one of them; if you go to meeting or to the theater, you don't go much to the latter place, though, if you are as closerun as I am, but wherever and whomever you are near, even if it is at a funeral, the same old tune greets your ear; the "fall of silver" and the "rise of interest," and the failures reported in the last night's News—these are the topics of conversation. Well, I am tired of it! What on earth are the women doing? I heard one mighty good woman say the other day that it made her feel like swearing. She was at home toiling and struggling, for the hard times did not make her idle, it made her ten times more work, for now she could not afford to hire help, and if she looked out on the street she could see dozens of idle boys and men, doing absolutely nothing, for it was such hard times; and she grew indignant thinking of the mothers and sisters at home, slaving and toiling to make the ends meet and to economize, while the idle men were on the street and she knew that when these same idle boys and men went home, they would expect a hot supper and a good one. What is the matter with society? No matter about that, however, if we can find out what is the matter with the men. And therefore respectfully, or otherwise, I would like to suggest that the men stop standing around and talking about hard times. If they positively can find no work to do in their trade or profession, let them go home and mend up all the broken windows and doors, all the old tin pans, and do up all the thousand and one chores they have been promising wife or mother for the last two years. If they have a spot of ground, let them plant and weed that with unflinching skill, and hard times won't hinder them getting a good crop off it, either. If they have no garden, then let them tinker faithfully and zealously in every needed place around the home. Then, if business still is dead, 'or heaven's sake let them go out in the kitchen and help the overworked mother or sister do the housework and put up the fruit, and wash the dishes. It won't hurt a man, and I will promise him that his mind will most successfully be drawn off his troubles. He can even learn to treadle the sewing machine. Why, I knew a man, and he was a college professor and a most perfect gentleman too, who always helped his wife put up her fruit, and did all her stitching on the machine, for he said it was not suitable work for any woman. I have known a man, and he was one of the leading men of this church, to tend the baby, and he did it well, too, while his wife was washing, and he even hung out the clothes and brought them in when dry. It will hurt a man's self respect a good deal more to be idle and gloomy than it will to assist his wife in her household duties. All this I most respectfully, or otherwise submit for the consideration of my beloved brethren.

WAKEMAN'S WANDERINGS.

KESWICK, England, July 10, 1893.—The first time I ever saw a peasant of the English Lake district—that splendid portion of England strewn with mountains, scaws, fells and hills and gemmed with countless lakes, comprising the shires of Cumberland, Westmoreland and the northern part of Lancashire—was in company with a personal friend of John Ruskin, Mr. A. M. Fraser, of Scott street, Annan, Scotland, who lives among his friends and books not a stone's throw from where Jane Welsh Carlyle's youthful ideal lover, the gentlest soul that Scotland ever knew, noble, saintly Edward Irving, was born.

It was a gray, grisly, grewsome day, when the mountain mists like gigantic belling sails were pounding back and forth between the mountains of Scotland and Cumberland, now and then in their flapping concussions flinging sheets of slanting rain from their heavy folds, which the wind instantly caught up and swept stingingly against the bare-headed and bare-legged fishers of the leaden-colored Firth.

My friend had to do with the railway service; took me to the Annan station-yard; secured a huge shunting engine with stoker and driver for our use; we were soon reeling and crashing across the great Annan bridge connecting Scotland with England; and our strange conveyance for sightseeing among peasantry at last halted with hoarse challenges beneath the gray and echoing crags where, on the English side of the Solway, tiny, stone-built Bowness looks out upon Scotland and the Firth, just where, nearly 2,000 years ago, the great wall of Romany Servius came to an end because of the unconquerable Gaelic hordes of the wild, barbaric North.

Everything in and about this gray little nest upon the heights above the Solway seems of everlasting stone. The rough half-stairs, half-street leading up to and through the hamlet was of stone. The few huddled structures were of stone; rude stone window-ledges, eaves, gargoyle gutter-spouts and all. The little chapel was like a huge, unshapen mossy mass of stone protruding from a shapeless mass of stones. The choked yard surrounding it was enclosed by a stone wall huge enough to have been left by Hadrian himself, and the huddled grave stones seemed like jagged, half-decayed teeth of stone which for centuries had gnashed at and been gnashed by elements as hard as stone. The sparse soil, showing between the stone roadway and the stone houses, and here and there cropping up between house and byre or paddock and wall, was thick and flinty with stone. And even the hard faces of the few old, old dames now and then seen peering at us from the tiny angle-neuk windows of stone were as set and fixed and vacuous as uncarved stone.

At one window we saw the face of a hardy man past middle age, and we straightway knocked at his wide, low door and were bidden to enter. Among these humble folk the coming of strangers at any time or hour is not reckoned an intrusion, but rather a pleasure; and there are no bolts nor locks upon the doors of any peasant's habitation in all this English Alpine country. They are trustful and simple and good in the face of all friendly approaches, but hard and dreadful as their own mountain scaws

and fells where wrong is found beneath friendly addresses.

We had come simply to see and talk; but it mattered not what our coming was for; and the old man gave welcome as statelily as a lord. As my friend engaged him in conversation in dialect and topic common to the region, I sat and studied this old man and his picturesque environment, eager to more fully know, as time and many wanderings among the lake district peasantry have since given ample opportunity, of the stuff and stock of which such imposing human frames are made, and the influences of the centuries that have given to ignorant men and women, most remote from the activities of other men and things, such a wondrous, lofty and almost indefinable calm.

The man was a universal type of the lake district peasantry. He was much more than six feet in height, and as he moved about the large, low room, his head just escaped the huge oaken beams of the ceiling. His hair was soft, silken and bountiful; flaxen where the silver has not yet come; and with his full, fine beard suggested a strain of the old Norse blood. His forehead was high, wide, white. His eyebrows were bushy, but fine and flossy, above large eyes of lustrous light, blue, deep set, steady and almost mournful in their gaze. The nose was strongly-cut, truly classic; and the mouth was large, but characterful and firm. This sort of a head set upon a huge and perfect frame, stout as the timbers of his centuries-old habitation, gave a man who looked straight at you and made you, despite yourself, look straight at him in return.

I have found other such frames and faces among the fishers of the English west coast, at Coldingham; below the Firth of Forth, among the Highland crofters, among the petty "lairds" of the Shetland Islands, and not a few among the mountain peasantry of Inishowen, round about Slieve Snaght, in the north of Ireland, and I have wondered if their endless communion with nature in her dreadful moods, as well as their lives of danger and deprivation, had not to do with tempering the light of their kindly eyes with the changeless look of mournful resignation which is set there as if with a graven seal upon them. But I have ever found humble men like these sturdy tender, grave and true.

The interior of this Cumbrian peasant's home was as characteristic and fine as the appearance of its sturdy old possessor. The large room where we sat was the "fire-house" or living-room of the habitation. It was fully eighteen feet wide and twenty-five feet long. All the door and window casements, the ceiling beams and the timbers about the fireplace had been hewn out of solid oak. The floor was of the same huge slate slabs as the roof, and these were so clean from scrubbing that they shone like dusky mirrors beneath our feet. There were many windows, no two in range, all little and splayed inwardly, the sides of each of their stone apertures as white as snow; and the sash of each was half hidden by milk-white muslin. Huge settles of oak with fleece or chintz encased covers were ranged along the low white walls. In one corner, its face yellow with age, solemnly ticked an eight-day clock, its clumsy frame built into the abutting walls. In the center of the room was a long,