



ALICE'S BUREAU, LITH.

THE GRAVE-YARD ON THE WABASH.

SPENCER & DIXON, IMP.

# THE WABASH:

OR

## ADVENTURES

OF AN

## ENGLISH GENTLEMAN'S FAMILY

IN THE

## INTERIOR OF AMERICA.

—The forest glades,  
The spreading prairie, woo'd us on.  
Imagination, 'neath the shades  
Of timber'd wildernesses, ran;  
And lighted up the unknown land  
With hope and love and life renew'd:  
For Thou wast there; and, hand in hand,  
Bravely we met the forest rude.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## PREFACE.

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THE following pages contain an account of the adventures of a family, in the rank of English country gentry, during their travels into what Europeans consider the Backwoods or the Far West of North America. I am aware that the lapse of thirty or forty *months* since they took place, would make a description of the cities of the United States as much out of date as would the same number of *years* intervening after a visit to the towns of the Old World; but I did not linger in the long-settled States of America nor in their capitals.

Although the villages and the towns and the countries which I most visited, may be now more filled up and "fenced in", yet will my description of them and of their inhabitants apply to localities, similarly placed in regard to the onward march of civilisation across that mighty continent, so long as a forest or

a prairie shall remain uncultivated between the Atlantic and the Pacific—so long as the American people shall be an amalgamation of individuals transplanted and, more or less firmly, rooted by citizenship in the rich soil which it is given to them to fill and to subdue.

Travelling, as we did, with a large family of children, we were, necessarily, brought into contact with much of which a single male traveller hears and sees nothing:—I had to make thoughtful provision for our slow progress in the interior, where he would have sped fearlessly onward in his stage-coach or steamer. This has enabled me to describe much that he never sees. His greater independence of motion may, indeed, have oftener thrown him into companionship with those individual oddities and entertaining scamps whom we are, sometimes, told to look upon as types of the whole American people; but the incidents of family travel have afforded interests more deep, and, probably, more genuine.

In these volumes, will be found many passages purporting to be extracted from the written records

of my children. I would mention that these records were not compiled by them with any view to publication, nor, even, from any love of writing about themselves ; but because, as a task and to exercise the composition and the handwriting of the younger of them, I desired each one to write, and to bring me every day, some account of their travels in America. When these descriptions appeared to me graphic or entertaining ; when they told the sad scenes which I myself was incapacitated from witnessing ; when, even, they only showed the impressions which a new country and new scenes produced upon new minds—I did not scruple to embody them : because I felt that I could so best fulfil the object I had in view, that I could so best familiarise the reader with America and the American people.

My endeavour has been to represent, in these pages, what we saw and felt : consequently, they must contain much that is personal ; much that is light, frivolous, anecdotal ; much, also, that is dark and sorrowing ; for such was the course of our travels. Like the Swiss family Robinson Crusoes, we stand before the reader—mysteriously driven

forth to wander and to live, for a few months, in a character as new to ourselves as our real position is unsuspected by those amongst whom we travel.

Whatever may have been this immediate cause of our journey—of which more anon—much of my serious inquiry did, I own, tend to the study of the United States as a scene for agricultural emigration. Those, therefore, who have more health and strength than money, and those who have more sons than means of advancing them in England, may gather from these pages the result of much investigation:—while those who care to know the social and religious state of the emigrant's future home, or only to see the Americans as they are amongst themselves in the far Western States—when they little think that he, whom they please to look down upon as a poor family emigrant, is a “chiel among them taking notes”—these, also, will necessarily find here much matter suited to their lighter tastes.

Grosvenor Street,  
30th April 1855.