

To the east, the south, and the west, the Plain spread out to the horizon's verge, a panorama of pastoral beauty.

In places the wooded groves, and the great apple orchards, then abundant hereabouts, marked the landscape with the dark green of their foliage.

Interspersed with these were fields of sturdy corn and yellow grain, waving in the sunshine and the gentle breezes, and prophesying to the waiting farmer of the coming harvest.

The meadows, too, which carpeted with their verdure most of the Plain, were bright and worshipful with their bloom and with their fragrance, which under the wooing of the warm sunbeams and the inborn impulses of their own nature, were exhaled as the incense of gratitude and love for the Great Creator of the mountains mighty and lilies of the valley fair and frail.

The hush and calm was broken, not disturbed by the neighing of horses and the lowing of the kine in the distance. Overhead in the branches of the trees, the song-birds were filling the air with the melody of their songs of praise and happiness, while all around there came to the ear the monotonous hum and drone of the bee and insect, which served to soothe the mind and give added repose to the Baptism of tranquility, which typified the angels' song at the Saviour's birth, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Over all this scene of peaceful beauty from the "delectable hills" to the "sweet fields" then "dressed in living green," the overhanging canopy of blue and gold, seemed to come down nearer to earth and enfold within its radiant curtains, for the time at least, this quiet spot; and it needed