

ignorant, half-grown lad, who learns for the first time "about the great rich gentleman who advertises for a hermit," and wishes that he had but the necessary qualifications of beard to offer himself as a candidate, indulges in it also; and I, too, in this transition stage, cherished it with all the strength of a passion. It seems to spring out of a latent timidity in the yet undeveloped mind, that shrinks from grappling with the stern realities of life, amid the crowd and press of a busy world, and o'ershadowed by the formidable competition of men already practised in the struggle. I have still before me the picture of the "lodge in some vast wilderness," to which I could have fain retired, to lead all alone a life quieter, but quite as wild, as my Marcus' Cave one; and the snugness and comfort of the humble interior of my hermitage, during some boisterous night of winter, when the gusty wind would be howling around the roof, and the rain beating on the casement, but when in the calm within, the cheerful flame would roar in the chimney, and glance bright on rafter and wall, still impress me as if the recollection was in reality that of a scene witnessed, not of a mere vision conjured up by the fancy. But it was all the idle dream of a truant lad, who would fain now, as on former occasions, have avoided going to school,—that best and noblest of all schools, save the Christian one, in which honest Labor is the teacher,—in which the ability of being useful is imparted, and the spirit of independence communicated, and the habit of persevering effort acquired; and which is more moral than the schools in which only philosophy is taught, and greatly more happy than the schools which profess to teach only the art of enjoyment. Noble, upright, self-relying Toil! Who that knows thy solid worth and value would be ashamed of thy hard hands, and thy soiled vestments, and thy obscure tasks,—thy humble cottage, and hard couch, and homely fare! Save for thee and thy lessons, man in society would everywhere sink into a sad compound of the fiend and the wild beast; and this fallen world would be as certainly a moral as a natural wilderness. But I little thought of the excellence of thy character and of thy teachings, when, with a heavy heart, I set out about