mean breadth does not exceed five. On the north and west its surface is undulating, rising in ridges and hills to the height of two hundred feet or more. Toward the south and east it is a plain, chiefly covered with a growth of stunted shrubbery, and reminding one, in its general features, of the high levels of the Alleghanies. There is a fair proportion of woodland, the growth chiefly of post oaks, which seldom attain a greater height than twenty-five or thirty feet; and the only tree or shrub which seems to attain its full size under the influence of the salt winds is the lilac, which grows here in great beauty and profusion. The land produces good grass; and under a proper system of cultivation the crop of cereals is found profitable. Notwithstanding the efforts of several public-spirited gentlemen, who have established an agricultural society and cultivate model farms, the tillage of the soil is not a favorite occupation with the Vineyarders. The hand which has wielded the harpoon can not condescend to the ox-goad or hay-fork. He who has been wont to plow the illimitable fields of ocean will not turn up sand and gravel on this limited patch of *terra firma*.

From Tisbury we visited the Indian reservation at Gay Head, so called from a remarkable headland that forms the western extremity of the island. Here, on a dreary point, nearly cut off from the main body of the island by a couple of fresh-water ponds, dwells the scanty remnant of the aboriginal inhabitants of the land. The moment we enter the reservation the appearance of every thing indicates a thriftless and inferior people. The hills are treeless and shrubless; a number of ordinary cattle may be seen browsing upon the luxuriant grass; but no signs of cultivation or improvement are visible except a few lonely, unpainted, and unornamented wooden houses, and several sorry patches of corn or kitchen vegetables, weed-grown, neglected, and forlorn.

In pleasing contrast with this desolation is the appearance of the government light-house and surroundings, that stand upon the breezy headland overlooking the sea. This well-kept and cheerful exterior led us to seek shelter and hospitality within the Federal inclosure rather than from the natives, and the welcome we received from Squire Flanders, the light-keeper, was worthy of his personal fame and the glorious flag under which he serves.

Having rested and eaten, and partaken of a cup of coffee, equivalent to both, we went to visit the Head, which is an object of interest to artists, geologists, naturalists, and all sorts of practical and speculative philosophers, as well as to the unlearned curious.

It is an earthy cliff, about 130 feet in height, its base washed by the Atlantic waves, its top covered with green-sward to the very brink.

The rains have furrowed the face with deep gullies, leaving sharp and fantastically-shaped ridges between, and exposing various and bright colored earths—red, white, yellow, black, brown, and purple—which, in the sunshine, rejoice the eyes of the passing mariner, and have gained for it its name of Gay Head. These washings also abound in all sorts of fossils, from petrified quohaugs as big as your thumb nail to the skeletons of monsters that might have swallowed the whale that swallowed Jonah.

As the shades of evening deepened we returned to the light-house, and there were invited by the faithful guardian of the tower to go up and witness the lighting of the wonderful lamp. And a magnificent illuminator it is, the finest on our coasts, and perhaps unsurpassed in the world.



THE LIGHT-HOUSE, GAY HEAD.



SQUIRE FLANDERS.

The revolving lantern is composed of a thousand and three prisms, so arranged as to concentrate the rays of light at a vast distance; and if the atmosphere is clear the light shows brighter at twenty miles than nearer at hand. The lamp is of polished brass, with a circular wick, and consumes about three gallons of oil per night. The oil is pumped up and the lantern turned by clock-work, which requires winding up every half-hour. The whole is of French manufacture, exhibited at the World's Fair in London, and purchased by our Government at a cost of sixteen thousand dollars. If our pride of nationality was touched at learning that we owed this *chef d'œuvre* to the genius of a Frenchman, we were consoled by the reflection that the worthy keeper himself was a native production.

Squire Flanders is not only a man of consequence on Gay Head, but his renown has extended over the whole island; and to those who delight in observing the diverse phases of human character he is well worthy of attention. As a public officer, he has weathered the storms and changes of political affairs, immovable as the wave-beaten cliff upon which he dwells; yet his integrity has never been questioned, and his lamp has never gone out. The exemplary father of ten or a dozen girls and boys, all named after the Presidents, his household furnishes an epitome of our Federal history. A natural and moral philosopher, according to the teachings of Professor Agassiz and St. Paul, he lectures with equal clearness on antediluvian ichthyology and the ethics of Scripture. In short, notwithstanding some eccentricities of appearance and manner, no one can long sojourn with Squire Flanders without being touched with his obliging and amiable character, and impressed with his substantial worth and honesty. It is a matter of conscience with him to keep his lamp always trimmed and his light set upon a hill. Long may it shine, a luminous example to Federal office-holders, a beacon of safety to the homeward-bound mariner!

Next morning, as soon as I could get off from my geological and pharological lessons, I led my companion down to the seashore, that we might see the tide roll in upon a long stretch of sand and pebble beach. We climbed upon a huge boulder and sat for a long time in silence, enjoying what I have always considered one of the grandest scenes in nature.

It is variety that charms in our lighter moods, when seeking enjoyment in the lesser beauties of creation—the hue of flowers, the leafage of trees, the plumage of birds, the tones and pauses of music; but to steep the soul in awe, to awaken in the mind the highest sense of sublimity, what is there like the oneness of ocean? The simple horizontal line that belts the globe; the deep monotone of blue; the measured surge, like the mighty pulsation of a living world; the sullen, cadenced roar; the solemn anthem of eternity.

"Great God!" exclaimed my companion, drawing a long breath, "does the sea roll in this way always?"

"So it has rolled unceasingly, my boy, from the beginning, since first 'the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters;' and so will it continue until the end, when the heavings of this restless bosom shall be stilled, this voice of thunder hushed—on that day when the great closing anthem shall be sung:

"'Dies iræ, dies illa,
Sæclum solvet in favillâ.'"

From the top of our boulder and this lofty discourse we descended to examine a strange creature which the waves threw up near us. It proved to be a king crab, or a horse-foot, as it is sometimes called, from its resemblance to the bottom