

The state of Ohio took a rough leave of us down a rocky precipitous hill, at the foot of which we found ourselves safe on the bank of the river; and driving down to the water's edge into a *team-boat* lately established, were, about dark landed on the other side, and comfortably received at a good family inn at Maysville kept by Mr. Chambers, a sensible clever man, who came to it from Jersey State about seventeen years ago, and [65] who has, by judgment in the purchase of land &c., made a good fortune for himself and family: some lots about the town, which he bought for four hundred dollars six years since, are now worth some thousands; such is the rapid increase in the value of property in this country when a man makes a good hit.

On quitting this State, through which we have travelled from Wheeling in a south-west direction to Maysville or Limestone, (Kentucky,) the impression it has made is not so favourable as I had been led to expect; though our course comprehended but a small part of it, yet we passed through the most populous districts, if we except that around Cincinnati. Instead of a garden, I found a wilderness; land speculators have got a considerable part in their baleful clutches to make their market on the wants of the poor settler; but I am apt to think have been themselves outwitted, owing to the superior attraction of the more

²⁷ From another party which passed, I learned that the well-known Colonel Boone is still alive in the Missouri country, though the journals lately gave a circumstantial account of his death.— WELSH.

distant western country: yet is Ohio a desirable one, as it contains within itself most articles of the first necessity and perhaps more; coals in abundance, lime, stone for building, iron and other metals, with fine rivers for transporting commodities of all kinds. The face of [66] that part which I saw, is exceedingly hilly, in some places approaching to mountains; but the soil in general well adapted to grazing, and the whole strongly resembling our county of Derby upon a gigantic scale. The north-west part of the State, an immense tract of country, has been lately ceded by the natives to the United States,²² and I believe has been surveyed, allotted, and is now offering to the public at one and a quarter dollar per acre ready money: of its fertility much is reported, and its communication with Lake Erie, and by it with the other lakes and the eastern markets, will render it perhaps more desirable than the part we have travelled over.

The roads at present are altogether in a state of nature, the trees only just chopped off about a foot from the ground, and rocks, and stones, and gullies left to be got over as we can; no wonder then, that you see a blacksmith's shop every two or three miles, and tavern by the side of it to put up and spend your money while the repairs are doing; for which, however trifling, Vulcan cannot form his mouth to any word less than a dollar, and his friend the tavern-keeper charges an "*eleven-penny bit*" if you have but two cents worth of whisky.

As to the general want of cleanliness in the [67] taverns, of which so much has been said *and so justly*, though the

²² This was the last important Indian cession in Ohio. September 29, 1817, the Wyandot, Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee, Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Chippewa ceded a large tract bounded on the east by the previous treaty line — namely, a line drawn south from a point a few miles east of the head of Sandusky Bay, and on the south by the old Greenville treaty line (see Evans's *Tow*, in our volume viii, note 51), and the St. Mary's River.— Ed.

keepers of them have no doubt a large share of the blame, yet much may be said in their defence; the fact is, their customers are of so filthy habits that to have a house clean is almost impossible; and though bugs swarm it is true in the bed-rooms, beyond an English imagination, it is extremely difficult in this warm climate to keep free from them, particularly at inns, as they are constantly carried in the cloaths, luggage, &c., from one house to another until many a bug, it may happen, has been as great a traveller as Mr. Birkbeck himself. Yet do the people deserve reprehension, for while "such things are," and sundry other unseemly appearances are constantly, in their bed-rooms and other parts, existing in full force; while their gardens (ill deserving the name) are over-run with weeds, and cropped in the most slovenly manner; while a thousand disagreeables are around them, these — what shall I call them? — slaves to sloth, and worshippers of an idle deity of independence, will sit lounging against the wall with arms across smoking cigars; or you shall see the female part, lolling out of their windows gazing at nothingness.

[68] KENTUCKY

MAYSVILLE, OR LIMESTONE

Here at Mr. Chamber's, we staid two days, received more like guests than as travellers at an inn; his conversation was amusing and his anecdotes conveying much information: in his garden which is spacious and well-managed, we ate the first ripe grapes we had met with. The town, which seems to be fast increasing in size and importance, stands high from the level of the river, and is screened by towering hills, affording in the immediate

neighbourhood and also up the river situations for building that few places can surpass: the view from above the town looking down the river is beautiful and extensive; a considerable part of the buildings are of brick; glass works are established, and other manufactories requiring machinery. All these advantages however will hardly compensate with most people for its being within the territories of a slave state. Of the determined obstinacy and turpitude of a black boy we were here witnesses; a silver fruit-knife had been left upon the table, and he had secreted it, the knife was soon missed, and search made for it in vain; at length, suspicion falling upon him, he was sent for and [69] questioned, but denied all knowledge of the knife with an air of the greatest innocency; he was offered half a dollar and to be screened from punishment if he would give it up, but continued to deny that he had taken it, wishing, "his flesh might rot if he had"—his pockets were at length examined; and the knife and an apple dropt together from one of them, upon which the young rogue declared that the person who searched him had put it there, and a terrible beating which I fear he got, did not in the least make him prevaricate.

We took leave of our host and hostess not without some regret, and, as we slowly paced up the long hill which rises immediately from the town, looked back frequently to view the beautiful river scenery from the different points it offered: a turn at the top suddenly presented on all sides a cleared, well cultivated, and inclosed country; the road was good, the day beautiful, and we bowled along through plentiful crops of Indian corn, rejoicing that we had escaped the wilderness, and thinking we had really entered upon the garden of the United States. After a few miles of good road however these pleasant

ideas were shaken out by an absolute rock, upon which with but little intermission we rattled for near twenty miles, passing through a place called Blue Licks.²⁹ At its salt springs [70] the deer and buffaloe used formerly to be found in immense herds; it is now a watering place, the resort of invalids: yet let not the English reader here picture to himself either Bath, Cheltenham, or Tunbridge Wells, but a few dispersed log huts and two taverns of the same description. Many of the men here wear, instead of a coat, a short cloak, a little resembling that part of the old English dress, which if they knew how to carry with any grace would look well.

The drought is now exceedingly great, and we have reports of much stock dying to the south of this state for want of water; we therefore see the country at as unfavourable a time as possible; yet, under these disadvantages, the grass is really green, a circumstance which proves the strong natural fertility of the soil, also shewn by the spontaneous growth of the white clover among the trees of the uncleared forest land where it has been grazed. Of this grazed forest the farmers assert that it will not, when cleared, broke up and sown, produce so much corn by one third per acre as that which has not been grazed, and many of them consequently shut up their forest land from all cattle and even from pigs.