

would, I believed, show not inadequately my ability of treating at least those lighter subjects with which newspaper editors are occasionally called on to deal.

Nearly two of the three twelvemonths passed by, however, and I was still an operative mason. With all my solicitude, I could not give myself heartily to seek work of the kind which I saw newspaper editors had at that time to do. It might be quite well enough, I thought, for the lawyer to be a special pleader. With special pleadings equally extreme on the opposite sides of a case, and a qualified judge to hold the balance between, the cause of truth and justice might be even more thoroughly served than if the antagonist agents were to set themselves to be as impartial and equal-handed as the magistrate himself. But I could not extend the same tolerance to the special pleading of the newspaper editor. I saw that, to many of the readers of his paper, the editor did not hold the place of a law-agent, but of a judge : it was his part to submit to them, therefore, not ingenious pleadings, but, to the best of his judgment, honest decisions. And not only did no place present itself for me in the editorial field, but I really could see no place in it that, with the views which I entertained on this head, I would not scruple to occupy. I saw no party cause for which I could honestly plead. My ecclesiastical friends had, with a few exceptions, cast themselves into the Conservative ranks, and there I could not follow them. The Liberals, on the other hand, being in office at the time, had become at least as like their old opponents as their former selves, and I could by no means defend all that *they* were doing. In Radicalism I had no faith ; and Chartism,—with my recollection of the kind of treatment which I had received from the workmen of the south still strongly impressed upon my mind,—I thoroughly detested. And so I began seriously to think of the backwoods of America. But there was another destiny in store for me. My native town, up till this time, though a place of considerable trade, was unfurnished with a branch bank ; but on the representation of some of its more extensive