

THE MONARCH OF DREAMS

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The Monarch of Dreams by Thomas Wentworth Higginson

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THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON

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BY
THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON

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THE MONARCH OF DREAMS.

Φάσμα δόξει δόμων ἀγασσείν.

Λεσχινύς: *Agamemnon*, 391.

THE MONARCH OF DREAMS.

HE who forsakes the railways and goes wandering through the hill-country of New England, must adopt one rule as invariable. When he comes to a fork in the road, and is assured that both ways lead to the desired point, he must simply ask which road is the best ; and, on its being pointed out, must at once take the other. Nothing can be easier than the explanation of this method. The passers-by will always recommend the new road, which keeps to the valley and avoids the hills ; but the old road, deserted by the

general public, ascends the steeper grades, and has a monopoly of the wider views.

Turning to the old road, you soon feel that both houses and men are, in a manner, stranded. They see very little of the world, and are under no stimulus to keep themselves in repair. You are wholly beyond the dreary sway of French roofs; and the caricatures of good Queen Anne's day are far from you. If any farmhouse on the hill-road was really built within the reign of that much-abused potentate, it is probably a solid, square mansion of brick, three stories high, blackened with time, and frowning rather gloomily from some hilltop,—as essentially a part of the past as an Irish round-tower or a Scotch border-fortress. A branching elm-tree or two may droop above it. It is partly screened from the road by a lilac-