

Adventures
of
an Angler in Canada,
Nova Scotia
and the United States

Charles Lanman

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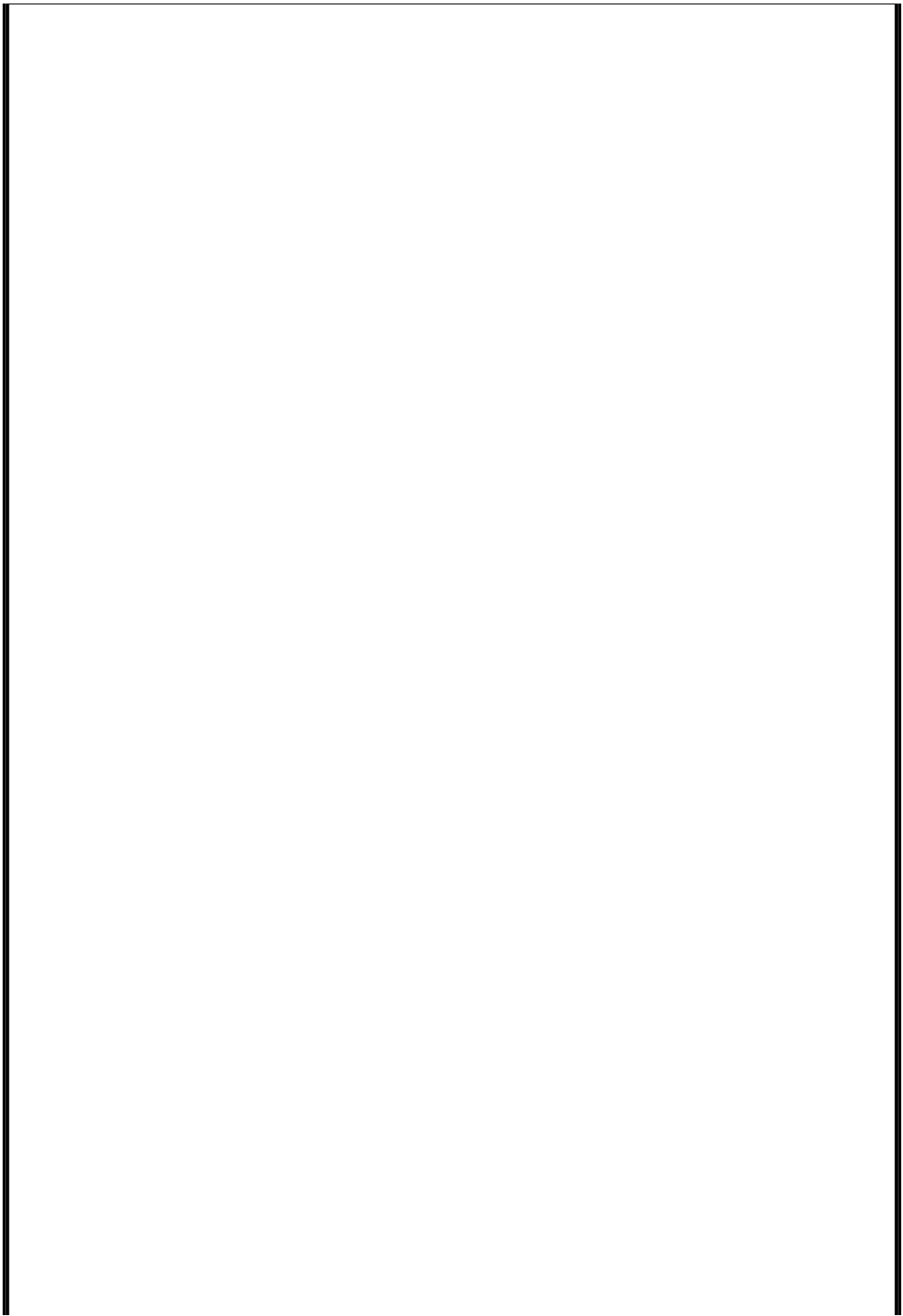
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CHARLES LANMAN.
AUTHOR OF ADVENTURES OF AN ANGLER IN AMERICA



**ADVENTURES
OF
AN ANGLER IN CANADA,
NOVA SCOTIA
AND THE UNITED STATES.**

BY CHARLES LANMAN.

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TO
SOLOMON T. NICOLL, ESQ.

My dear Sir,

To you, in testimony of my friendship, I inscribe this little Volume.

On a pleasant morning in May last, I awoke from a piscatorial dream, haunted by the idea, that I must spend a portion of the approaching summer in the indulgence of my passion for angling. Relinquishing my editorial labours for a time, I performed a pilgrimage, which has resulted in the production of this Volume. I hope it may entertain those of my friends and the public, who have heretofore received my literary efforts with favour. The work will be found to contain a record of
Adventures in the Valleys of the Hudson, St. Lawrence and St. John, and along some of the rivers of New England.

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Truly your friend,

CHARLES LANMAN.

NEW-YORK, 1847.

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ADVENTURES OF AN ANGLER.

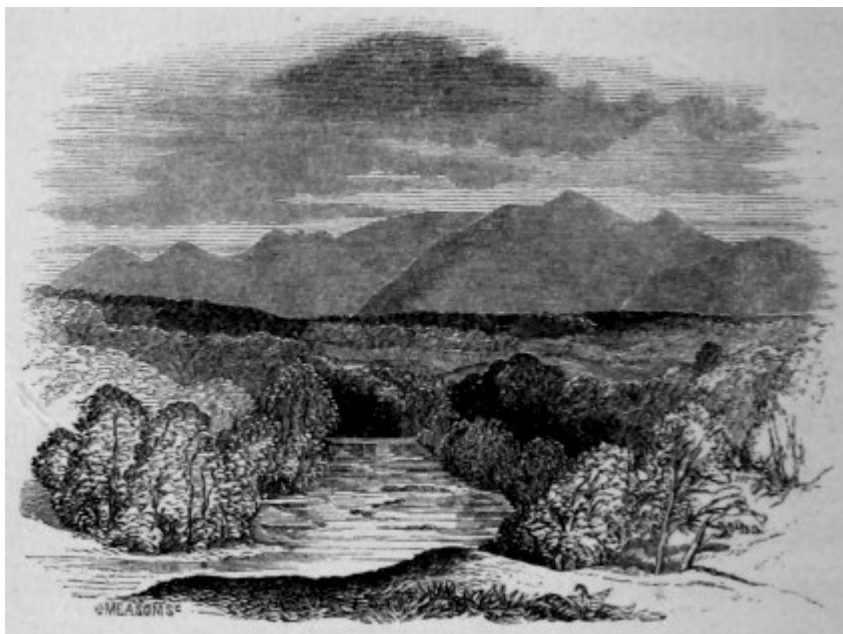
CHAPTER I.

The Catskill Mountains—South Peak Mountain—A thunder storm—Midnight on the Mountains—Sunrise—Plauterkill Clove—Peter Hummel—Trout fishing—Stony Clove—The Kauterskill Fall—The Mountain House—The Mountain Lake.

Plauterkill Clove. May.

I commence this chapter in the language of Leather-Stocking: “You know the Catskills, lad, for you must have seen them on your left, as you followed the river up from York, looking as blue as a piece of clear sky, and holding the clouds on their tops, as the smoke curls over the head of an Indian chief at a council-fire.” Yes, every body is acquainted with the names of these mountains, but few with their peculiarities of scenery. They are situated about eight miles from the Hudson, rise to an average elevation of thirty-five hundred feet, and running in a straight line from north to south, cover a space of some twenty-five miles. The fertile valley on the east is as beautiful as heart could desire; it is watered by the Kauterskill,

Plauterkill and Esopus Creeks, inhabited by a sturdy Dutch yeomanry, and is the agricultural mother of Catskill, Saugerties and Kingston. The upland on the west, for about forty miles, is rugged, dreary, and thinly settled; but the winding valley of Schoharie beyond, is possessed of many charms peculiarly American. The mountains themselves are covered with dense forests, abounding in cliffs and waterfalls, and for the most part untrodden by the footsteps of men. Looking at them from the Hudson, the eye is attracted by two deep hollows, which are called “Cloves.”



CATSKILL MOUNTAINS.

The one nearest to the Mountain House, Kauterskill Clove, is distinguished for a remarkable fall, which has been made familiar to the world by the pen of Bryant and the pencil of Cole; but this Clove is rapidly filling up with human habitations;

while the other, Plauterkill Clove, though yet possessing much of its original glory, is certain of the same destiny. The gorge whence issues the Esopus, is among the Shaudaken mountains, and not visible from the Hudson.

My nominal residence, at the present time, is at the mouth of Plauterkill Clove. To the west, and only half a mile from my abode, are the beautiful mountains, whose outlines fade away to the north, like the waves of the sea when covered with a *visible* atmosphere. The nearest, and to me the most beloved of these, is called South Peak. It is nearly four thousand feet high, and covered from base to summit with one vast forest of trees, varying from eighty to a hundred feet in height. Like its brethren, it is a wild and uncultivated wilderness, abounding in all the interesting features of mountain scenery. Like a corner stone does it stand at the junction of the northern and western ranges of the Catskills, and as its huge form looms against the evening sky, it inspires one with awe, as if it were the ruler of the world: and yet, I have learned to love it as a friend. I have pondered upon its impressive features, when reposing in the noon-tide sunshine, when enveloped in clouds, when holding communion with the most holy night, and when trembling under the influence of a thunder-storm, and encircled by a rainbow. It has filled my soul with images of beauty and sublimity, and made me feel the omnipotence of God.

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A day and night was it lately my privilege to spend upon this mountain, accompanied by a poet-friend. We started at an early hour, equipped in our brown fustians, and laden with well-filled knapsacks, one with a hatchet in his belt, and the other with a brace of pistols. We were bound to the extreme summit of the peak, where we intended to spend the night, witness the rising of

the sun, and return at our leisure on the following day. But when I tell you, that our course lay right up the almost perpendicular side of the mountain, where was no path save that formed by a torrent or a bear, you will readily believe it was somewhat rare and romantic. But this was what we delighted in; so we shouted “Excelsior,” and commenced the ascent. The air was 5 excessively sultry, and the very first effort we made, caused the perspiration to start most profusely. Upward, upward was our course; now climbing through a tangled thicket, or under the spray of a cascade, and then again supporting ourselves by the roots of saplings or scrambling under a fallen tree; now, like the samphire gatherer, scaling a precipice; and then again clambering over a rock, or “shinning” up a hemlock tree, to reach a desired point.

Our first halt was made at a singular spot called Hunter’s Hole, which is a spacious cavern or pit, forty feet deep and twenty wide, and approached only by a fissure in the mountain, sufficiently large to admit a man. Connected with this place, is the following story.

Many years ago, a farmer, residing at the foot of the mountain, having missed a favourite dog, and being anxious for his safety, called together his neighbours and offered a reward for the safe return of his canine friend. Always ready to do a kind deed, a number of them started in different directions for the hunt. A barking sound having been heard to issue from this cavern, it discovered that the lost dog was at the bottom, where he had most probably fallen while chasing a fox. “But how shall he be extricated from this hole?” was the general enquiry of the 6 now-assembled hunters. Not one of all the group would venture to descend under any circumstances; so that the poor

animal remained a prisoner for another night. But the next morning he was released, and by none other than a brave boy, the son of the farmer, and playmate of the dog. A large number of men were present on the occasion. A strong rope was tied around the body of the child, and he was gently lowered down. On reaching the bottom, and finding by the aid of his lamp, that he was in a "real nice place," the little rogue concluded to have some sport; whereupon he proceeded to pull down more rope, until he had made a coil of two hundred feet, which was bewildering enough to the crowd above; but nothing happened to him during the adventure, and the dog was rescued. The young hero having played his trick so well, it was generally supposed, for a long time after, that this cavern was two hundred feet deep, and none were ever found sufficiently bold to enter in, even after a fox. The bravery of the boy, however, was eventually the cause of his death, for he was cut down by a leaden ball in the war of 1812.

The next remarkable place that we attained in ascending South Peak, was the Bear Bank, where, in the depth of winter may be found an abundance of these charming creatures. It is said, 7 that they have often been seen sunning themselves, even from the hills east of the Hudson. We were now under a beetling precipice, three hundred feet high, and there, under the shadow of a huge pine, we enjoyed a slice of bread and pork, with a few drops of the genuine mountain dew.

Instead of a dessert of strawberries and cream, however, we were furnished, by venerable dame Nature, with a thunder-storm. It was one that we had noticed making a great commotion in the valley below. It had probably discovered two bipeds going towards its home, the sky, and seemed to have pursued us

with a view of frightening us back again. But “knowing that nature never did betray the heart that loved her,” we awaited the thunderstorm’s reply to our obstinate refusal to descend. The cloud was yet below us, but its unseen herald, a strong east wind, told us that the conflict had commenced. Presently a peal of thunder resounded through the vast profound, which caused the mountain to tremble to its deep foundation. And then followed another, and another, as the storm increased, and the rain and hail poured down in floods.

Thinking it safer to expose ourselves to the storm than remain under the pine, we retreated without delay, when we were suddenly enveloped in the heart of the cloud, only a few rods distant; then, a stroke of lightning blinded us, and the towering forest monarch was smitten to the earth. We were in the midst of an unwritten epic poem about that time, but we could not appreciate its beauties, for another peal of thunder, and another stroke of lightning attracted our whole attention. Soon as these had passed, a terrible gale followed in their wake, tumbling down piles of loose rocks, and bending to the dust, as if in passion, the resisting forms of an army of trees; and afterwards a glorious rainbow spanned the mountain, appearing like those distinguishing circles around the temples of the mighty and holy, as portrayed by the painters of old. The commotion lasted for one hour, when the region of the Bear Bank became as serene as the slumber of a babe. A spirit of silent prayer was brooding upon the earth and in the air; and with a shadow of thoughtfulness at our hearts, we resumed our upward march.

Our next halting place was upon a sort of peninsula, called the Eagle’s Nest, where, it is said, an Indian child was formerly carried by one of those birds, and cruelly destroyed, and

whence the frantic mother, with the mangled body of her babe, leaped into the terrible abyss below. From this point, we discovered a host of clouds assembled in council above High Peak, as if discussing the parched condition of the earth, and the speediest mode of affording relief to a still greater extent than they had done; and far away to the west, was another assembly of clouds, vying like sportive children, to outrun and overleap each other in their aerial amphitheatre. 9

After this, we surmounted another point called Rattlesnake Ledge. Here the rocks were literally covered with the white bones of those reptiles, slaughtered by the hunter in by-gone years, and we happened to see a pair of them that were alive. One was about four feet long, and the other, which was only about half as large, seemed to be the offspring of the old one, for, when discovered, they were playing together like an affectionate mother with her tender child. Soon as we appeared in their presence, the serpents immediately ceased their sports, and in the twinkling of an eye they coiled themselves in the attitude of battle. The conflict was of short duration, and to know the result you need only look into my cabinet of curiosities.

Higher yet was it our lot to climb. We went a little out of our course to obtain a bird's-eye view of a mountain lake. In its tranquil bosom the glowing evening sky and mountain sides were vividly reflected, and the silence surrounding it was so profound, that we could almost hear the ripples made by a solitary duck, as it swam from one shore to the other in its utter loneliness. Very beautiful, indeed, was this picture; and as I reflected upon it, I thought that, as the Infant of Bethlehem was tenderly protected by the parents who watched over its 10

slumbers, so was this exquisite lake cradled and protected in the lap of the mountains.

One sight more did we behold before reaching the summit of South Peak. It was the sunset hour, and on a jutting cliff, which commanded an immense view, our eyes were delighted by the sight of a deer, standing still, and looking down upon the silent void below, which was then covered with a deep purple atmosphere, causing the prospect to resemble the boundless ocean. It was the last of its race, we could not but fancy, bidding the human world good night, previous to seeking its heathery couch in a nameless ravine.

One effort more, and the long-desired eminence was attained; and we were a little nearer the evening star than we had ever been before. It was now the hour of twilight, and as we were about done over with fatigue, it was not long before we had pitched our leafy tent, eaten some supper, and yielded ourselves to the embrace of sleep,

“Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health.”

At midnight, a cooling breath of air having passed across my face, I was awakened from a fearful dream, which left me in a nervous and excited state of mind. A strange and solemn gloom had taken possession of my spirit, which was greatly enhanced by the doleful song of a neighbouring hemlock grove. Our encampment having been made a little below the summit of the Peak, and feeling anxious to behold the prospect at that hour from that point, I awakened my companion, and we seated ourselves upon the topmost rock, which was nearly bare of shrubs, but covered with a rich moss, softer and more beautiful

than the finest carpet.

But how can I describe the scene that burst upon our enraptured vision. It was unlike anything I had ever seen before, creating a lone, lost feeling, which I supposed could only be realized by a wanderer in an uninhabited wilderness, or on the ocean, a thousand leagues from home. Above, around, and beneath us—ay, far beneath us—were the cold, bright stars, and to the eastward, the “young moon with the old moon in her arms.” In the west were floating a little band of pearly clouds, which I almost fancied to be winged chariots, and that they were crowded with children, the absent and loved of other years, who, in a frolic of blissful joy, were out upon the fields of heaven. On one side of us reposed the long, broad valley of the Hudson, with its cities, towns, villages, woods, hills, and plains, whose crowded highway was diminished to a narrow girdle of deep blue. Towards the south, hill beyond hill, field beyond field, receded to the sky, occasionally enlivened by a peaceful lake. On our right, a multitudinous array of rugged mountains lay piled up, apparently as impassable as the bottomless gulf. To the north, Old High Peak, king of the Catskills, bared his bosom to the moonlight, as if demanding and expecting the homage of the world. Strange and magnificent, indeed, was the prospect from that mountain watch-tower; and it was with reluctance that we turned away, as in duty bound, to slumber until the dawn.

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The dawn! And now for a sunrise picture among the mountains, with all the illusive performances of the mists and clouds. He comes! he comes! the “king of the bright days!”

Now the crimson and golden clouds are parting, and he bursts

on the bewildered sight. One moment more, and the whole earth rejoices in his beams, falling alike, as they do, upon the prince and the peasant of every land. And now, on either side and beneath the sun, an array of new-born clouds are gathering, like a band of cavaliers, preparing to accompany their leader on a journey. Out of the Atlantic have they just arisen; at noon they will have pitched their tents on the cerulean plains of heaven; and when the hours of day are numbered, the far-off waters of the Pacific will again receive them in its cool embrace.

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Listen! was not that the roar of waves? Naught but the report of thunder in the valley below. Are not the two oceans coming together? See! we are on a rock, in the midst of an illimitable sea, and the tide is surely rising—rising rapidly! Strange! it is still as death, and yet the oceans are covered with billows. Lo! the naked masts of a ship, stranded on a lee-shore; and yonder, as if a reef were hidden there to impede their course, the waves are struggling in despair, now leaping to the sky, and now plunging into a deep abyss! And when they have passed the unseen enemy, how rapid and beautiful are their various evolutions, as they hasten to the more distant shore.

Another look, and what a change! The mists of morning are being exhaled by the risen sun; already the world of waters is dispersed, and in the valley of the Hudson, far far away, are reposing all the enchanting features of the green earth.

We descended the mountain by a circuitous route, that we might enjoy the luxury of passing through Plauterkill Clove. The same spring that gives rise to Schoharie Creek, which is the principal tributary of the Mohawk, also gives rise

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to the Plauterkill. In its very infancy it begins to leap and laugh with the gladness of a boy. From its source to the plain, the distance is only two miles, and yet it has a fall of twenty-five hundred feet; but the remainder of its course, until it reaches the Esopus, is calm and picturesque; and on every side, and at every turn, may be seen the farm-houses of a sturdy yeomanry.

The wild gorge, or dell, through which it passes, abounds in waterfalls of surpassing beauty, varying from ten to a hundred feet in height, whose rocks are green with the moss of centuries, and whose brows are ever wreathed with the most exquisite of vines and flowers. Here is the Double Leap, with its almost fathomless pool, containing a hermit trout, that has laughed at the angler's skill for a score of years; the Fall of the Mountain Spirit, haunted, as it is said, by the disembodied spirit of an Indian girl, who lost her life here, while pursuing a phantom of the brain; and here is the Blue Bell Fall, for ever guarded by a multitudinous array of those charming flowers. Caverns, too, and chasms are here, dark, deep, chilly, and damp, where the toad, the lizard, and snake, and strange families of insects, are perpetually multiplying, and actually seeming to enjoy their loathsome lives; and here is the Black Chasm and the Devil's Chamber, the latter with perpendicular walls, twice the height of Old Trinity, and with a wainscoting of pines and hemlocks, which have "braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze." Plauterkill Clove is an eddy of the great and tumultuous world, and in itself a world of unwritten poetry, whose primitive loveliness has not yet been disfigured by the influence of Mammon. It has been consecrated by a brotherhood of friends, well tried and true, to the pure religion of nature; and after spending a summer day therein, and then emerging under the open sky, their feelings are always allied to those of a

pilgrim in a strange land, passing through the dreamy twilight of an old cathedral.

But it is time that I should change my tune, as I desire to record a few fishing adventures, which I have lately experienced among the Catskills. My first excursion was performed along the margin of Sweetwater Brook, which flows out of the lake already mentioned. My guide and companion was a notorious hunter of this region, named Peter Hummel, whose services I have engaged for all my future rambles among the mountains. He is decidedly one of the wildest and rarest characters I have ever known, and would be a valuable acquisition to a menagerie. He was born in a little hut, at the foot of South Peak, is twenty-seven years of age, and has never been to school a day in his life, or, in his travels towards civilization, further away from home than fifteen miles. He was educated for a bark-gatherer, his father and several brothers having always been in the business; but Peter is averse to common-place labour, to anything, in fact, that will bring money.

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When a boy of five years, he had an inkling for the mountains, and once had wandered so far, that he was found by his father, in the den of an old bear, playing with her cubs. To tramp among the mountains, with gun and dog, is Peter's chief and only happiness. He is probably one of the best specimens of a hunter now living; and very few, I fancy, could have survived the dangers to which he has exposed himself. As to his constitution, he seems to be one of those iron mortals, who never die with age and infirmity, but who generally meet with a sudden death, as if to recompense them for their heedlessness. But with all his wildness and recklessness, Peter Hummel is as amiable and kind-hearted a man as ever breathed. He is an original wit,

withal, and shrewd and very laughable are many of his speeches; and his stories are the cream of romance and genuine mountain poetry.

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But to my story. As usual, we started on our tramp at an early hour, he with a trout-basket in his hand, containing our dinner, and I with my sketch-book and a "pilgrim staff." After a tiresome ascent of three hours, up a mountain path, over ledges and through gloomy ravines, we at last reached the wished-for brook. All the day long were we cheered by its happy song, as we descended, now leaping from one deep pool to another, and now scrambling over green-coated rocks, under and around fallen trees, and along the damp, slippery sides of the mountain, until we reached its mouth on a plain, watered by a charming river, and sprinkled with the rustic residences of the Dutch yeomanry. We were at home by sunset, having walked the distance of twenty miles, and captured one hundred and fifty trout, the most of which we distributed among the farm-houses in our way, as we returned. The trout were small, varying from three to eight ounces in weight, and of a dark brown colour.

On another occasion, I had taken my sketch-book and some fishing-tackle, and gone up a mountain road to the banks of Schoharie Creek, nominally for the purpose of sketching a few trees. In the very first hole of the stream into which I accidentally peered, I discovered a large trout lying near the bottom, just above a little bed of sand, whence rose the bubbles of a spring. For some thirty minutes I watched the fellow with a "yearning tenderness;" but as he appeared to be so very happy, and I was in a kindred mood, I thought that I would let him live. Presently, however, a beautiful fly lighted on the water, which the greedy hermit swallowed in a minute, and returned to his

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cool bed with his conscience, as I fancied, not one whit troubled by what he had done. Involuntarily I began to unwind my line; and having cut a pole, and repeated to myself something about “diamond cut diamond,” I whipped on a red hackle and passed it over the pool. The rogue of a trout, however, saw me, and scorned for awhile to heed my lure. But I coaxed and coaxed, until at last he darted for it, apparently out of mere spite. Something similar to a miniature water-spout immediately arose, and the monarch of the brook was in a fair way of sharing the same fate which had befallen the innocent fly. I learned a salutary lesson from this incident, and as I had yielded to the temptation of the brook, I shouldered my sketch-book and descended the stream. At noon I reached a farm-house, where I craved something to eat. A good dinner was given me, which was seasoned by many questions, and some information, concerning trout. That afternoon, in company with a little boy, I visited a neighbouring stream, called the Roaring Kill, where I caught one hundred and sixty fish. I then returned to the farm-house, and spent the evening in conversation with my new acquaintances. After breakfast, on the following morning, I set out for home, and reached there about noon, having made only two additions to my sketches. Long shall I remember the evening spent with this family, and their hospitality towards an entire stranger. A pleasant family was that night added to my list of friends.

Another of my trouting pilgrimages was to a famous place, called Stony Clove, among the mountains of Shaudaken. It is a deep perpendicular cut, or gorge, between two mountains, two thousand feet in depth, from twenty feet to four hundred in width, and completely lined, from base to summit, with luxuriant vegetation. It is watered by a narrow but deep brook, which is

so full of trout, that some seven hundred were captured by myself and two others in a single day. When I tell you that this spot is only about one hundred miles from New York, you will be surprised to learn, that in its immediate vicinity we saw no less than two bears, one doe with two fawns, and other valuable game.

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In some parts of this Clove the sunshine never enters, and whole tons of the purest ice may be found there throughout the year. It is, indeed, a most lonely and desolate corner of the world, and might be considered a fitting type of the Valley of the Shadow of Death; in single file did we have to pass through it, and in single file do the sons of men pass into the grave. To spend one day there, we had to encamp two nights; and how we generally manage that affair I will mention presently.

In returning from Stony Clove, we took a circuitous route, and visited the Mountain House. We approached it by the way of the celebrated Kauterskill Fall, which I will describe to you in the graphic language of Cooper, as you may not remember the passage in his "Pioneer." "Why there's a fall in the hills, where the water of two little ponds, that lie near each other, breaks out of their bounds, and runs over the rocks into the valley. The stream is, may be, such a one as would turn a mill, if so useless a thing was wanted in the wilderness. *But the Hand that made that 'Leap' never made a mill!* There the water comes croaking and winding among the rocks, first so slow that a trout might swim in it, and then starting and running, just like any creature that wanted to make a fair spring, till it gets to where the mountain divides, like the cleft foot of a deer, leaving a deep hollow for the brook to tumble into. The first pitch is nigh two hundred feet, and the water looks like flakes of snow

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afore it touches the bottom, and then gathers itself together again for a new start, and, may be, flutters over fifty feet of flat rock, before it falls for another hundred, where it jumps from shelf to shelf, first running this way and that way, striving to get out of the hollow, till it finally comes to the plain.”

Our party, on this occasion, consisted of three, Peter Hummel, a bark-gatherer, and myself. I had chosen these fellows for the expedition, because of their friendship for me and their willingness to go, and I resolved to give them a “treat” at the “Grand Hotel,” which the natives of this region look upon as a kind of paradise. The reader is no doubt aware, that the Mountain House is an establishment vieing in its style of accommodation with the best of hotels.

Between it and the Hudson there is, during the summer, a semi-daily line of stages; and it is the transient resort of thousands, who visit it for the novelty of its situation, as well as for the surrounding scenery. The edifice itself stands on a cliff, within a few feet of the edge, and commands a prospect extending from Long Island Sound to the White Mountains. The first time I visited the spot, I spent half the night at my bed-room window, watching the fantastic performances of a thunder-storm far below me, which made the building tremble like a ship upon a reef, while the sky above was cloudless, and studded with stars. Between this spot and South Peak, “there’s the High Peak and the Round Top which lay back, like a father and mother among their children, seeing they are far above all the other hills.”

But to proceed. Coarsely and comically dressed as we were, we made a very unique appearance as we paraded into the

office of the hotel. I met a few acquaintances there, to whom I introduced my comrades; and in a short time each one was spinning a mountain legend to a crowd of delighted listeners. In due time, I ushered them into the dining-hall, where a scene was enacted which can be better imagined than described; the fellows were completely out of their element, and it was laughable in the extreme to see them stare, and hear them talk, as the servants bountifully helped them to the turtle-soup, ice-cream, charlotte-russe, and other fashionable dainties.

About the middle of the afternoon we commenced descending the beautiful mountain road leading towards the Hudson. In the morning there had been a heavy shower, and a thousand happy rills attended us with a song. A delightful nook on this road is pointed out as the identical spot where Rip Van Winkle slept away a score of his life. I reached home in time to spend the twilight hour in my own room, musing upon the much-loved mountains. I had but one companion, and that was a whip-poor-will, which nightly comes to my window-sill, as if to tell me a tale of its love, or of the woods and solitary wilderness.

23

But the most unique and interesting of my fishing adventures remains to be described. I had heard a great deal about the good fishing afforded by the lake already mentioned, and I desired to visit it, and spend a night upon its shore. Having spoken to my friend Hummel, and invited a neighbour to accompany us, whom the people have named "White Yankee," the noontide hour of a pleasant day found us on our winding march; and such a grotesque appearance as we made, was exceedingly amusing. The group was mostly animated when climbing the steep and rocky ravines which we were compelled to pass through. There was Peter, "long, lank and lean," and wild in his attire and

countenance as an eagle of the wilderness, with an axe in his hand, and a huge knapsack on his back, containing our provisions and utensils for cooking. Next to him followed White Yankee, with three blankets lashed upon his back, a slouched white hat on his head, and nearly a half pound of tobacco in his mouth. Crooked legged withal, and somewhat sickly was this individual, and being wholly unaccustomed to this kind of business, he went along groaning, grunting, and fuming, as if he was “sent for, and *didn't want* to come.” In the rear trotted along your humble friend, with a gun upon his shoulder, a powder-horn and shot-pouch at his side, cow-hide boots on his feet, and a cap on his head—his beard half an inch long, and his flowing hair streaming in the wind.

24

We reached our place of destination about five o'clock, and halted under a large impending rock, which was to be our sleeping place. We were emphatically under the “shadow of a rock, in a weary land.” Our first business was to build a fire, which we did with about one cord of green and dry wood. Eighty poles were then cut, to which we fastened our lines. The old canoe in the lake was bailed out, and having baited our hooks with the minnows we had brought with us, we planted the poles in about seven feet water, all around the lake shore. We then prepared and ate our supper, and awaited the coming on of night. During this interval, I learned the following particulars concerning the lake. It was originally discovered by a hunter, named Shew. It is estimated to cover about fifty acres, and in the centre, to be more than two hundred feet in depth. For my part, however, I do not believe it contains over five acres, though the mountains which tower on every side but one, are calculated to deceive the eye; but, as to its depth, I could easily fancy it to be bottomless, for the water is remarkably dark. To

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the number of trout in this lake there seems to be no end. It is supposed they reach it, when small, through Sweetwater Brook, when they increase in size, and multiply. It also abounds in green and scarlet lizards, which are a serious drawback to the pleasures of the fastidious angler. I asked Peter many questions concerning his adventures about the lake, and he told me that the number of "harmless murders" he had committed here was about three hundred. In one day, he shot three deer; at another time, a dozen turkeys; at another, twenty ducks; one night, an old bear; and again, half a dozen coons; and, on one occasion, annihilated a den of thirty-seven rattlesnakes.

At nine o'clock, we lighted a torch and went to examine our lines; and it was my good fortune to haul out not less than forty-one trout, weighing from one to two pounds a-piece. These, we put into a spring of very cold water, which bubbled from the earth a few paces from our camping place, and then retired to repose. Branches of hemlock constituted our couch, and my station was between Peter and White Yankee. Little did I dream, when I first saw these two bipeds, that I should ever have them for my bed-fellows; but who can tell what shall be on the morrow? My friends were in the land of Nod in less than a dozen minutes after we had retired; but it was hard for me to go to sleep in the midst of the wild scene which surrounded me. There I lay, flat on my back, a stone and my cap for a pillow, and wrapt in a blanket, with my nose exposed to the chilly night air. And what pictures did my fancy conjure up, as I looked upon the army of trunks around me, glistening in the fire-light! One moment they were a troop of Indians from the spirit-land, come to revisit again the hunting grounds of their fathers, and weeping because the white man had desecrated their soil; and again, I fancied them to be a congress of wild animals,

assembled to try, execute, and devour us, for the depredations our fellows had committed upon their kind during the last one hundred years. By and by, a star peered upon me from between the branches of a tree, and my thoughts ascended heavenward. And now, my eyes twinkled and blinked in sympathy with the star, and I was a dreamer.

27

An hour after the witching time of night, I was startled from my sleep by a bellowing halloo from Peter, who said it was time to examine the lines again. Had you heard the echoes which were then awakened, far and near, you would have thought yourself in enchanted land. But there were living answers to that shout, for a frightened fox began to bark, an owl commenced its horrible hootings, a partridge its drumming, and a wolf its howl. There was not a breeze stirring, and

“Nought was seen, in the vault on high,
But the moon, and the stars, and a cloudless sky,
And a river of white in the welkin blue.”

Peter and Yankee went out to haul in the trout, but I remained on shore to attempt a drawing, by moonlight, of the lake before me. The opposite side of the mountain, with its dark tangled forest, was perfectly mirrored in the waters below, the whole seeming as solid and variegated as a tablet of Egyptian marble. The canoe with its inmates noiselessly pursued its way, making the stillness more profound. In the water at my feet I distinctly saw lizards sporting about, and I could not but wonder why such reptiles were ever created. I thought, with the Ancient Mariner,

28

“A thousand slimy things lived on,

And so did I.”

Again did we retire to rest, slumbering until the break of day. We then partook of a substantial trout breakfast, gathered up our plunder, and with about one hundred handsome trout started for home.

The accidents we met with during the night were harmless, though somewhat ridiculous. A paper of matches, which Peter carried in his breeches’ pocket, took fire, and gave him such a scorching that he bellowed lustily. White Yankee, in his restless slumber, rolled so near our watch-fire, that he barely escaped with one corner of his blanket, the remainder having been consumed. As for me, I only fell into the water among the lizards, while endeavouring to reach the end of a log, which extended into the lake. In descending the mountain, we shot three partridges, and confoundedly frightened a fox; and by the middle of the afternoon, were quietly pursuing our usual avocations among our fellow-men of the lower world.

CHAPTER II.

A Spring Day—The Sky—The Mountains—The Streams—
The Woods—The Open Fields—Domestic Animals—
Poetry—The Poultry-yard.

Plauterkill Clove. May.

May is near its close, and I am still in the valley of the Hudson. Spring is indeed come again, and this, for the present year, has been its day of triumph. The moment I awoke at dawn, this morning, I knew by intuition that it would be so, and I bounded from my couch like a startled deer, impatient for the cool delicious air. Spring is upon the earth once more, and a new life is given me of enjoyment and hope. The year is in its childhood, and my heart clings to it with a sympathy, that I feel must be immortal and divine. What I have done to-day, I cannot tell: I only know that my body has been tremulous with feeling, and my eyes almost blinded with seeing. Every hour has been fraught with a new emotion of delight, and presented to my vision numberless pictures of surpassing beauty. I have held communion with the sky, the mountains, the streams, the woods, and the fields; and these, if you please, shall be themes of my present chapter.

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The sky! It has been of as deep an azure, and as serene, as ever canopied the world. It seemed as if you could look through it, into the illimitable home of the angels—could almost behold the glory which surrounds the Invisible. Three clouds alone have attracted my attention. One was the offspring of the dawn, and encircled by a rim of gold; the next was the daughter of noon,

and white as the driven snow; and the last of evening, and robed in deepest crimson. Wayward and coquettish creatures were these clouds! Their chief ambition seemed to be to display their charms to the best advantage, as if conscious of their loveliness; and, at sunset, when the light lay pillowed on the mountains, it was a joyous sight to see them, side by side, like three sweet sisters, as they were, going home. Each one was anxious to favour the world with its own last smile, and by their changing places so often, you would have thought they were all unwilling to depart. But they were the ministers of the Sun, and he would not tarry for them; and, while he beckoned them to follow on, the Evening Star took his station in the sky, and bade them depart: and when I looked again, they were gone. Never more, thought I, will those clouds be a source of joy to a human heart. And in this respect, also, they seemed to me to be the emblems of those beautiful but thoughtless maidens, who spend the flower of youth trifling with the affections of all whom they have the power to fascinate.

31

The mountains! In honour of the season which has just clothed them in the richest green, they have this day displayed every one of their varied and interesting charms. At noon, as I lay under the shadow of a tree, watching them “with a look made of all sweet accord,” my face was freshened by a breeze. It appeared to come from the summit of South Peak, and to be the voice of the Catskills I listened, and these were the words which echoed through my ear:

“Of all the seasons, oh, Spring! thou art the most beloved, and to us, always the most welcome. Joy and gladness ever attend thy coming, for we know that the ‘winter is past, the rains are over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice

of the turtle is heard in our land.' And we know, too, that from thy hands flow unnumbered blessings. Thou softenest the earth, that the husbandman may sow his seed, which shall yield 32 him a thousand fold at the harvest. Thou releasest the rivers from their icy fetters, that the wings of commerce may be unfurled once more. Thou givest food to the cattle upon a thousand hills, that they, in their turn, may furnish man with necessary food, and also assist him in his domestic labours. Thou coverest the earth with a garniture of freshest loveliness, that the senses of man may be gratified, and his thoughts directed to Him who hath created all things, and pronounced them good. And, finally, thou art the hope of the year, and thine admonitions, which are of the future, have a tendency to emancipate the thoughts of man from this world, and the troubles which may surround him here, and fix them upon that clime where an eternal spring abides." "The voice in my dreaming ear melted away," and I heard the roaring of the streams as they fretted their way down the rocky steeps.

The streams! Such "trumpets" as they have blown to-day, would, I am afraid, have caused Mr. Wordsworth to exclaim:

"The cataracts—*make a devilish noise up yonder.*"

The fact is, as "all the earth is gay," and all the springs among the mountains are "giving themselves up to jollity," the 33 streams are full to overflowing, and rush along with a "vindictive looseness," because of the burden they have to bear. The falls and cascades, which make such exquisite pictures in the summer months, are now fearful to behold, for, in their anger, every now and then they toss some giant tree into an abyss of foam, which makes one tremble with fear. But after the

streams have left the mountains, and are running through the bottom-lands, they still appear to be displeased with something, and at every turn they take, delve into the “bowels of the harmless earth,” making it dangerous for the angler to approach too near, but rendering the haunt of the trout more spacious and commodious than before. The streams are about the only things I cannot praise to-day, and I hope it will not rain for a month to come, if this is the way they intend to act whenever we have a number of delightful showers.

The woods! A goodly portion of the day have I spent in one of their most secret recesses. I went with Shakspeare under my arm, but could not read, any more than fly, so I stretched myself at full length on a huge log, and kept a sharp look-out for anything that might send me a waking dream. The brotherhood of trees clustered around me, laden with leaves just bursting into full maturity, and possessing that delicate and peculiar green, which lasts but a single day, and never returns. A fitful breeze swept through them, so that ever and anon I fancied a gushing fountain to be near, or that a company of ladies fair were come to visit me, and that I heard the rustle of their silken kirtles. And now my eyes rested on a tree, that was entirely leafless, and almost without a limb. Instead of grass at its foot, was a heap of dry leaves, and not a bush or vine grew anywhere near it, but around its neighbours they grew in great abundance. It seemed branded with a curse, alone, forsaken of its own, and despised by all. Can this, thought I, be an emblem of any human being? Strange that it should be, but it is nevertheless too true. Only one week ago I saw a poor miserable maniac bound hand and foot, driven from “home and all its treasures,” and carried to a dark, damp prison-house in a neighbouring town. I can be reconciled to the mystery of a poisonous reptile’s existence, but

it is very hard to understand for what good purpose a maniac is created. Another object I noticed, was a little tree about five feet high, completely covered with blossoms of a gaudy hue. At first, I tried to gather something poetical out of this thing, but with all my endeavours, I could not. It caused me a real hearty laugh as the idea expanded, for it reminded me of a certain maiden lady of my acquaintance, who is old, stunted, very fond of tall men and always strutting round under a weight of jewelry. But oh! what beautiful flowers did I notice in that shady grove, whose whispering thrilled me with delight! Their names? I cannot tell them to you, fair reader; they ought to have no names, any more than a cloud or a foam-bell on the river. Some were blue, some white, some purple, and some scarlet. There were little parties of them on every side; and as the wind swayed their delicate stems, I could not but fancy they were living creatures, the personified thoughts perhaps of happy and innocent children. Occasionally, too, I noticed a sort of straggler peeping at me from beside a hillock of moss, or from under the branches of a fallen tree, as if surprised at my temerity in entering its secluded haunt. Birds also were around me in that greenwood sanctuary, singing their hymns of praise to the Father of mercies for the return of spring. The nests of the females being already built, they had nothing to do but be happy, anticipating the time when they themselves should be the “dealers-out of some small blessings” to their helpless broods. As to their mates, they were about as independent, restless and noisy as might be expected, very much as any rational man would be who was the husband of a young and beautiful wife.

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But the open fields to-day have superabounded with pictures to please and instruct the mind. I know not where to begin to

describe them. Shall it be at the very threshold of our farmhouse? Well, then, only look at those lilac trees in the garden, actually top-heavy with purple and white flowering pyramids. The old farmer has just cut a number of large branches, and given them to his little daughter to carry to her mother, who will distribute them between the mantel-piece, the table, and the fireplace of the family sitting-room. But what ambrosial odour is that which now salutes the senses? It comes not from the variegated corner of the garden, where the tulip, the violet, the hyacinth, the blue bell, and the lily of the valley are vying to outstrip each other in their attire; nor, from that clover-covered lawn, besprinkled with butter-cups, strawberry blossoms, and honey-suckles; but from the orchard, every one of whose trees are completely covered with snow-white blossoms. And from their numberless petals emanates the murmur of bees, as they are busy extracting the luscious honey.

What an abundance of fruit—of apples, cherries, peaches and pears, do these sweet blossoms promise! But next week there may be a bitter frost; and this is the lesson which my heart learns. Now that I am in the spring-time of life, my hopes, in number and beauty, are like the blossoms of trees, and I know not but they may even on the morrow be withered by the chilly breath of the grave. But let us loiter farther on. The western slope of this gentle hill is equally divided, and of two different shades of green; one is planted with rye, and the other with wheat. The eastern slope of the hill has lately been loosened by the plough, and is of a sombre colour, but to my eye not less pleasing than the green. And this view is enlivened with figures besides—for a farmer and two boys are planting corn, the latter opening the bed with their hoes, and the former dropping in the seed (which he carries in a bag slung at his side), and covering

it with his foot. And now, fluttering over their heads is a roguish bob-o-link, scolding about something in their wake; at a respectful distance, and hopping along the ground are a number of robins; and on the nearest fence a meadow-lark and bluebird are “holding on for a bite.” But there is no end to these rural pictures, so I will just take my reader into this neighbouring meadow-pasture, thence into the poultry-yard at home, and conclude my present rhapsody.

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Here we are, then, in the midst of various domestic animals. Yonder, a couple of black colts are chasing each other in play, while their venerable mother (for they are brothers, though not twins) is standing a little way off, watching their antics, and twisting about her ears, as she remembers the happy days of her own colthood. Here are some half dozen hearty cows, lying down and grazing, each one with a “pledge of affection” sporting about her. There are six or eight oxen, eating away as fast as they can, while one, who seems to be a sentinel, occasionally rolls up his eye to see if the farmer is coming to renew his song of “haw! gee! gee! haw!” Under the shadow of that old oak is a flock of sheep, with their lambs bounding beside them, as to the “tabor’s sound;” but to me there comes no “thought of grief” at the sight, wherein I must be suffered to disagree with Wordsworth, to whom I have already alluded once or twice, and whose celebrated and most wonderful Ode has been echoing in my heart all the day long. Some of the lines in it are appropriate to the day, the charms of which I am attempting to make you feel, reader, and you will oblige me by reading and inwardly digesting, the following fragments of a whole, and yet really complete poems:—

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“The sunshine is a glorious birth”

“The winds come to me from the fields of sleep.”

“And the babe leaps up on his mother’s arm.”

“Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own.”

“Full soon thy soul shalt have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as fate, and deep almost as life.”

“O joy, that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive.”

“To me, the meanest flower that blows, can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.”

Strange, that a rational man, after dwelling upon such poetry, should be willing to go into a poultry-yard. But why not? I would rather do this willingly than be compelled, as I have been, and may be again, to hear a man say, after reading to him Wordsworth’s great Ode—“Why! of what use is such stuff? what does it prove? will it furnish a man with bread and butter? will it make the pot boil?” The people of the poultry-yard have been in such glee to-day, and contributed so much to

the gladness of the day, that I must pay them a passing tribute.

In the first place, our old gobbler, with his retinue of turkey wives, has been on the point of bursting with pride ever since sunrise. If the Grand Sultan of Turkey (who must be the father of all turkeys) cuts the same kind of capers in the presence of his hundred ladies, Turkey must be a great country for lean people to “laugh and grow fat in.” Our gobbler is a feathered personification of Jack Falstaff, possessing his prominent trait of cowardice to perfection. I flourished a red handkerchief in his face this morning, and, by the way he strutted round and gobbled, you would have thought he was going to devour you. About ten minutes after this, I threw down a handful of corn, which was intended for his particular palate. While he was busy picking it up, a certain cock stepped alongside and commenced picking too: the intruder, having got in the way of the gobbler, was suddenly pushed aside; whereupon the gentleman with spurs chuckled and “showed fight,” but the gobbler for a moment heeded him not. This the cock could not bear, so he pounced upon his enemy, and whipped him without mercy, until the coward and fool ran away, with his long train of affectionate wives following behind.

The cocks, hens and chickens, which have figured in the yard to-day, would more than number a hundred, and such cackling, crowing, chuckling, and crying as they have made, was anything but a “concord of sweet sounds.” But the creatures have been happy, and it was therefore a pleasure to look at them. A young hen this morning made her first appearance with a large brood of chickens, yellow as gold, and this caused quite a sensation among the feathered husbands generally. The mother, as she rambled about, seemed to say by her pompous air, to her

daughterless friends—“ar’nt they beautiful? don’t you wish you had a few?” It was also very funny to see with what looks of astonishment the youthful cocks surveyed these “infant phenomenons.” As to our ducks, and geese, and guinea hens, they have minded their business pretty well—the two former paddling about the creek and mud-puddles, and the latter “between meals” roaming at large through the orchard and garden, altogether the most beautiful and rational of the feathered tribes.

A mountaineer, who is to take this queer record to the post-office, is waiting for me, and I must close,—hoping that the country pictures I have endeavoured to sketch may have a tendency to make my reader feel a portion of that joy, which has characterized this delightful Spring Day.

CHAPTER III.

A corn-planting Bee.

Plauterkill Clove. May.

The people who inhabit that section of country lying between the Catskill Mountains and the Hudson River, are undoubtedly the legitimate descendants of the far-famed Rip Van Winkle. Dutch blood floweth in their veins, and their names, appearance, manners, are all Dutch, and Dutch only. The majority of them are engaged in tilling the soil, and as they seem to be satisfied with a bare competency, the peacefulness of their lives is only equalled by their ignorance of books, and the world at large. The height of their ambition is to enjoy a frolic, and what civilized people understand by that term, they designate a Bee. Not only have they their wedding and funeral Bees, but they commemorate their agricultural labours with a Bee, and of these, the Corn-Planting Bee, which I am about to describe, is a fair specimen.

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A certain old Dutchman of my acquaintance had so long neglected the field where he intended to plant his corn, that he found it necessary to retrieve his reputation by getting up a Bee. He therefore immediately issued his verbal invitations, and at two o'clock on the appointed day, about seventy of his neighbours, including men and women, made their appearance at his dwelling, each one of them furnished with a hoe and a small bag to carry the seed. After supplying his guests with all they wanted in the way of spiritual drink, my friend gave the signal, and shouldering a large hoe started off for the field of action,

closely followed by his neighbours, who fell to work lustily. The field was large, but as the planters were numerous, it was entirely planted at least two hours before sunset, when the party was disbanded, with the express understanding resting upon their minds that they should invite their children to the dance, which was to take place in the evening at the Bee-giver's residence.

The house of my farmer friend having been originally built for a tavern, it happened to contain a large ball-room, and on this occasion it was stripped of its beds and bedding, and the walls thereof decked from top to bottom with green branches and an occasional tallow candle, and conspicuous at one end of the hall was a refreshment establishment, well supplied with pies, gingerbread, molasses, candy and cigars, with an abundance of coloured alcohols.

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The number of young men and women who came together on the occasion was about one hundred, and while they were trimming themselves for the approaching dance, the musician, a huge, long-legged and bony Dutchman, was tuning a rusty fiddle. The thirty minutes occupied by him in this interesting business were employed by the male portion of the guests in "wetting their whistles." The dresses worn on the occasion were eminently rustic and unique. Those of the gentlemen, for the most part, were made of a coarse grey cloth, similar to that worn by the residents on Blackwell's Island, while the ladies were arrayed in white cotton, trimmed with a narrow scarlet ribbon. Pumps being out of vogue, cow-hide boots were worn by the former, and calf brogans by the latter.

All things being now ready, a terribly loud shriek came from the

poor little fiddle, and the clattering of heels commenced, shaking the building to its very foundation. "On with the dance, let joy be unconfined," seemed to be the motto of all present; and from the start, there seemed to be a strife between the male and the female dancers, as to who should leap the highest and make the most noise. Desperate were the efforts of the musician, as he toiled away upon his instrument, keeping discord with his heels; and every unusual wail of the fiddle was the forerunner of a profuse perspiration, which came rolling off of the fiddler's face to the floor. And then the joyous delirium of the musician was communicated to the dancers, and as the dance proceeded, their efforts became still more desperate; the women wildly threw back their hair, and many of the men took off their coats, and rolled up their shirt-sleeves for the purpose of keeping cool. In spite of every effort, however, the faces of the dancers became quite red with the excitement, and the hall was filled with a kind of heated fog, in which the first "break-down" of the evening concluded.

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Then followed the refreshment scene. The men drank whisky and smoked cigars, while the women feasted upon mince-pies, drank small beer, and sucked molasses candy. Some of the smaller men, or boys, who were too lazy to dance, sneaked off into an out-of-the-way room for the purpose of pitching pennies; while a few couples, who were victims to the tender passion, retired to some cozy nook, to bask unobserved in each other's smiles.

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But now the screeching fiddle is again heard above the murmur of talking and laughing voices, and another rush is made for the sanded floor. Another dance is there enjoyed, differing from the one already described only in its increased extravagance. After

sawing away for a long time, as if for dear life, the musician is politely requested to play a new tune. Promptly does he assent to the proposition, but having started on a fresh key, he soon falls into the identical strain, which had kept him busy for the previous hour; so that the philosophic listener is compelled to conclude that the fiddler either cannot play more than one tune, or that he has a particular passion for the monotonous and nameless one to which he so closely clings. And thus, with many indescribable variations does the ball continue throughout the entire night.

I did not venture to trip the “light fantastic toe” on the occasion in question, but my enjoyment as a calm spectator was very amusing and decidedly original. Never before had I seen a greater amount of labour performed by men and women in the same time. I left this interesting assembly about midnight, fully satisfied with what I had seen and heard; but I was afterwards told that I missed more than “half the fun.”

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When the music was loudest, so it appears, and the frenzy of the dance at its climax, a select party of Dutch gentlemen were suddenly seized with an appetite for some more substantial food than had yet been given them. They held a consultation on the important subject, and finally agreed to ransack the garret and cellar of their host for the purpose of satisfying their natural desires. In the former place they found a good supply of dried beef, and in the latter, a few loaves of bread and a jar of rich cream, upon which they regaled themselves without favour, but with some fear. The giver of the Bee subsequently discovered what had been done, and though somewhat more than “three sheets in the wind” slyly sent for a pair of constables, who soon made their appearance, and arrested the thieving guests, who

were held to bail in the sum of fifty dollars each. I was also informed that the dance was kept up until six o'clock in the morning, and that the appearance of my friend's establishment, and the condition of his guests at seven o'clock, was ridiculous in the extreme. A small proportion of the Bee-party only had succeeded in starting for home, so that the number who, from excess of drinking and undue fatigue had retired to repose, was not far from three score and ten. The sleeping accommodation of the host was limited, and the consequence was, that his guests had to shift for themselves, as they best could. The floors of every room in the house, including the pantries, were literally covered with men and women; some of them moaning with a severe head-ache, some breathing audibly in a deep sleep, and others snoring in the loudest and most approved style. By twelve o'clock, the interesting company had stolen off to their several homes, and the Corn-Planting Bee, among the Catskills, was at an end.

CHAPTER IV.

Lake Horicon—Sketches of its scenery—Information for anglers—Sabbath-day Point—War memories—The Turret City—Death of a deer—Roger's Slide—Diamond Island—The snake-charmer—Snake stories—Night on the Horicon.

Lyman's Tavern. June.

If circumstances alone could make one poetical, then might you expect from me on this occasion a paper of rare excellence and beauty. My sketch-book is my desk, my canopy from the sunshine an elm-tree, the carpet under my feet a rich green sprinkled with flowers, the music in my ear of singing birds, and the prospect before me, north, east, and south, the tranquil bosom of Lake George, with its islands and surrounding mountains, whose waters, directly at my side, are alive with many kinds of fish, sporting together on a bed of sand. Yes, the far-famed Lake George is my subject, but in what I write I shall not use that title; for I do not like the idea of christening what belongs to us with the name of an English monarch, however much his memory deserves to be respected. Shall it be Lake St. Sacramento, then? No! for that was given to it by the Pope and the French nation. Horicon—a musical and appropriate word, meaning pure water, and given it by the poor Indian—is the name which rightfully belongs to the lake which is now my theme.

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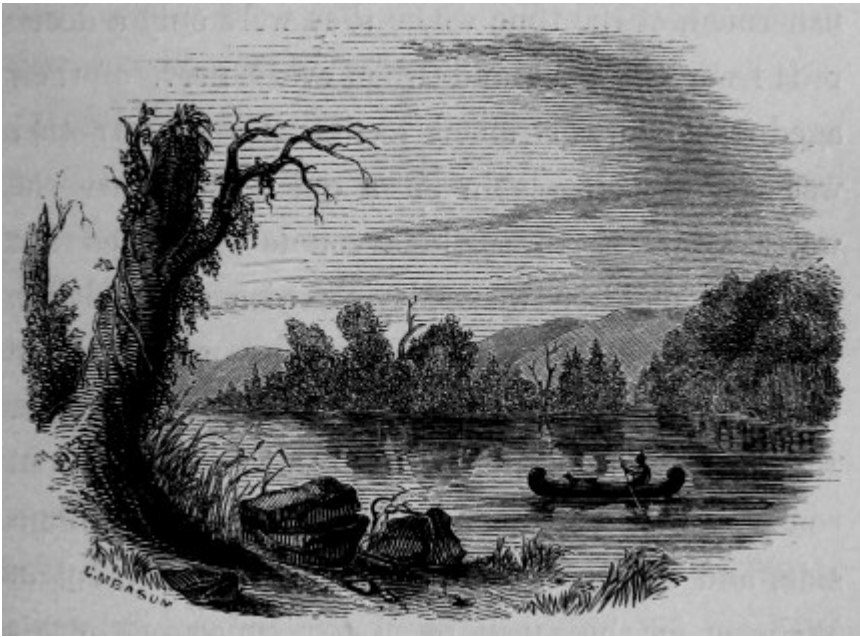
Lake Horicon is one of the few objects in nature which did not disappoint me after reading the descriptions of travellers. I

verily believe, that in point of mere beauty, it has not its superior in the world. Its length is thirty-four miles, and its width from two to four. Its islands number about three hundred, and vary from ten feet to a mile in length; a great many of them are situated in the centre of the lake, at a place called the Narrows. It is completely surrounded with mountains, the most prominent of which are, Black Mountain, on the east of the Narrows, Tongue Mountain, directly opposite, and French Mountain, at the southern extremity. The first is the most lofty, and remarkable for its wildness, and the superb prospect therefrom; the second is also wild and uninhabited, but distinguished for its dens of rattlesnakes; and the latter is somewhat cultivated, but memorable for having been the camping-ground of the French during the Revolutionary war. The whole eastern border is yet a comparative wilderness; but along the western shore are some respectable farms, and a good coach-road from Caldwell to Ticonderoga, which affords many admirable views of the sky-blue lake. There are three public-houses here which I can recommend: the Lake House, for those who are fond of company; Lyman's Tavern, for the hunter of scenery and lover of quiet; and Garfield's House, for the fisherman. A nice little steam-boat, commanded by a gentleman, passes through the Lake every morning and evening (excepting Sundays), and though a convenient affair to the traveller, it is an eye-sore to the admirer of the wilderness.

Identified with this boat is an eccentric man, named "Old Dick," who amuses the tourist, and collects an occasional shilling by exhibiting a number of rattlesnakes. When, in addition to all these things, it is remembered that Horicon is the centre of a region made classic by the exploits of civilized and savage warfare, it can safely be pronounced one of the most interesting

portions of our country for the summer tourist to visit. I have looked upon it from many a peak, whence might be seen almost every rood of its shore. I have sailed into every one of its bays; and, like the pearl-diver, have repeatedly descended into its cold blue chambers; so that I have learned to love it as a faithful and well-tried friend. Since the day of my arrival here, I have kept a journal of my adventures; and, as a memorial of Horicon, I will extract therefrom and embody in this chapter the following passages.

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LAKE HORICON.

Six pencil sketches have I executed upon the Lake to-day. One of them was a view of the distant mountains, whose various outlines were concentrated at one point, and whose colour was of that delicate dreamy blue, created by a sunlight atmosphere, with the sun directly in front. In the middle distance was a

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flock of islands, with a sail boat in their midst, and in the foreground a cluster of rocks, surmounted by a single cedar, which seemed to be the sentinel of a fortress. Another was of the ruins of Fort George, with a background of dark green mountains, which was made quite desolate by a flock of sheep sleeping in one of its shady moats. Another was of a rowing race between two rival fishermen, at the time when they were only a dozen rods from the goal, and when every nerve of their aged frames was strained to the utmost. Another was of a neat log-cabin on a quiet lawn near the water, at whose threshold a couple of ragged but beautiful children were playing with a large dog, while from the chimney of the house ascended the blue smoke with a thousand fantastic evolutions. Another was of a huge pine tree, which towered conspicuously above its kindred on the mountain side, and seemed to me an appropriate symbol of Webster in the midst of a vast concourse of his fellow-men. And the last was of a thunder-storm, driven away from a mountain top by the mild radiance of a rainbow, which partly encircled Horicon in a loving embrace.

I have been fishing to-day, and, while enduring some poor sport, indited in my mind the following information, for the benefit of my piscatorial friends. The days of trout-fishing in Lake Horicon are nearly at an end. A few years ago it abounded in salmon-trout, which were frequently caught weighing twenty pounds, but their average weight at the present is not more than one pound and a half, and they are scarce even at that. In taking them you first have to obtain a sufficient quantity of sapling bark to reach the bottom in sixty feet of water, to one end of which must be fastened a stone, and to the other a stick of wood, which designates your fishing ground, and

is called a buoy. A variety of more common fish are then caught, such as suckers, perch, and eels, which are cut up and deposited, some half a peck at a time, in the vicinity of the buoy. In a few days, the trout will begin to assemble, and so long as you keep them well fed, a brace of them may be captured at any time during the summer. But the fact is, this is only another way for “paying too dear for the whistle.” The best angling, after all, is for the common brook trout, which is a bolder biting fish, and better for the table than the salmon-trout. The cause of the great decrease in the large trout of this lake is this—in the autumn, when they have sought the shores for the purpose of spawning, the neighbouring barbarians have been accustomed to spear them by torch-light; and if the heartless business does not soon cease, the result will be, that in a few years they will be extinct. There are two other kinds of trout in the lake, however, which yet afford good sport—the silver-trout, caught in the summer, and the fall-trout. But the black-bass, upon the whole, is now mostly valued by the fisherman. They are in their prime in the summer months. They vary from one to five pounds in weight; are taken by trolling and with a drop line, and afford fine sport. Their haunts are along the rocky shores, and it is often the case that on a still day you may see them from your boat swimming about in herds, where the water is twenty feet deep. They have a queer fashion when hooked, of leaping out of the water for the purpose of getting clear, and it is seldom that a novice in the gentle art can keep them from succeeding. But alas, their numbers also are fast diminishing, by the same means and the same hands that have killed the trout. My advice to those who come here exclusively for the purpose of fishing is, to continue their journey to the sources of the Hudson, Schroon Lake, Long Lake, and Lake Pleasant, in whose several waters there seems to be no end to every variety of trout, and where

may be found much wild and beautiful scenery. The angler of the present day will be disappointed in Lake Horicon.

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When issuing from the Narrows on your way down the Horicon, the most attractive object, next to the mountains, is a strip of low sandy land extending into the lake, called Sabbath Day Point. It was so christened by Abercrombie, who encamped and spent the Sabbath there, when on his way to Ticonderoga, where he was so sadly defeated. I look upon it as one of the most enchanting places in the world; but the pageant with which it is associated was not only enchanting, and beautiful, but magnificent. Only look upon the picture.

It is the sunset hour, and before us, far up in the upper air, and companion of the evening star and a host of glowing clouds, rises the majestic form of Black Mountain, enveloped in a mantle of rosy atmosphere. The bosom of the Lake is without a ripple, and every cliff, ravine, and island, has its counterpart in the pure waters. A blast of martial music from drums, fifes, bagpipes, and bugle horns, now falls upon the ear, and the immense procession comes in sight; one thousand and thirty-five battaux, containing an army of seventeen thousand souls, headed by the brave Abercrombie and the red cross of England—the scarlet uniforms and glistening bayonets forming a line of light against the darker back-ground of the mountain. And behind a log in the foreground is a crouching Indian runner, who, with the speed of a hawk, will carry the tidings to the French nation that an army is coming, “numerous as the leaves upon the trees.” Far from the strange scene fly the affrighted denizens of mountain and wave—while thousands of human hearts are beating happily at the prospect of victory, whose bodies in a

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few hours will be food for the raven on the plains of Ticonderoga.

A goodly portion of this day have I been musing upon the olden times, while rambling about Fort George, and Fort William Henry. Long and with peculiar interest did I linger about the spot near the latter, where were cruelly massacred the followers of Monroe, at which time Montcalm linked his name to the title of a heartless Frenchman, and the name of Webb became identified with all that is justly despised by the human heart. I profess myself to be an enemy to wrong and outrage of every kind, and yet a lover and defender of the Indian race; but when I picked up one after another the flinty heads of arrows, which were mementos of an awful butchery, my spirit revolted against the Red man, and for a moment I felt a desire to condemn him. Yes, I will condemn that particular band of murderers, but I cannot but defend the race.

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Cruel and treacherous they were, I will allow, but do we forget the treatment they ever met with from the white man? The most righteous of battles have ever been fought for the sake of sires and wives and children, and for what else did the poor Indian fight, when driven from the home of his youth into an unknown wilderness, to become there-after a by-word and a reproach among the nations? "Indians," said we, "we would have your lands; and if you will not be satisfied with the gewgaws we proffer, our powder and balls will teach you that power is but another name for right." And this is the principle that has guided the white man ever since in his warfare against the aborigines of our country. I cannot believe that we shall ever be a happy and prosperous people, until the King of Kings shall have forgiven

us for having, with a yoke of tyranny, almost annihilated a hundred nations.

A portion of this afternoon I whiled away on a little island, which attracted my attention by its charming variety of foliage. It is not more than one hundred feet across at the widest part, and is encircled by a yellow sand-bank, and shielded by a regiment of variegated rocks. But what could I find there to interest me, it may be inquired. My answer is this. That island, hidden in one of the bays of Horicon, is an Insect city, and more populous than was Rome in the days of her glory. There the honey-bee has his oaken tower, the wasp and humble-bee their grassy nests, the spider his den, the butterfly his hammock, the grasshopper his domain, the beetle and cricket and hornet their decayed stump, and the toiling ant her palace of sand. There they were born, there they flourish and multiply, and there they die, symbolizing the career and destiny of man. I was a “distinguished stranger” in that city, and I must confess that it gratified my ambition to be welcomed with such manifestations of regard as the inhabitants thought proper to bestow. My approach was heralded by the song of a kingly bee; and when I had thrown myself upon a mossy bank, multitudes of people gathered round, and, with their eyes intently fixed upon me, stood still, and let “expressive silence muse my praise.” To the “natives” I was emphatically a source of astonishment; and as I wished to gather instruction from the event, I wondered in my heart whether I should be a *happier* man if my presence in a human city should create a kindred excitement. At any rate, it would be a “great excitement on a small capital.”

While quietly eating my dinner this noon in the shady recess of an island near Black Mountain, I was startled by the yell of a pack of hounds coming down one of its ravines. I knew that the chase was after a deer, so I waited in breathless anxiety for his appearance. Five minutes had hardly elapsed before I discovered a noble buck at bay on the extreme summit of a bluff which extended into the lake. There were five dogs yelping about him, but the “antlered monarch” fought them like a hero. His hoof was the most dangerous weapon he could wield, and it seemed to me that the earth actually trembled every time that he struck at his enemies. Presently, to my great joy, one of the hounds was killed, and another so disabled, that he retired from the contest. But the hunters made their appearance, and I knew that the scene would soon come to a tragic close. And when the buck beheld them, I could not but believe that over his face a “tablet of agonizing thoughts was traced,” for he fell upon his knees, then made a sudden wheel, and with a frightful bound, as a ball passed through his heart, cleared the rock and fell into the lake below. The waters closed over him; and methought that the waves of Horicon and the leaves of the forest murmured a requiem above the grave of the wilderness king. I turned away with a tear in my eye, and partly resolved that I would never again have a dog for my friend, or respect the character of a hunter; but then I looked into the crystal waters of the lake, and thought of the beam in my own eye, and stood convicted of a kindred cruelty.

One of the most singular precipices overlooking Horicon is about five miles from the outlet, and known as Rogers' Slide. It is some four hundred feet high, and at one point not a fissure or sprig can be discerned to mar the polished surface of the rock

till it reaches the water. Once on a time, in the winter, the said Rogers was pursued by a band of Indians to this spot, where, after throwing down his knapsack, he carefully retraced the steps of his snow-shoes for a short distance, and descending the hill by a circuitous route, continued his course across the frozen lake. The Indians, on coming to the jumping-off-place, discovered their enemy on the icy plain; but when they saw the neglected knapsack below, and no signs of returning footsteps where they stood, they thought the devil must be in the man, and gave up the pursuit.

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The most famous, and one of the most beautiful islands in this lake, is Diamond Island, so called, from the fact that it abounds in crystallized quartz. It is half a mile in length, but the last place in the world which would be thought of as the scene of a battle. It is memorable for the attack made by the Americans on the British, who had a garrison there during the Revolution. The American detachment was commanded by Colonel Brown, and being elated with his recent triumphs on Lake Champlain, he resolved to attack Diamond Island. The battle was bloody, and the British fought like brave men, "long and well;" the Americans were defeated, and this misfortune was followed by the sufferings of a most painful retreat over the almost impassable mountains between the Lake and what is now Whitehall. While wandering about the island, it was a difficult matter for me to realize, that it had ever resounded with the roar of cannon, the dismal wail of war, and the shout of victory. That spot is now covered with woods, whose shadowy groves are the abode of a thousand birds, for ever singing a song of peace or love, as if to condemn the ambition and cruelty of man.

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In the vicinity of French Mountain is an island celebrated as the burial place of a rattle-snake hunter, named Belden. From all that I can learn, he must have been a strange mortal indeed. His birth-place and early history were alike unknown. When he first made his appearance at this Lake, his only companions were a brotherhood of rattle-snakes, by exhibiting which he professed to have obtained his living; and it is said that, during the remainder of his life, he acquired a handsome sum of money by selling the oil and gall of his favourite reptile. And I have recently been told, that the present market-price of a fat snake, when dead, is not less than half a dollar. Another mode peculiar to old Belden for making money, was to suffer himself to be bitten, at some tavern, after which he would return to his cabin to apply the remedy, when he would come forth again just as good as new. But he was not always to be a solemn trifler. For a week had the old man been missing, and on a pleasant August morning, his body was found on the island alluded to, sadly mutilated and bloated, and it was certain that he had died actually surrounded by rattlesnakes. His death-bed became his grave, and rattlesnakes were his only watchers,—and thus endeth the story of his life.

But this reminds me of two little adventures. The other day, as I was seated near the edge of a sand bar, near the mouth of a brook, sketching a group of trees and the sunset clouds beyond, I was startled by an immense black snake, that landed at my side, and pursued its way directly under my legs, upon which my drawing-book was resting. Owing to my perfect silence, the creature had probably looked upon me as a mere stump. But what was my surprise, a few moments after, when reseated in the same place, to find another snake, and that a large spotted adder, passing along the same track the former had pursued. The

first fright had almost disabled me from using the pencil, but when the second came, I gave a lusty yell, and forgetful of the fine arts, started for home on the keen run.

At another time, when returning from a fishing excursion, in a boat, accompanied by a couple of “greenhorns,” we discovered on the water, near Tongue Mountain, an immense rattlesnake, with his head turned towards us. As the oarsman in the bow of the boat struck at him with his oar, the snake coiled round it, and the fool was in the very act of dropping the devilish thing in my lap at the stern of the boat. I had heard the creature rattle, and not knowing what I did, as he hung suspended over me, overboard I went, and did not look behind till I had reached the land. The consequence was, that for one while I was perfectly disgusted even with Lake Horicon, and resolved to leave it without delay. The snake was killed without doing any harm, however; but such a blowing up as I gave the man actually made his hair stand straight with fear.

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One more snake story and I'll conclude. On the north side of Black Mountain is a cluster of some half-dozen houses, in a vale, which spot is called the Bosom, but from what cause I do not know. The presiding geniuses of the place are a band of girls, weighing two hundred pounds a piece, who farm it with their fathers for a living, but whose principal amusement is rattlesnake hunting. Their favourite playground is the notorious cliff on Tongue Mountain, where they go with naked feet (rowing their own boats across the Lake), and pull out by their tails from the rocks the pretty playthings, and, snapping them to death, they lay them away in a basket as trophies of their skill. I was told that in one day last year they killed the incredible number of eleven hundred. What delicious wives would

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these Horicon ladies make! Since the Florida Indians have been driven from their country by bloodhounds, would it not be a good idea for Congress to secure the services of these amazons for the purpose of exterminating the rattlesnakes upon our mountains. This latter movement would be the most ridiculous; but the inhumanity of the former is without a parallel.

A clear and tranquil summer night, and I am alone on the pebbly beach of this paragon of Lakes. The countless hosts of heaven are beaming upon me with a silent joy, and more impressive and holy than a poet's dream are the surrounding mountains, as they stand reflected in the unruffled waters. Listen! what sound is that, so like the wail of a spirit? Only a loon, the lonely night-washer of Horicon, whose melancholy moan, as it breaks the profound stillness, carries my fancy back to the olden Indian times, ere the white man had crossed the ocean. All these mountains and this beautiful Lake were then the heritage of a brave and noble-hearted people, who made war only upon the denizens of the forest, whose lives were peaceful as a dream, and whose manly forms, decorated with the plumes of the eagle, the feathers of the scarlet bird, and the robe of the bounding stag, tended but to make the scenery of the wilderness beautiful as an earthly Eden. Here was the quiet wigwam village, and there the secluded abode of the thoughtful chief. Here, unmolested, the Indian child played with the spotted fawn, and the "Indian lover wooed his dusky mate;" here the Indian hunter, in the "sunset of his life," watched, with holy awe, the sunset in the west, and here the ancient Indian prophetess sung her uncouth but religious chant. Gone—all, all gone—and the desolate creature of the waves, now pealing forth another wail, seems the only memorial that they have left behind. There—my

recent aspirations are all quelled, I can walk no farther to-night; there is sadness in my soul, and I must seek my home. It is such a blessed night, that it seems almost sinful that a blight should rest upon the spirit of man; yet on mine a gloom will sometimes fall, nor can I tell from whence the cloud that makes me wretched.

CHAPTER V.

The Scaroon Country—Scaroon Lake—Pike Fishing by Torch-light—Trout Fishing—Lyndsey's Tavern—Paradox Lake.

Lyndsey's Tavern. June.

Emptying into the Hudson River, about fifteen miles north of Glen's Falls, is quite a large stream, sometimes called the East Branch of the Hudson, but generally known as Scaroon River. Its extreme length is not far from fifty miles. It is a clear, cold, and rapid stream, winds through a mountainous country, and has rather a deep channel. The valley through which it runs is somewhat cultivated, but the mountains, which frown upon it on either side, are covered with dense forests. The valley of the Scaroon abounds in beautiful lakes and brooks; and as I have explored them pretty thoroughly during the past week, I will now record the result of my observations.

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The most prominent pictorial features of this region is Scaroon Lake, through which the river of that name forms a channel. It is ten miles in length, and averages about one in width. Excepting a little hamlet at its head, and two or three farms at the southern extremity, it is yet surrounded with a wilderness of mountains. The waters thereof are deep and clear, and well supplied with fish, of which the salmon-trout and pike are the most valuable. The trout are more abundant here than in Lake George, but owing to the prevailing custom of spearing them in the autumn, they are rapidly becoming extinct. I made a desperate effort to

capture one as a specimen, but without success, though I was told that they varied in weight from ten to fifteen pounds. My efforts, however, in taking pike were more encouraging. But, before giving my experience, I must mention an interesting fact in natural history. Previous to the year 1840, Scaroon Lake was not known to contain a single pike, but during that year, some half dozen males and females were brought from Lake Champlain and deposited therein, since which time they have multiplied so rapidly, as to be quite abundant, not only in Scaroon Lake, but in all the neighbouring waters. And as they are frequently taken, weighing some twenty pounds, the fact seems to be established that this fish grows rapidly, and is not of slow growth, as many naturalists have supposed.

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But to my pike story. A number of lumbermen were going out for the purpose of taking pike by torch-light, and I was fortunate enough to secure a seat in one of the three flat boats which contained the fishermen. It was a superb night, and the lake was without a ripple. Our torches were made of "fat pine," as it is here called; and my polite friends taking it for granted that I was a novice in the spearing business, they cunningly awarded to me the dullest spear in their possession, and gave me the poorest position in the boat. I said nothing to all this, but inwardly resolved that I would give them a salutary lesson, if possible. I fished from nine until twelve o'clock, and then left my friends to continue the sport. The entire number of pike taken, as I found out in the morning, was thirteen; and, as fortune would have it, four of this number were captured by myself, in spite of my poor spear. I did not take the largest fish, which weighed eighteen pounds, but the greatest number, with which success I was fully satisfied. The effect of my good luck upon my companions was unexpected, but gratifying to me; for there was afterwards a

strife between them, as to who should show me the most attention in the way of piloting me about the country. This little adventure taught me the importance of understanding even the vagabond art of spearing.

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The event of that night, however, which afforded me the purest enjoyment, was the witnessing of a moonlight scene, immediately after leaving the Lake shore, for the inn where I was staying. Before me, in wild and solemn beauty, lay the southern portion of the Scaroon, on whose bosom were gliding the spearmen, holding high above their heads three huge torches, which threw a spectral glare, not only upon the water, but upon the swarthy forms which were watching for their prey. Just at this moment an immense cloud of fog broke away, and directly above the summit of the opposite mountain, the clear full moon made its appearance, and a thousand fantastic figures, born of the fog, were pictured in the sky, and appeared extremely brilliant under the effulgence of the ruling planet; while the zenith of sky was of a deep blue, cloudless, but completely spangled with stars. And what greatly added to the magic of the scene, was the dismal scream of a loon, which came to my ear from a remote portion of the Lake which was yet covered with a heavy fog.

Rising from the western margin of Scaroon Lake, is a lofty mountain, which was once painted by Thomas Cole, and by him named Scaroon Mountain. There is nothing particularly imposing about it, but it commands an uncommonly fine prospect of the surrounding country. When I first came in sight of this mountain, it struck me as an old acquaintance, and I reined in my horse for the purpose of investigating its features. Before I resumed my course, I concluded that I was standing on

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the very spot whence the artist Cole had taken his original sketch of the scene, by which circumstance I was convinced of the fidelity of his pencil.

The largest island in Scaroon Lake lies near the northern extremity, and studs the water like an emerald on a field of blue. It was purchased some years ago by a gentleman of New York, named Ireland, who has built a summer residence upon it, for the accommodation of himself and friends.

Emptying into the Scaroon river, just below the Lake, is a superb mountain stream, known as Trout Brook. It is thirty feet wide, twelve miles long, and comes rushing down the mountains, forming a thousand waterfalls and pools, and filling its narrow valley with a continual roar of music. Not only is it distinguished for the quality and number of its trout, but it possesses one attraction which will pay the tourist for the weary tramp he must undergo to explore its remote recesses. I allude to what the people about here call the "Stone Bridge." At this point, the wild and dashing stream has formed a channel directly through the solid mountains; so that in fishing down, the angler suddenly finds himself standing upon a pile of dry stones. The extent of this natural bridge is not more than twenty, or perhaps thirty feet; but the wonder is, that the unseen channel is sufficiently large to admit the passage of the largest logs, which the lumbermen float down the stream.

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I might also add, that at the foot of this bridge is one of the finest pools imaginable. It is, perhaps, one hundred feet long; and so very deep, that the clear water appears quite black. This is the finest spot in the whole brook for trout; and my luck there may be described as follows: I had basketed no less than nine half-

pounders, when my fly was suddenly seized, and my snell snapped in twain by the fierceness of his leaps. The consequence of that defeat was, that I resolved to capture the trout, if I had to remain there all night. I then ransacked the mountain-side for a living bait, and with the aid of my companion, succeeded in capturing a small mouse, and just as the twilight was coming on, I tied the little fellow to my hook, and threw him on the water. He swam out in fine style; but when he reached the centre of the pool, a large trout leaped completely out of his element, and in descending, seized the mouse. The result was, that I broke my rod, but caught the trout; and though the mouse was seriously injured, I had the pleasure of again giving him his liberty.

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The largest trout that I killed weighed nearly a pound; and though he was the cause of my receiving a ducking, he afforded me some sport, and gave me a new idea. When I first hooked him, I stood on the very margin of the stream, knee deep in a bog; and just as I was about to basket him, he gave a sudden leap, cleared himself, and fell into the water. Quick as thought, I made an effort to rescue him; but in doing so, lost my balance, and was playing the part of a turtle in a tub of water. I then became poetical, and thought it “would never do to give it up so;” and after waiting some fifteen minutes, I returned, and tried for the lost trout again. I threw my fly some twenty feet above the place where I had tumbled in, and recaptured the identical trout which I had lost. I recognized him by his having a torn and bleeding mouth.

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This circumstance convinced me that trout, like many of the sons of men, have short memories, and also that the individual in question was a perfect Richelieu or General Taylor in his way,

for he seemed to know no such word as fail. As to the trout that I did not capture, I verily believe that he must have weighed two pounds; but as he was probably a superstitious gentleman, he thought it the better part of valour, somewhat like Santa Anna, to treat the steel of his enemy with contempt.

The brook of which I have been speaking, is only twenty-five miles from Lake Horicon, and unquestionably one of the best streams for the angler in the Scaroon Valley. The Trout Brook Pavilion, at the mouth of it, kept by one Lockwood, is a comfortable inn; and his right-hand man, named Kipp, is a very fine fellow, and a perfect angler.

Speaking of the above friends, reminds me of another, a fine man, named Lyndsey, who keeps a tavern, about ten miles north of Scaroon Lake. His dwelling is delightfully situated in the centre of a deep valley, and is a nice and convenient place to stop at for those who are fond of fishing, and admire romantic scenery. His family, including his wife, two daughters and one son, not only know how to make their friends comfortable, but they seem to have a passion for doing kind deeds. 77

During my stay at this place, I had the pleasure of witnessing a most interesting game, which seems to be peculiar to this part of the country. It was played with the common ball, and by one hundred sturdy farmers. Previous to the time alluded to, fifty Scaroon players had challenged an equal number of players from a neighbouring village, named Moriah. The conditions were, that the defeated party should pay for a dinner, to be given by my friend Lyndsey. They commenced playing at nine o'clock, and the game was ended in about three hours, the Scaroon party

having won by about ten counts in five hundred. The majority of the players varied from thirty to thirty-five years of age, though some of the most expert of them were verging upon sixty years. They played with the impetuosity of school-boys; and there were some admirable feats performed in the way of knocking and catching the ball. Some of the men could number their acres by thousands, and all of them were accustomed to severe labour, and yet they thought it absolutely necessary to participate occasionally in this manly and fatiguing sport. The dinner passed off in fine style, and was spiced by many agricultural anecdotes; and as the sun was setting, the parties separated in the best of spirits, and returned to their several homes.

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For fear that I should forget my duty, I would now introduce to my reader, a sheet of water embosomed among these mountains, which glories in the name of Lake Paradox. How it came by that queer title, I was not able to learn; but this I know, that it is one of the most beautiful lakes I have ever seen. It is five miles long, and surrounded with uncultivated mountains, excepting at its foot, where opens a beautiful plain, highly cultivated, and dotted with a variety of rude but exceedingly comfortable farm-houses. The shores of Lake Paradox are rocky, the water deep and clear, abounding in fish, and the lines of the mountains are picturesque to an uncommon degree.

But it is time that I should turn from particulars to a general description of the Scaroon Country. Though this is an agricultural region, the two principal articles of export are lumber and iron. Of the former, the principal varieties are pine, hemlock, and spruce; and the two establishments for the manufacture of iron are abundantly supplied with ore from

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the surrounding mountains. Potatoes of the finest quality flourish here, also wheat and corn. The people are mostly Americans, intelligent, virtuous and industrious, and are as comfortable and happy as any in the State.

CHAPTER VI.

The Adirondac Mountains—Trout Fishing in the Boreas River—A night in the woods—Moose Lake—Lake Delia—Mount Tahawas—Lakes Sanford and Henderson—The McIntyre Iron Works.

John Cheney's Cabin. June.

The Adirondac Mountains are situated on the extreme head waters of the Hudson, in the Counties of Essex and Hamilton, and about forty miles west of Lake Champlain. They vary from five hundred to five thousand feet in height, and with few exceptions are covered with dense forests. They lord it over the most extensive wilderness region in the Empire State; and as I have recently performed a pilgrimage among them, I now purpose to give an account of what I saw and heard during my expedition.

The tourist, who visits these mountains, finds it necessary to leave the mail road near Lyndsey's Tavern on the Scaroon. If fortune smiles upon him, he will be able to hire a horse to take him in the interior, or perhaps obtain a seat in a lumber wagon; but if not, he must try the mettle of his legs. With regard to my own case, fortune was non-committal; for, while she compelled me to go on foot, she supplied me with a pair of temporary companions, who were going into the interior to see their friends, and have a few days' sport in the way of fishing and hunting.

One of my friends, (both of whom were young men), was a

farmer, who carried a rifle, and the other a travelling country musician, who earned a fiddle. Our first day's tramp took us about fifteen miles, through a hilly, thickly wooded, and houseless wilderness, to the Boreas River, where we found a ruined log shantee, in which we determined to spend the night. We reached this lonely spot at three o'clock in the afternoon; and having previously been told that the Boreas was famous for trout, two of us started after a mess of fish, while the fiddler was appointed to the office of wood chopper to the expedition.

The Boreas at this point is about one hundred feet broad, winds through a woody valley, and is cold, rapid and clear. The entire river does not differ materially, as I understand from the point alluded to, for it waters an unknown wilderness. I bribed my farmer friend to *ascend* the river, and having pocketed a variety of flies, I started down the stream. I proceeded near half a mile, when I came to a still-water pool, which seemed to be extensive and very deep. At the head of it, midway in the stream, was an immense boulder, which I succeeded in surmounting, and whence I threw a red hackle for upwards of three hours. I never saw trout jump more beautifully, and it was my rare luck to basket thirty-four, twenty-one of which averaged three quarters of a pound, and the remaining thirteen were regular two-pounders. Satisfied with my luck, I returned to the shantee, where I found my companions, one of them sitting before a blazing fire and fiddling, and the other busily employed in cleaning the trout he had taken.

In due time followed the principal event of the day, which consisted in cooking and eating a wilderness supper. We had brought a supply of pork and bread, and each one having prepared for himself a pair of wooden forks, we proceeded to

roast our trout and pork before a huge fire, using the drippings of the latter for seasoning, and a leather cup of water for our beverage. We spent the two following hours in smoking and telling stories; and having made a bed of spruce boughs, and repaired the rickety partition which divided one end of the cabin from the other end, which was all open, we retired to repose. We had no blankets with us, and an agreement was, therefore, entered into that we should take turns in replenishing the fire, during the night. An awfully dark cloud settled upon the wilderness, and by the music of the wind among the hemlock trees we were soon lulled into a deep slumber.

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A short time after midnight, while dreaming of a certain pair of eyes in the upper part of Broadway, I was awakened by a footstep on the outside of the cabin. I brushed open my eyes, but could see nothing but the faint glimmer of an expiring ember on the hearth. I held my breath and listened for the mysterious footsteps; I heard it not, but something a little more exciting,—the scratching of a huge paw upon our slender door. In an exceedingly short time I roused my bed-fellows, and told them what I had heard. They thought it must be a wolf, and as we were afraid to frighten him away, yet anxious to take his hide, it was resolved that I should hold a match, and the farmer should fire his rifle in the direction of the mysterious noise, which operation was duly performed. A large pine torch was then lighted, the rifle reloaded, and the heroes of the adventure marched into the outer hall of the cabin, where we found a few drops of blood, and the muddy tracks of what we supposed to be a wild cat. The rifleman and myself then commissioned the fiddler to make a fire, when we again threw ourselves upon the hemlock couch.

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The fiddler attended faithfully to his duty, and in less than twenty minutes he had kindled a tremendous blaze. The brilliant and laughing flame had such an exhilarating influence upon his nerves, that he seized his instrument and commenced playing, partly for the purpose of keeping off the wild animals, but mostly for his own amusement. Then laying aside his fiddle, he began to sing a variety of uncouth as well as plaintive songs, one of which was vague but mournful in sentiment, and more wild in melody, as I thought at the time, than anything I had ever before heard. I could not find out by whom it was written, or what was its exact import, but in the lonely place where we were sleeping, and at that hour, it made a very deep impression on my mind. The burthen of the song was as follows, and was in keeping with the picture which the minstrel, the fire-light, and the rude cabin presented.

“We parted in silence, we parted at night,
On the banks of that lonely river;
Where the shadowy trees their boughs unite
We met, and we parted for ever;—
The night bird sang, and the stars above
Told many a touching story,
Of friends long passed to the mansions of rest,
Where the soul wears her mantle of glory.

“We parted in silence, our cheeks were wet
By the tears that were past controlling;—
We vowed we would never, no never forget,
And those vows at the time were consoling;—
But the lips that echoed my vows
Are as cold as that lonely river,
The sparkling eye, the spirit’s shrine

Has shrouded its fire for ever.

“And now on the midnight sky I look,
My eyes grow full with weeping,—
Each star to me is a sealed book
Some tale of that loved one keeping.
We parted in silence, we parted in tears
On the banks of that lonely river,
But the odour and bloom of by-gone years
Shall hang o’er its waters for ever.”

But sleep, the “dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health” soon folded the singer and his listeners in her embrace, and with the rising sun we entered upon the labours of another day. While the fiddler prepared our breakfast, (out of the few trout which certain *beastly* robbers had not stolen during the night), the rifleman went out and killed a large hare, and I took a sketch of the cabin where we had lodged.

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After breakfast we shouldered our knapsacks and started for the Hudson. We struck this noble river at the embryo city of Tahawas where we found a log house and an unfinished saw-mill. Here we also discovered a canoe which we boarded, and navigated the stream to Lake Sanford. This portion of the Hudson is not more than one hundred feet broad, but quite deep and picturesque. On leaving our canoe we made our way up a mountain road, and after walking about four miles, came out upon an elevated clearing of some two hundred acres, in the centre of which was a solitary log cabin with a retinue of out-houses,—and this was the famous Newcomb Farm.

The attractions of this spot are manifold, for it lies in the

vicinity of Moose Lake and Lake Delia, and commands the finest distant prospect of the Adirondac Mountains, which has yet been discovered.

Moose Lake lies at the west of the Farm, and about six miles distant. It is embosomed among mountains, and the fountain head of the Cold River, which empties into the St. Lawrence. In form it is so nearly round, that its entire shore may be seen at one view; the bottom is covered with white sand, and the water is perfectly cold and clear. Considering its size, it is said to contain more trout than any lake in this wilderness; and it is also celebrated as a watering-place for deer and moose. In fishing from the shore, one of our party caught no less than forty pounds of trout in about two hours. There were two varieties, and they varied from one to three pounds in weight.

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Our guide to this lake, where we encamped for one night, was Steuben Hewitt, the keeper of the Newcomb Farm, who is a hunter. This woodsman got the notion into his head, that he must have a venison steak for his banquet. We had already seen some half dozen deer walking along the opposite margin of the lake, but Steuben told us that he would wait until after dark to capture his game. He also told us that the deer were in the habit of visiting the wilder lakes of this region at night, for the purpose of escaping the tormenting flies; and as he spoke so confidently of what he intended to accomplish, we awaited his effort with a degree of anxiety.

Soon as the quiet night had fairly set in, he shipped himself on board a wooden canoe (a rickety affair, originally bequeathed to this lake by some departed Indian,) in the bow of which was a fire-jack or torch-holder. Separating this machine from

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himself, as he sat in the centre of the canoe, was a kind of screen made of bark, which was sufficiently elevated to allow him to fire his gun from underneath; and in this manner, with a loaded rifle by his side, did he paddle into the lake. After floating upon the water for one hour, in perfect silence, he finally heard a splashing near the shore, and immediately lighting his torch, he noiselessly proceeded in the direction of the sound, where he discovered a beautiful deer standing knee-deep in the water, and looking at him in stupified wonder. The poor creature could see nothing before it but the mysterious light, and while standing in the most interesting attitude imaginable, the hunter raised his rifle and shot it through the heart. In half an hour from that time the carcass of the deer was hanging from a dry limb near our camp fire, and I was lecturing the hard-hearted hunter on the cruelty of thus capturing the innocent creatures of the forest. To all my remarks, however, he replied, "They were given to us for food, and it matters not how we kill them."

Lake Delia, through which you have to pass in going to Moose Lake, lies about two miles west of the Newcomb Farm. It is four miles long, and less than one mile in width, and completely surrounded with wood-crowned hills. Near the central portion this lake is quite narrow, and so shallow that a
rude bridge has been thrown across for the accommodation of the farm people. The water under this bridge is only about four feet deep, and this was the only spot in the lake where I followed my favorite recreation. I visited it on one occasion with my companions, late in the afternoon, when the wind was blowing, and we enjoyed rare sport in angling for salmon-trout, as well as a large species of the common trout. I do not know the number that we took, but I well remember that we had more than we could conveniently carry. Usually, the salmon-trout are

only taken in deep water, but in this and Moose Lake, they seem to be as much at home in shallow as in deep water.

On one occasion I visited Lake Delia alone, at an early hour of the morning. It so happened, that I took a rifle along with me, and while quietly throwing my fly on the old bridge, I had an opportunity of using the gun to some purpose. My movements in that lonely place were so exceedingly still, that even the wild animals were not disturbed by my presence; for while I stood there, a large fat otter made his appearance, and when he came within shooting distance, I gave him the contents of my gun, and he disappeared. I related the adventure to my companions on my return to the Farm, but they pronounced it a “fish story.” I finally vindicated my veracity, however, for, on the following day, they discovered a dead otter on the lake shore, and concluded that I had told the truth.

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I must not conclude this chapter without giving my reader an additional paragraph about the Newcomb Farm. My friend Steuben Hewitt's nearest neighbour is eight miles off, and as his family is small, you may suppose that he leads a retired life. One of the days that I spent at his house, was an eventful one with him, for a town election was held there. The electors met at nine o'clock, and the poll closed at five; and as the number of votes polled was SEVEN, it may well be supposed that the excitement was intense.

But, with all its loneliness, the Newcomb Farm is well worth visiting, if for no other purpose than to witness the panorama of mountains which it commands. On every side but one, they may be seen fading away to mingle their deep blue with the lighter hue of the sky; but chief among them all is old Tahawas, king of

the Adirondacs.

The country out of which this mountain rises is an imposing Alpine wilderness; and as it has long since been abandoned by the red man, the solitude of its deep valleys and lonely lakes, for the most part, is now more impressive than that of the far-off Rocky Mountains. 91

The meaning of the Indian word Tahawas, is *Sky Piercer*, or *Sky Splitter*, and faithfully describes the appearance of the mountain. Its actual elevation, above the level of the sea, is five thousand four hundred and sixty-seven feet, while that of Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, is only six thousand two hundred and thirty-four; making a difference of only seven hundred and sixty-seven feet in favour of Washington. Though Tahawas is not so lofty as its New England brother, yet its form is by far the most picturesque and imposing. Taken together, they are the highest pair of mountains in the United States.

Before going one step farther, I must allude to what I deem the folly of a certain state geologist, in attempting to name the prominent peaks of the Adirondac Mountains after a brotherhood of living men. If he is to have his way in this matter, the beautiful name of Tahawas will be superseded by that of Marcy, and several of Tahawas' peers are hereafter to be known as Mounts Seward, Wright, and Young. Now if this business is not supremely ridiculous, I must confess that I do not know the meaning of that word. A pretty idea, indeed, to scatter to the winds the ancient poetry of the poor Indian, and perpetuate in its place the names of living politicians. For my part, I agree most decidedly with the older inhabitants of the Adirondac wilderness, who look with perfect indifference upon 92

the attempted usurpation of the geologist already mentioned.

For nine months in the year, old Tahawas is covered with a crown of snow, but there are spots among its fastnesses where you may gather ice and snow, even in the dog-days. The base of this mountain is covered with a luxuriant forest of pine, spruce and hemlock, while the summit is clothed in a net-work of creeping trees, and almost entirely destitute of the green which should characterize them. In ascending its sides, when near the summit, you are impressed with the idea that your pathway may be smooth; but as you proceed, you are constantly annoyed by pit-falls, into which your legs are foolishly poking themselves, to the great annoyance of your back-bone, and other portions of your body, which are naturally straight.

I ascended Tahawas, as a matter of course, and in making the trip I travelled some twenty miles, on foot and through the pathless woods, employing for the same the better part of two days. My companion on this expedition was John Cheney (of whom I have something to write hereafter), and as he did not consider it prudent to spend the night on the summit, we only spent about one hour gazing upon the panorama from the top, and then descended about half way down the mountain, where we built our watch-fire. The view from Tahawas is rather unique. It looks down upon what appears to be an uninhabited wilderness, with mountains fading to the sky in every direction, and where, on a clear day, you may count no less than twenty-four lakes, including Champlain, Horicon, Long Lake, and Lake Pleasant.

While trying to go to sleep on the night in question, as I lay by the side of my friend Cheney, he gave me an account of the

manner in which certain distinguished gentlemen had ascended Mount Tahawas, for it must be known that he officiates as the guide of all travellers in this wild region. Among those to whom he alluded, were Ingham and Cole, the artists, and Hoffman and Headley, the travellers. He told me that Mr. Ingham fainted a number of times in making the ascent, but became so excited with all that he saw, he determined to persevere, and finally succeeded in accomplishing the difficult task. Mr. Hoffman, he said, in spite of his lameness, would not be persuaded by words that he could not reach the summit; and when he finally discovered that the task was utterly beyond his accomplishment, his disappointment seemed to have no bounds.

The night that I spent on Tahawas was not distinguished by any event more remarkable than a regular rain-storm. Our canopy was composed of hemlock branches, and our only covering was a blanket. The storm did not set in until about midnight, and my first intimation of its approach was the falling of rain-drops directly into my ear, as I snuggled up to my bed-fellow, for the purpose of keeping warm. Desperate indeed were the efforts I made to forget my condition in sleep, as the rain fell more abundantly, and drenched me, as well as my companion, to the very skin. The thunder bellowed as if in the enjoyment of a very happy frolic, and the lightning seemed determined to root up a few trees in our immediate vicinity, as if for the purpose of giving us more room. Finally Cheney rose from his pillow (which was a log of wood), and proposed that we should quaff a little brandy, to keep us from catching cold, which we did, and then made another attempt to reach the land of Nod.

At the break of day, we were awakened from a short but refreshing sleep by the singing of birds; and when the cheerful sunlight had reached the bottom of the ravines, we were enjoying a comfortable breakfast in the cabin of my friend.

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The principal attractions, associated with Tahawas are the Indian Pass, the Adirondac Lakes, the Adirondac Iron Works, and the mighty hunter of the Adirondacs, John Cheney. The Pass, so called, is only an old-fashioned notch between the mountains. On one side is a perpendicular precipice, rising to the height of eleven hundred feet; and, on the other, a wood-covered mountain, ascending far up into the sky, at an angle of forty-five degrees. Through this Pass flows a tiny rivulet, over which the rocks are so thickly piled, as frequently to form pitfalls, that measure from ten to thirty feet in depth. Some of these holes are never destitute of ice, and are cool and comfortable even at midsummer. The Pass is nearly half a mile in length, and, at one point, certain immense boulders have come together and formed a cavern, which is called the "meeting house," and is, perhaps, capable of containing a thousand people. The rock on either side of the Pass, is a grey granite, and its only inhabitants are eagles, which are very abundant, and occupy the most conspicuous crag in the notch.

The two principal lakes which gem the Adirondac wilderness are named Sanford and Henderson, after the two gentlemen who first purchased land upon their borders. The former is five miles in length, and the latter somewhat less than three, both of them varying in width from half a mile to a mile and a half. The mountains which swoop down to their bosoms are covered with forest, and abound in a great variety of large game. There is not, to my knowledge, a single habitation on

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either of the lakes, and the only smoke ever seen to ascend from their lonely recesses, comes from the watch-fire of the hunter, or the encampment of surveyors and tourists. The water of these lakes is cold and deep, and moderately supplied with salmon trout. Lake Henderson is admirably situated for the exciting sport of deer-hunting, and though it contains two or three canoes, cannot be entered from the West Branch of the Hudson without making a portage.

Through Lake Sanford, however, the Hudson takes a direct course, and there is nothing to impede the passage of a small boat to within a mile of the Iron Works, which are situated in a valley between the two lakes. The fact is, during the summer, there is an extensive business done on Lake Sanford, in the way of “bringing in” merchandize, and “carrying out” the produce of the Forge. It was my misfortune to make the inward passage of the Lake in company with two ignorant Irishmen. Their boat was small, heavily laden, very old and leaky. This was my only chance, and on taking my seat with a palpitating heart, I made an express bargain with the men that they should keep along the shore on their way up. They assented to my wishes, but immediately pulled for the very centre of the lake. I remonstrated, but they told me there was no danger. The boat was now rapidly filling with water, and though one was bailing with all his might, the rascals were determined not to accede to my wishes. The conclusion of the matter was, that our shallop became water-logged; and on finally going ashore, the merchandize was greatly damaged, and I was just about as wet as I was angry at the miserable creatures, whose obstinacy had not only greatly injured their employers, but also endangered my own plunder as well as my life.

The Iron Works alluded to above are located in a narrow valley, and in the immediate vicinity of Lake Henderson at a place called McIntyre. Sometime in the year 1830, a couple of Scotch gentlemen, named Henderson and McIntyre, purchased a large tract of wild land lying in this portion of New York. In the summer following, they passed through this wilderness on an exploring expedition, and, with the assistance of their Indian guide, discovered that the bed of the valley in question was literally blocked up with iron ore. On making farther investigations, they found that the whole rocky region about them was composed of valuable mineral, and they subsequently established a regular built Iron Establishment, which has been in operation ever since. A gentleman named Robinson afterwards purchased an interest in the concern, and it is now carried on by him and Mr. McIntyre, though the principal stock-holders are the wife and son of Mr. Henderson, deceased.

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The metal manufactured by this company is of the very best quality of bar-iron; and an establishment is now in progress of erection at Tahawas, twelve miles down the river, where a party of English gentlemen intend to manufacture every variety of steel. The Iron Works give employment to about one hundred and fifty men, whose wages vary from one dollar to four dollars per day. The society of the place, you may well imagine, is decidedly original; but the prominent individual, and only remarkable man who resides here, is John Cheney, the mighty hunter of the Adirondacs. For an account of this man, the reader will please look into the following chapter.

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CHAPTER VII.

John Cheney, the Adirondac hunter, and some of his exploits.

John Cheney's Cabin. June.

John Cheney was born in New Hampshire, but spent his boyhood on the shores of Lake Champlain, and has resided in the Adirondac wilderness about thirteen years. He has a wife and one child, and lives in a comfortable cabin in the wild village of McIntyre. His profession is that of a hunter, and he is in the habit of spending about one half of his time in the woods. He is a remarkably amiable and intelligent man, and as unlike the idea I had formed of him, as possible. I expected, from all that I had heard, to see a huge, powerful and hairy Nimrod; but instead of such, I found him small in stature, and bearing more the appearance of a modest and thoughtful student.

The walls of his cosy little house, containing one principal room, are ornamented with a large printed sheet of the Declaration of Independence, and two engraved portraits of Washington and Jackson. Of guns and pistols he has an abundant supply, and also a good stock of all the conveniences for camping among the mountains. He keeps one cow, which supplies his family with all the milk they need; but his favourite animals are a couple of hunting dogs named Buck and Tiger.

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As summer is not the time to accomplish much in the way of hunting, my adventures with John Cheney have not been distinguished by any stirring events; we have, however, enjoyed

some rare sport in the way of fishing, and obtained many glorious views from the mountain peaks of this region. But the conversation of this famous Nimrod has interested me exceedingly, and wherever we might be, under his own roof, or by the side of our mountain watch-fires, I have kept him busy in recounting his former adventures. I copied into my note-book nearly everything he said, and now present my readers with a few extracts relating to his hunting exploits. I shall use his own words as nearly as I can remember them.

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“I was always fond of hunting, and the first animal I killed was a fox; I was then ten years of age. Even from childhood I was so in love with the woods that I not only neglected school but was constantly borrowing a gun, or stealing the one belonging to my father, with which to follow my favourite amusement. He finally found it a useless business to make a decent boy of me, and in a fit of desperation he one day presented me with a common fowling piece. I was the youngest of thirteen children, and was always called the black sheep of the family. I have always enjoyed good health, and am forty-seven years of age; but I have now passed my prime, and don’t care about exposing myself to any useless dangers.

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“You ask me if I ever hunt on Sunday: no, Sir, I do not; I have always been able to kill enough on week days to give me a comfortable living. Since I came to live among the Adirondacs, I have killed *six hundred deer, four hundred sable, nineteen moose, twenty-eight bears, six wolves, seven wild cats, thirty*

otter, one panther and one beaver.

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“As to that beaver, I was speaking about, it took me three years to capture him, for he was an old fellow, and remarkably cunning. He was the last, from all that I can learn, that was ever taken in the State. One of the Long Lake Indians often attempted to trap him, but without success; he usually found his trap sprung, but could never get a morsel of the beaver’s tail; and so it was with me, too; but I finally fixed a trap *under* the water, near the entrance to his dam, and it so happened that he one day stepped into it and was drowned.

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“I was going to tell you something about my dogs—Buck and Tiger. I’ve raised some fifty of this animal in my day, but I never owned such a tormented smart one as that fellow Buck. I believe there’s a good deal of the English mastiff in him; but a keener eye than he carries in his head I never saw. Only look at that breast of his, did you ever see a thicker or more solid one? He’s handsomely spotted, as you may see; but some of the devilish Lake Pleasant Indians cut off his ears and tail about a year ago, and he now looks rather odd. You may not believe it, but I have seen a good many men, who were not half as sensible as that very dog. Whenever the fellow’s hungry, he always seats himself at my feet and gives three short barks, which is his way of telling me that he would like some bread and meat. If the folks happen to be away from home, and he feels a little sharp, he pays a regular visit to all the houses in the village, and after playing with the children, barks for a dry crust, which he

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always receives, and then comes back to his own home. He's a great favourite among the children, and I've witnessed more than one fight among the boys, because some wicked little scamp had thrown a stone at him. When I speak to him, he understands me just as well as you do. I can wake him out of a sound sleep, and by my saying, 'Buck, go up and kiss the baby,' he will march directly to the cradle and lick the baby's face. And the way he watches that baby, when it's asleep, is perfectly curious; he'd tear you to pieces in three minutes, if you were to try to take it away.

"Buck is now four years old, and though he's helped me to kill several hundred deer, he never lost one for me yet. Whenever I go a-hunting, and don't want him along, I have only to say, 'Buck, you must not go,' and he remains quiet. There's no use in chaining him, I tell you, for he understands his business. This dog never starts after a deer until I tell him to go, even if the deer is in sight. Why, 'twas only the other day that Tiger brought in a doe to Lake Colden, where the two had a desperate fight within a hundred yards of the spot where Buck and myself were seated. I wanted to try the metal of Tiger, and told Buck he must not stir, though I went up to the deer to see what the result would be between the fighters. Buck didn't move out of his tracks; but the way he howled for a little taste of blood was perfectly awful. I almost thought the fellow would die in his agony. Buck is of great use to me when I am off hunting, in more ways than one. If I happen to be lost in a snow-storm, which is sometimes the case, I only have to tell him to go home, and if I follow his track I am sure to come out in safety; and when sleeping in the woods at night, I never have any other pillow than Buck's body.

“As to my black dog Tiger, he isn’t quite two years old yet, but he’s going to make a great hunter. I am trying hard, now-a-days, to break him of a very foolish habit of killing porcupines. Not only does he attack every one he sees, but he goes out to hunt them, and often comes home, all covered with their quills. It was only the other day, that he came home with about twenty quills working their way into his snout. It so happened, however, that they did not kill him, because he let me pull them all out with a pair of pincers, and that, too, without budging an inch. About the story people tell, that the porcupine *throws* its quills, I can tell you it’s no such thing; it’s only when the quills touch the dog, that they come out and work their way through his body.”

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“As to deer hunting, I can tell you more stories in that line than you’d care about hearing. They have several ways of killing ’em in this quarter, and some of these ways are so infernal mean, I’m surprised that there should be any deer left in the country. In the first place, there’s the ‘still hunting’ fashion, where you lay in ambush near a salt lick and shoot the poor creatures, when they’re not thinking of you. And there’s the beastly manner of blinding them with a ‘torch light’ when they come into the lakes to cool themselves, and get away from the flies, during the warm nights of summer. Now I say, that no decent man will take this advantage of wild game, unless he is in a starving condition. The only manly way to kill deer is by ‘driving’ them, as I do, with a couple of hounds.

“There isn’t a creature in this whole wilderness that I think so much of as the deer. They are so beautiful, with their bright

eyes, graceful necks, and sinewy legs. And they are so swift, and make such splendid leaps when hard pressed; why, I've seen a buck jump from a cliff that was forty feet high, and that, too, without injuring a hair. I wish I could get my living without killing this beautiful animal! but I must live, and I suppose they were made to die. The cry of the deer, when in the agonies of death, is the awfulest sound I ever heard; I'd a good deal rather hear the scream of the panther, provided I have a ball in my pistol, and the pistol is in my hand. I wish they would never speak so.

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"The time for taking deer is in the fall and winter. It's a curious fact, that when a deer is at all frightened, he cannot stand upon smooth ice, while, at the same time, when not afraid of being caught, he will not only walk, but actually trot across a lake, as smooth as glass. It's a glorious sight to see them running down the mountains, with the dogs howling behind; but I don't think I ever saw a more beautiful race than I once did on Lake Henderson, between a buck deer, and my dog Buck, when the lake was covered with a light fall of snow. I had put Buck upon a fresh track, and was waiting for him on the lake shore; presently, a splendid deer bounded out of the woods upon the ice, and as the dog was only a few paces off, he led the race directly across the lake. Away they ran, as if a hurricane was after them, crossed the lake, then back again, they then made another wheel, and having run to the extreme southern point of the Lake, again returned, when the deer's wind gave out, and the dog caught and threw the creature, into whose throat I soon plunged my knife, and the race was ended.

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"I never was so badly hurt in hunting any animal as I have been in hunting deer. It was while chasing a buck on Cheney's Lake,

(which was named after me, by Mr. Henderson, in commemoration of my escape), that I once shot myself in a very bad way. I was in a canoe, and had laid my pistol down by my side, when, as I was pressing hard upon the animal, my pistol slipped under me in some queer way, and went off, sending a ball into my leg just above the ankle, which came out just below the knee. I knew something terrible had happened, and though I thought that I might die, I was determined that the deer should die first; and I did succeed in killing him before he reached the shore. But soon as the excitement was over, the pain I had felt before was increased a thousand fold, and I felt as if all the devils in h—ll were dragging at my leg, the weight and the agony were so great. I had never suffered so before, and I thought it strange. You may not believe it, but when that accident happened I was fourteen miles from home, and yet, even with that used-up leg, I succeeded in reaching my home, where I was confined to my bed from October until April. That was a great winter for hunting which I missed, but my leg got entirely well, and is now as good as ever.

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“The most savage animal that I hunt for among these mountains is the moose, or caraboo, as I’ve heard some people call them. They’re quite plenty in the region of Long Lake and Lake Pleasant; and if the hunter don’t understand their ways, he’ll be likely to get killed before he thinks of his danger. The moose is the largest animal of the deer kind, or, in fact, of any kind that we find in this part of the country. His horns are very large, and usually look like a pair of crab-apple trees. He has a long head, long legs, and makes a great noise when he travels; his flesh is considered first rate, for he feeds upon grass, and the tender

buds of the moose maple; he is a rapid traveller, and hard to tire out. In winter they run in herds; and when the snow is deep, they generally live in one particular place in the woods, which we call a 'yard.' The crack time for killing them is in the winter, when we can travel on the snow with our braided snow-shoes.

"I once killed two moose before nine o'clock in the morning. I had been out a-hunting for two days, in the winter, and when night came, I had to camp out near the foot of Old Tahawas. When I got up in the morning, and was about to start for home, I discovered a yard, where lay a couple of bull moose. I don't know what they were thinking about, but just as soon as they saw me, they jumped up and made directly towards the place where I was standing. I couldn't get clear of their ugly feet without running; so I put for a large dead tree that had blown over, and walking to the butt of it, which was some ten feet high, looked down in safety upon the devils. They seemed to be very mad about something, and did everything they could to get at me by running around; and I remember they ran together, as if they had been yoked. I waited for a good chance to shoot, and when I got it, I fired a ball clean through one of the animals into the shoulder of the second. The first one dropt dead as a door-nail, but the other took to his heels, and after going about fifty rods, concluded to lie down. I then came up to him, keeping my dogs back, for the purpose of sticking him, when he jumped up again, and put after me like lightning. I ran to a big stump, and after I had fairly fixed myself, I loaded again, and again fired, when the fellow tumbled in the snow quite dead. He was eight feet high, and a perfect roarer.

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“Another animal that we sometimes find pretty plenty in these woods, is the big grey wolf; they are savage fellows, and dangerous to meet when angry. On getting up early one winter morning, I noticed in the back part of my garden, what I thought to be a wolf-track. I got my gun, called for my dog, and started on the hunt. I found the fellow in his den among the mountains. I kindled a fire and smoked him out. I then chased him for about two miles, when he came to bay. He was a big fellow, and my dogs were afraid to clinch in; dogs hate a wolf worse than any other animal. I found I had a fair chance, so I fired at the creature, but my gun missed fire. The wolf then attacked me, and in striking him with my gun, I broke it all to pieces. I was in a bad fix, I tell you, but I immediately threw myself on my back with my snow-shoes above me, when the wolf jumped right on to my body, and probably would have killed me had it not been for my dog Buck, who worried the wolf so boldly that the devil left me to fight the dog. While they were fighting with all their might, I jumped up, took the barrel of my gun and settled it right into the brain of the savage animal. That was the largest wolf ever killed in this wilderness.

* * * * *

“One of the hardest fights I ever had in these woods, was with a black bear. I was coming from a winter hunt: the snow was very deep, and I had on my snow-shoes. It so happened, as I was coming down a certain mountain, the snow suddenly gave way under me, and I fell into the hole, or winter-quarters of one of the blackest and largest bears I ever saw. The fellow was just about as much frightened as I was, and he scampered out of the den in a great hurry. I was very tired, and had only one dog with me at the time, but I put after him. I had three smart battles with

him, and in one of them he struck my hand with such force, as to send my gun at least twenty or thirty feet from where we stood. I finally managed to kill the rascal, however; but not until he had almost destroyed the life of my dog. That was a noble dog, but in that battle the poor fellow received his death-wound. He couldn't walk at the time; and though I was nine miles from home, I took him up in my arms and brought him; but with all my nursing, I could not get him up again, for he died at the end of a few weeks. That dog was one of the best friends I ever had.

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“But the most dangerous animal in this country, is the yellow panther, or painter. They are not very plentiful, and so tormented cunning, that it's very seldom you can kill one. They are very ugly, but don't often attack a man unless cornered or wounded. They look and act very much like a cat, only that they are very large. I never killed but one, and his body was five feet long, and his tail between three and four. At night, their eyes look like balls of fire; and when they are after game, they make a hissing noise, which is very dreadful to hear. Their scream is also very terrible; and I never saw the man who was anxious to hear it more than once. They are seldom hunted as a matter of business, but usually killed by accident.

“The panther I once killed, I came across in this manner. I was out on Lake Henderson with two men, catching fish through the ice, when we saw two wolves come on to the ice in great haste, looking and acting as if they had been pursued. I proposed to the men that we should all go and kill them, if we could. They wanted to fish, or were a little afraid, so I took my gun and

started after the game. I followed them some distance, when, as they were scaling a ledge, they were attacked by a big panther, and a bloody fight took place. From the appearance of the animals, I supposed that they had met before, which was the cause why the wolves came upon the lake.

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During the scuffle between the animals, it is a singular fact, that they all three tumbled off the precipice, and fell through the air, about one hundred feet. The wolves jumped up and ran away, while the panther started in another direction. I followed his track, and after travelling a number of hours overtook him, and managed to shoot him through the shoulder. He then got into a tree, and as he was lashing his tail, and getting ready to pounce upon me, I gave him another ball, and he fell to the earth with a crash, and was quite dead. I then went to the Lake, and got the men to help me home with my booty.”

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CHAPTER VIII.

Burlington—Lake Champlain—Distinguished Men.

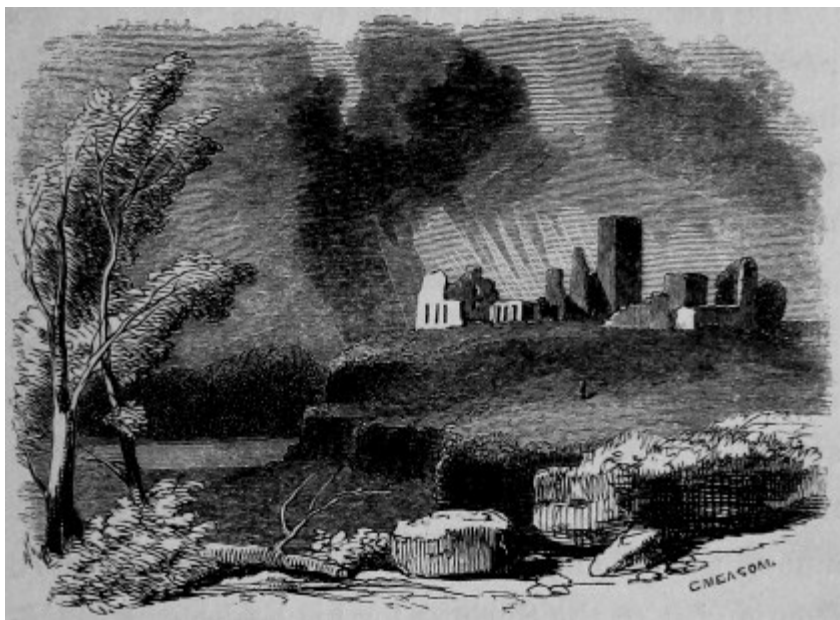
Burlington. June.

Of all the towns which I have ever seen, Burlington in Vermont is decidedly one of the most beautiful. It stands on the shore of Lake Champlain, and from the water to its eastern extremity is a regular elevation, which rises to the height of some three hundred feet. Its streets are broad and regularly laid out, the generality of its buildings elegant, and its inhabitants well educated, refined, and wealthy. My visit here is now about to close, and I cannot but follow the impulses of my heart, by giving my reader a brief account of its principal picturesque attraction, and some information concerning a few of its public men.

As a matter of course, my first subject is Lake Champlain. In approaching it from the south, and particularly from Horicon, one is apt to form a wrong opinion of its picturesque features; but you cannot pass through it without being lavish in its praise. It extends, in a straight line from south to north, somewhat over a hundred miles, and lies between the States of Vermont and New York. It is the gateway between the country on the St. Lawrence and that on the Hudson, and it is therefore extensively navigated by vessels and steam-boats. It is surrounded with flourishing villages, whose population is generally made up of New Englanders and Canadians. Its width varies from half a mile to thirteen, but its waters are muddy, excepting in the vicinity of Burlington. Its islands are not

numerous, but one of them, Grand Isle, is sufficiently large to support four villages. Its scenery may be denominated bold; on the west are the Adirondac Mountains; and at some distance on the east, the beautiful Green Mountains, whose glorious *commanders* are Mansfield Mountain and the Camel's Hump. Owing to the width of the Lake at Burlington, and the beauty of the western mountains, the sunsets that are here visible, are exceedingly superb.

The classic associations of this Lake are uncommonly interesting. Here are the moss-covered ruins of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, whose present occupants are the snake, the lizard, and toad. Leaden and iron balls, broken bayonets, and English flints, have I picked up on their ramparts, which I cannot look upon without thinking of death-struggles and the horrible shout of war. And there too is Plattsburg, in whose waters Commodore McDonough vindicated the honour of the Stars and Stripes of Freedom.



RUINS OF TICONDEROGA.

As to the fishing of this Lake, I have but a word to say. Excepting trout, almost every variety of fresh-water fish is found here in abundance; but the water is not pure, which is ever a serious drawback to my enjoyment in wetting the line. Lake Champlain received its present name from a French nobleman, who discovered it in 1609, and who died at Quebec in 1635.

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The associations I am now to speak of, are of a personal character; and the first, of the three names before me, is that of Joseph Torrey, the present Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy in the University of Vermont. As a citizen, he is one of the most amiable and beloved of men. As one of the faculty of the University, he occupies a high rank, and is a particular favourite with all his students. A pleasing evidence of the latter fact I noticed a few days since, when it was reported among the

students that the Professor had returned from a visit to the Springs for his health. I was in company with some half dozen of them at the time, and these are the remarks they made: "How is his health?" "I hope he has improved!" "Now shall I be happy; for ever since he went away, the recitation-room has been a cheerless place to me." "Now shall I be advised as to my essay!" "Now shall my poem be corrected!" "Now, in my troubles, shall I have the sympathies of a true friend!" Much more meaning is contained in these simple phrases than what meets the eye. Surely, if any man is to be envied, it is he who has a place in the affections of all who know him. As a scholar, too, Professor Torrey occupies an exalted station, as will be proved to the world in due time. He has never published anything but an occasional article for a review, and the Memoir of President Marsh, (who was his predecessor in the University), as contained in the admirable volume of his Remains, which should occupy a conspicuous place in the library of every American scholar and Christian.

The memoir is indeed a rare specimen of that kind of writing, beautifully written, and pervaded by a spirit of refinement that is delightful. But I was mostly interested in Mr. Torrey as a man of taste in the Fine Arts. In everything but the mere execution, he is a genuine artist, and long may I remember the counsels of his experience and knowledge. A course of Lectures on the Arts forms a portion of his instruction as Professor; and I trust that they will eventually be published, for the benefit of our country. He has also translated, from the German of Schelling, a most admirable discourse, entitled "Relation of the Arts of Design to Nature;" a copy of which ought to be in the possession of every young artist. Mr. Torrey has been an extensive traveller in Europe, and being a lover and an acute observer of everything

connected with literature and art, it is quite a luxury to hear him expatiate upon “the wonders he has seen.”

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He also examines everything with the eye of a philosopher; and his conclusions are ever of practical utility. Not only can he analyze in a profound manner the principles of metaphysical learning, but, with the genuine feelings of a poet, descant upon the triumphs of poetic genius, or point out the mind-charms of a Claude or Titian. He is—but I will not say all that I would, for I fear that at our next meeting he would chide me for my boyish personalities. Let me conclude then, reader, with the advice, that, if you ever chance to meet the Professor in your travels, you must endeavour to secure an introduction, which I am sure you cannot but ever remember with unfeigned pleasure.

John Henry Hopkins, D.D., Bishop of Vermont, is another of the principal attractions of Burlington. The history of his life, the expression of his countenance, and his general deportment, all speak of the “peace of God.” Considering the number and diversity of his acquirements, I think him a very remarkable man. He is not only, in point of character, well worthy of his exalted station as Bishop, but as a theologian, learned and eloquent to an uncommon degree. His contributions to the world of Letters are of rare value, as he has published volumes entitled “Christianity Vindicated,” “The Primitive Church,” “The Primitive Creed,” “The Church of Rome,” “British Reformation,” and “Letters to the Clergy.” His style of writing is persuasive, vigorous, and clear; and all his conclusions seem to have been formed in full view of the Bible, which is a virtue worth noticing in these degenerate days. It is because of his honesty and soundness, I suppose, that some of his own church are disaffected with his straightforward conduct.

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Bishop Hopkins, as a divine, is of the same school with the late Bishop White, and therefore among the most eminently wise and good of his age and country.

The Bishop of Vermont is also a man of remarkable taste with regard to Architecture, Music, and Painting; in which departments, as an amateur, he has done himself great credit. Not only did he plan and superintend the building of an edifice for his recent school, but has published an interesting book on Architecture, wherein he appears to be as much *at home* as if he were Christopher Wren. Knowing the market to be full of sentimental nonsense in the way of songs, he composed, for the benefit of his own children, a few with a moral tone, which he also set to music, and are now published as a worthy tribute to his fine feelings, and the correctness of his ear. But he ranks still higher as a man of taste in the capacity of a Painter. The Vermont Drawing Book, which he published, is an evidence of his ability as a draughtsman. The family portraits which adorn his walls, prove him to have an accurate eye for colour, and an uncommon knowledge of effect;—his oil sketches of scenes from nature, give token of an ardent devotion to nature. But the best, in my opinion, of all his artistical productions, is a picture representing “our Saviour blessing little children.” Its conception, grouping, and execution, are all of very great merit, and I am persuaded will one day be looked upon with peculiar interest by the lovers and judges of art in this country. Though done in water colours, and considered by the artist as a mere sketch for a larger picture, there are some heads in it that would have called forth a compliment even from the lamented Allston. Would that he could be influenced to send it, for exhibition, to our National Academy! And thus endeth my humble tribute of praise to a gifted man.

I now come to the Hon. George P. Marsh, of whom, if I were to follow the bent of my feelings, I could write a complete volume. Though yet in the early prime of life, he is a sage in learning and wisdom. After leaving college, he settled in Burlington, where he has since resided, dividing his time between his legal profession and the retirement of his study. With a large and liberal heart, he possesses all the endearing and interesting qualities which belong to the true and accomplished gentleman. Like all truly great men, he is exceedingly retiring and modest in his deportment, and one of that rare class who can never be excited by the voice of fame. About two years ago, almost without his knowledge, he was elected to a seat in the lower house of Congress, where he at once began to make an impression as a Statesman. Though few have been his public speeches, they are remarkable for sound political logic, and the classic elegance of their language. As an orator, he is not showy and passionate, but plain, forcible, and earnest.

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But it is in the walks of private life, that Mr. Marsh is to be mostly admired. His knowledge of the Fine Arts is probably more extensive than that of any other man in this country, and his critical taste is equal to his knowledge; but that department peculiarly his hobby, is Engraving. He has a passion for line engravings; and it is unquestionably true, that his collection is the most valuable and extensive in the Union. He is well acquainted with the history of this art from the earliest period, and also with its various mechanical ramifications. He is as familiar with the lives and peculiar styles of the Painters and Engravers of antiquity, as with his household affairs; and when he talks to you on his favourite theme, it is not to display his learning, but to make you realize the exalted attributes and mission of universal Art.

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As an author, Mr. Marsh has done but little in extent, but enough to secure a seat beside such men as Edward Everett, with whom he has been compared. He has published (among his numerous things of the kind) a pamphlet entitled “The Goths in New England,” which is a fine specimen of chaste writing and beautiful thought; also another on the “History of the Mechanic Arts,” which contains a great deal of rare and important information. He has also written an “Icelandic Grammar” of one hundred and fifty pages, which created a sensation among the learned of Europe a few years ago. As to his scholarship,—it can be said of him, that he is a *master* in some twelve of the principal modern and ancient languages. He has not learned them merely for the purpose of being considered a literary prodigy, but to multiply his means of acquiring information, which information is intended to accomplish some substantial end. He is not a visionary, but a devoted lover of truth, whether it be in History, Poetry, or the Arts.

But my chief object in speaking of this gentleman, was to introduce a passing notice of his Library, which is undoubtedly the most unique in the country. The building itself, which stands near his dwelling, is of brick, and arranged throughout with great taste. You enter it, as it was often my privilege, and find yourself in a perfect wilderness of gorgeous books, and portfolios of engravings. Of books, Mr. Marsh owns some five thousand volumes. His collection of Scandinavian Literature is supposed to be the more complete than any out of the Northern Kingdoms. To give you an idea of this literary treasure, I will mention a few of the rarest specimens. In old Northern Literature, here may be found the *Arna Magnæan* editions of old Icelandic Sagas, all those of *Suhm*, all those of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and, in fact, all those printed at

Copenhagen and Stockholm, as well as in Iceland, with scarcely an exception. This Library also contains the great editions of *Heimskringla*, the two *Eddas*, *Kongs-Skugg-Sjo*, *Konunga*, *Styrlise*, the *Scriptores Rerum Danicarum*, *Scriptores Rerum Svecicarum*, *Dansk Magazin*, the two complete editions of *Olaus Magnus*, *Saxo Grammaticus*, the works of Bartholinus, Torfaus, Schöning, Suhm, Pontoppidan, Grundtvig, Petersen, Rask, the *Aplantica* of Rudbeck, the great works of *Sjöborg*, Liljegren, Geijer, Cronholm, and Strinnholm, all the collections of old Icelandic, Danish, and Swedish laws, and almost all the writers, ancient and modern, who have treated of the language, literature, or history, of the ancient Scandinavian race.

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In modern Danish Literature, here may be found the works of Holberg, Wessel, Ewald, Hejberg, Baggesen, Oehlenschläger, Nyerup, Ingemann, with other celebrated authors; in Swedish, those of Leopold Oxenstierna, Bellmann, Franzen, Atterbom, Tegner, Frederika Bremer, and indeed almost all the *belles-lettres* authors of Sweden, the Transactions of the Royal Academy of Science, (more than one hundred volumes), those of the Swedish Academy, and of the Royal Academy of Literature, and many collections in documentary history, besides numerous other works.

In Spanish and Portuguese, besides many modern authors, here are numerous old chronicles, such as the Madrid collection of old Spanish Chronicles in seven volumes 4to.; the Portuguese *Livros ineditos da Historia Portugueza*, five volumes folio; Fernam Lopez, de Brito, Duarte Nunez de Liam, Damiam de Goes, de Barros, Castanheda, Resende, Andrada, Osorio; also, de Menezes, Mariana, and others of similar

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character. In Italian, most of the best authors, who have acquired a European reputation; several hundred volumes of French works, including many of the ancient chronicles; a fine collection in German, including many editions of Reyneke der Fuchs, the Niebelungen, and other works of the middle ages. In classical literature, good editions of the most celebrated Greek and Latin authors; and in English, a choice collection of the best authors, among which should be mentioned, as rare in this country, Lord Berners' Froissart, Roger Ascham, the writings of King James I., John Smith's Virginia (edition of 1624), Amadis de Gaul, and Palmerin of England. In lexicography, the best dictionaries and grammars in all the languages of Western Europe, and many biographical dictionaries and other works of reference in various languages. Many works also on astrology, alchemy, witchcraft, and magic; and a goodly number of works on the situation of Plato's Atlantis and Elysian Fields, such as Rudbeck's Atlantica, Goropius Becanus, de Grave République des Champs-Elysées, and a host of others in every department of learning, the mere mention of which would cause the bookworm a thrill of delight.

In the department of Art, Mr. Marsh possesses the Musée Français, Musée Royal, (proof before letters) Liber Veritatis, Houghton Gallery, Florence Gallery, Publications of Dilettanti Society, and many other illustrated works and collections of engravings; the works of Bartsch, Ottley Mengs, Visconti, Winckelmann, and other writers on the history and theory of Art; old illustrated works, among which are the original editions of Teuerdanck and Der Weiss Kunig; and many thousand steel engravings, including many originals by Albert Dürer, Luke of Leyden, Lucas Cranach, Aldegreuer, Wierx, the Sadeler Nauteuil, (among others the celebrated Louis XIV., size of life,

and a proof of the *Cadet à la Perle*, by Masson), Edelinck, Drevet, Marc Antonio, and other old engravers of the Italian school, Callot, Ostade, Rembrandt, (including a most superb impression of the Christ Healing the Sick, the hundred guilder Piece, and the portrait of Renier Ansloo), Waterloo, Woollett, Sharp, Strange, Earlom, Wille, Ficquet Schmidt, Loughi, and Morghen; in short, nearly all the works of all the greatest masters in chalcography, from the time of Dürer to the present day. It were folly for me to praise these various works, and I have alluded to them merely for the purpose of letting you know something of the taste and possessions of Mr. Marsh. His library is one of the most delightful places it has ever been my fortune to visit, and the day that I became acquainted with the man, I cannot but consider as an era in my life. Morning, noon, and evening did I linger with the master-spirits of olden time, collected in his library, and though I often stood in mute admiration of their genius, I was sometimes compelled to shed a tear, as I thought of the destiny, as a writer, which will probably be mine. Thank God, there is no such thing as ambition in that blessed world above the stars, which I hope to attain,—no ambition to harass the soul,—for then will it be free to revel, and for ever, in its holy and godlike conceptions. But a truce to this strain of thought, and also to the Lions of Burlington, of whom I now take my leave with a respectful bow.

CHAPTER IX.

Stage-coach—The Winooski—The Green Mountains—The ruined Dwelling—The White Mountains—The Flume—A deep Pool—The Old Man of the Mountain—The Basin—Franconia Notch—View of the Mountains—Mount Washington—The Notch Valley.

In a Stage-coach. June.

Three loud knocks at my bed-room door awakened me from “a deep dream of peace.” “The eastern stage is ready,” said my landlord, as he handed me a light; whereupon, in less than five minutes after the hour of three, I was on my way to the White Mountains, inditing on the tablet of my memory, the following disjointed stage-coach rhapsody.

A fine coach, fourteen passengers, and six superb horses. My seat is on the outside, and my eyes on the alert for anything of peculiar interest which I may meet with in my journey. Now do the beautiful Green Mountains meet my view. The day is breaking, and lo! upon either side of me, and like the two leaders of an army, rise the peaks of Mansfield Mountain and the Camel’s Hump. Around the former the cloud-spirits of early morning are picturing the fantastic poetry of the sky; while just above the summit of the other, may be seen the new moon and the morning star, waiting for the sun to come, like two sweet human sisters, for the smiles and kisses of a returning father. And now, as the sunbeams glide along the earth, we are in the solitude of the mountains, and the awakened mist-creatures are ascending from the cool and silent nooks in the deep ravines.

Young Dana's description of a ship under full sail is very fine, but it does not possess the living beauty of that picture now before me, in those six bay horses, straining every nerve to eclipse the morning breeze. Hold your breath, for the road is hard and smooth as marble, and the extended nostrils of those matchless steeds speak of a noble pride within. There, the race is done, the victory theirs; and now, as they trot steadily along, what music in the champing of those bits, and the striking of those iron-bound hoofs! Of all the soulless animals on earth, none do I love so dearly as the horse,—I sometimes am inclined to think that they have souls. I respect a noble horse, more than I do some men. Horses are the Indian chiefs of the brute creation.

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The Winooski, along whose banks runs the most picturesque stage route in Vermont, is an uncommonly interesting stream,—rapid, clear, and cold. It is remarkable for its falls and narrow passes, where perpendicular rocks of a hundred feet or more, frown upon its solitary pools. Its chief pictorial attraction is the cataract at Waterbury,—a deep and jagged chasm in the granite mountain, whose horrors are greatly increased by the sight and the smothered howl of an avalanche of pure white foam. On its banks, and forty miles from its outlet near Burlington, is situated Montpelier, the capital of Vermont. It is a compact town, mostly built upon two streets, and completely hemmed in by rich and cultivated mountains. Its chief attractions to my mind, however, during my short stay, was a pair of deep black eyes, only half visible under their drooping lids.

During one of my rambles near Montpelier, I discovered an isolated and abandoned dwelling, which stands upon a little plot of green, in the lap of the forest near the top of a mountain. I

entered its deserted chambers, and spent a long time musing upon its solemn admonitions. The cellar had become the home of lizards and toads. The spider and cricket were masters of the hearth, where once had been spun the mountain legend, by an old man to the only child of his widowed son. They were, as I am told, the last of a long line, which once flourished in Britain, and with them their name would pass into forgetfulness. Only the years of a single generation have elapsed since then, but the dwellers upon yonder mountain are sleeping in the grave! And is this passing record of their existence the only inheritance they have left behind? Most true; but would it have been *better* for them, or for us, had they bequeathed to the world a noted name, or immense possessions? What is our life?

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The route between Montpelier and Danville lies along the Winooski, and is not less beautiful than that down the river. Its chief picture is Marshfield Waterfall. While at Montpelier, a pleasure ride was got up by some of my friends, and as they were bound to the east, and I was honoured with an invitation, I sent on my baggage and joined them, so that the monotony of my journey was agreeably relieved. We had our fishing-rods with us, and having stopped at the fall, we caught a fine mess of trout, which we had cooked for dinner at the next tavern on our way,—and our dessert was fine singing from the ladies, and good stories from the lips of Senator Phelps, who was of the party, and is celebrated for his conversational powers. For further particulars concerning that expedition, I would refer you to that pair of eyes, which I just now mentioned as having beamed upon me with a bewitching brilliancy. But alas! the dear creature is already,—excuse me, I cannot, I will not speak the hateful word. The lucky fellow ought to carry a liberal and kind

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soul hereafter, if he has never done so before.

At cock-crowing this morning I was again in my seat outside of the stage-coach, anxiously waiting for the mists to evaporate in the east. The sun proved to be my friend, and soon as he appeared, they vanished like a frightened troop, and he was marching up the sky in the plenitude of his glory. And then, for the first time, did my vision rest upon the White Mountains, as they reposed in the distance, like a mighty herd of camels in the solitude of the desert. In the charming valley of the Connecticut we only tarried about ten minutes, but long enough for me to hear the mower whet his scythe, the “lark sing loud and high,” and the pleasant tinkle of a cow-bell far away in a broad meadow. While there I took a sketch, wherein I introduced the father of New England rivers, and the bald peak of Mount Lafayette, with the storm-inflicted scar upon its brow. A noble monument is yonder mountain to the memory of a noble man.

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While breakfasting at Littleton this morning, I came to the conclusion to leave my baggage and visit Franconia. I jumped into the stage, and after a very pleasant ride of seventeen miles, found myself far into the Notch, in the midst of whose scenery I am to repose this night. I reached here in time to enjoy an early dinner with “mine host;” after which I sallied forth to examine the wonders of the place, but was so delighted with everything around, that I did not take time to make a single sketch. I saw the Flume, and was astonished. It is a chasm in the mountain, thirty feet wide, about a hundred deep, and some two thousand long, and as regular in its shape as if it had been cut by the hand of man. Bridging its centre is a rock of many tons weight, which one would suppose could only have been hurled there from the

heavens. Through its centre flows a little brook, which soon passes over a succession of rocky slides, and which are almost as smooth and white as marble. And to cap the climax, this Flume is the centre of as perfect and holy a wilderness of scenery as could be imagined.

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I have also seen (what should be the pride of the Merrimack, as it is upon one of its tributaries) the most superb pool in this whole country. The fall above it is not remarkable, but the forest-covered rocks on either side, and the pool itself, are wonderfully fine. In the first place, you must remember, that the waters of this whole region are cold as ice, and very clear. The pool forms a circle of about one hundred feet in diameter, and is said to be fifty feet in depth. Owing to the fall, it is the “head-quarters” of the trout, which are found all along the stream in great abundance. After I had completed a drawing, I laid aside my pencils and fixed my fishing rod. I threw the line only about two hours and caught forty-five trout. Among them was the great-grandfather of all trout, as I thought at the time, he was seventeen inches long, and weighed two pounds and one ounce.

The Old Man of the Mountain is another of the lions of this place. It is a cone-shaped mountain (at the foot of which is a small lake), upon whose top are some rocks, which have a resemblance to the profile of an old man. It is really a very curious affair. There the old fellow stands, as he has stood perhaps for centuries, “looking the whole world in the face.” I wonder if the thunder ever frightens him? and does the lightning play around his brow without making him wink? His business there, I suppose, is to protect the “ungranted lands” of New Hampshire, or keep Isaac Hill from lecturing the White Mountains on Locofocoism. He need not trouble himself as to

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the first fear, for they could not be deeded even to a bear; and as to the second, I do not believe the mountains could ever be persuaded to vote for the acquisition of New Territory. Every plant upon them speaks of freedom, and in their fastnesses does the eagle find a home,—their banner-symbols are the stars and stripes, and therefore they must be Whigs.

And another curiosity, which everybody goes to see, is called the Basin,—an exquisite little spot,—fit for the abode of a very angel. It is formed in the solid rock, and though twenty feet in depth, you can see a sixpence at the bottom,—it is so wonderfully clear. But the wild beauties of this Notch, unknown to fame, are charming beyond compare. There goes the midnight warning of the clock, and I must retire. Would that my dreams might be of yonder star, now beaming with intense brightness above the dark outline of the nearest mountain.

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The distance from Knight's tavern to the western outlet of Franconia Notch is eight miles. The eastern stage was to pass through about the middle of the afternoon, so after eating my breakfast I started on, intending to enjoy a walk between the mountains. With the conceptions and feelings that were with me then, I should have been willing to die, for I was very happy.



FRANCONIA NOTCH.

Now, as I sat upon a stone to sketch a mass of foliage, a little red squirrel came within five feet of me, and commenced a terrible chattering, as if his lady-love had given him the “mitten,” and he was inveighing against the whole female sex; and now an old partridge with a score of children came tripping along the shadowy road, almost within my reach, and so fearless of my presence, that I would not have harmed one of them even for a crown. Both of these were exceedingly simple pictures, and yet they afforded me a world of pleasure.

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I thought of the favourite haunts of these dear creatures—the hollow tree—the bed of dry leaves—the cool spring—the mossy yellow log—the rocky ledges overgrown with moss—the gurgling brooklet stealing through the trees, with its fairy waterfalls in a green shadow and its spots of vivid sunlight—and of a thousand other kindred gems in the wonderful gallery of

Nature. And now as I walked onward, peering into the gloomy recesses of the forest on either side, or fixed my eyes upon the blue sky with a few white clouds floating in their glory, many of my favourite songs were remembered, and, in a style peculiarly my own, I poured them upon the air, whilst I was answered by unnumbered mountain echoes. Nothing had they to do with the place or with each other, but like the pictures around me, they were a divine food for my soul—so that I was in the enjoyment of a heavenly feast. Now, as I looked through the opening trees, I saw an eagle floating above the summit of a mighty cliff;—now, with the speed of a falling star descending far into the leafy depths, and then, slowly but surely ascending, until hidden from view by a passing cloud. Fly on, proud bird, glorious symbol of my country's freedom! What a god-like life is thine! Thou art the “sultan of the sky,” and from thy craggy home for ever lookest upon the abodes of man with indifference and scorn. The war-whoop of the savage, the roar of artillery on the bloody battle field, and the loud boom of the ocean cannon, have fallen upon thy ear, and thou hast listened, utterly heedless as to whom belonged the victory. What strength and power in thy pinions! traversing in an hour a wider space

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“Than yonder gallant ship, with all her sails
Wooing the winds, can cross from morn till eve!”

When thy hunger-shriek echoes through the wilderness, with terror does the wild animal seek his den, for thy talons are of iron and thine eyes of fire. But what is thy message to the sun? Far, far into the zenith art thou gone, for ever gone—emblem of a mighty hope that once was mine.

My thoughts were upon the earth once more, and my feet upon a

hill out of the woods, whence might be seen the long
broad valley of the Amonoosack, melting into that of the
Connecticut. Long and intently did I gaze upon the landscape,
with its unnumbered farm-houses, reposing in the sunlight, and
surmounted by pyramids of light blue smoke, and also upon the
cattle gazing on a thousand hills. Presently I heard the rattling
wheels of the stage-coach;—one more look over the charming
valley, and I was in my seat beside the coachman.

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In view of the foregoing and forthcoming facts, I cannot but
conclude that I am a most lucky fellow. My ride from Franconia
to Littleton was attended with this interesting circumstance. A
very pretty young lady, who was in the stage, found it necessary
to change her seat to the outside on account of the confinement
within. Of course, I welcomed her to my side with unalloyed
pleasure. The scenery was fine, but what does my reader
suppose I cared for that—as I sat there talking in a most
eloquent strain to my companion, with my right arm around her
waist to keep her from falling? That conduct of mine may appear
“shocking” to those who have “never travelled,” but it was not
only an act of politeness but of absolute necessity. Neither, as
my patient’s smile told me, “was it bad to take.” And how
delightful it was to have her cling to me, and to hear the beating
of her heart, as the driver swung his whip and ran his
horses down the hills! Animal magnetism is indeed a
great invention—and I am a believer in it, so far as the touch of
a beautiful woman is concerned.

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Away, away—thoughts of the human world! for I am entering
into the heart of the White Mountains. Ah me! how can I
describe these glorious hierarchs of New England! How
solemnly do they raise their rugged peaks to heaven! Now, in

token of their royalty, crowned with a diadem of clouds; and now with every one of their cliffs gleaming in the sunlight like the pictures of a dream! For ages, have they been the playmates of the storm, and held communion with the mysteries of the midnight sky. The earliest beams of the morning have bathed them in living light, and theirs too have been the last kisses of departing day. Man and his empires have arisen and decayed, but they have remained unchanged, a perpetual mockery. Upon their summits, Time has never claimed dominion. There, as of old, does the eagle teach her brood to fly, and there does the wild bear prowl after his prey. There do the waterfalls still leap and shout on their way to the dells below, even as when the tired Indian hunter, some hundred ages ago, bent him to quaff the liquid element. There still, does the rank grass rustle in the breeze, and the pine, and cedar, and hemlock, take part in the howling of the gale. Upon Man alone falls the heavy curse of time; Nature has never sinned, therefore is her glory immortal.

As is well known, the highest of these mountains was christened after our beloved Washington; and with it, as with him, are associated the names of Jefferson, Madison, and Adams. Its height is said to be six thousand and eight hundred feet above the sea; but owing to its situation in the centre of a brotherhood of hills, it does not appear to be so grand an object as South Peak Mountain among the Catskills. Its summit, like most of its companions, is destitute of vegetation, and therefore more desolate and monotonous. It is somewhat of an undertaking to ascend Mount Washington, though the trip is performed on horseback; but if the weather is clear, the traveller will be well repaid for his labour. The painter will be pleased with the views he may command in ascending the route from Crawford's,

which abounds in the wildest and most diversified charms of mountain scenery. But the prospect from the summit of Washington, will mostly excite the soul of the poet. Not so much on account of what he will behold, but for the breathless feeling, which will make him deem himself, for a moment, to be an angel or a god. And then, more than ever, if he is a Christian, will he desire to be alone, so as to anticipate the bliss of heaven by a holy communion with the Invisible.

I spent a night upon this mountain; and my best view of the prospect was at the break of day, when, as Milton says,

“—— morn, her rosy steps in th’ Eastern clime
Advancing, sow’d the earth with orient pearls,”

and,

“Wak’d by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr’d the gates of light;”

or, when in the language of Shakspeare,

“The grey-eyed morn smiled on the frowning night,
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light.”

Wonderfully vast, and strangely indistinct and dreamy, was the scene spread out on every side. To the west lay the superb Connecticut, with its fertile valley reposing in the gloom of night; while to the east, the ocean-bounded prospect, just bursting into the life of light, was faintly relieved by Winnepiseogee and Sebago lakes; and, like rockets along the earth, wandered away the Merrimack, the Saco, and the Androscoggin, to their ocean home,—the whole forming an epic

landscape, such as we seldom behold excepting in our sleep. Heavens! with what exquisite delight did I gaze upon the scene, as in the eyes of truth and fancy it expanded before my mind. Yonder, in one of a hundred villages, a young wife, with her first-born child at her side, was in the midst of her morning dream; and there, the pilgrim of fourscore years was lying on his couch in a fitful slumber, as the pains of age crept through his frame. There, on the Atlantic shore, the fisherman in the sheltering bay, hoisted anchor and spread his sail for the sea; and there, the life-star of the lighthouse was extinguished, again at its stated time to appear with increased brilliancy. In reality, there was an ocean of mountains all around me; but in the dim light of the hour, and as I looked down upon them, it seemed to me that I stood in the centre of a plain, boundless as the universe; and though I could not see them, I felt that I was in a region of spirits, and that the summit of the mount was holy ground. But the morning was advancing, the rising mists obscured my vision, and as I did not wish to have that day-break picture dissipated from my mind, I mounted my faithful horse, and with a solemn awe at heart, descended the mountain.

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The ride from the Notch House, (kept by the celebrated hunter, named Crawford), through the Notch Valley, some twelve miles long, is magnificent. First is the Gap itself, only some twenty feet in width, and overhung with jagged rocks of wondrous height; and then the tiny spring, alive with trout, which gives birth to the untamed Saco. A few more downward steps, and you are in full view of a bluff, whose storm-scathed brow seems to prop the very heavens, its grey shadows strongly contrasting with the deep blue sky. A little further on, and you find yourself in an amphitheatre of mountains, whose summits and sides are barren and desolate,

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where the storms of a thousand years have exhausted their fury. Downward still, and farther on, and you come to the memorable Wiley cottage, whose inhabitants perished in the avalanche or slide of 1826. The storm had been unceasing for some days upon the surrounding country, and the dwellers of the cottage were startled at midnight by the falling earth. They fled, and were buried in an instant; and up to the present time, only one of the seven bodies has ever been found. As it then stood, the dwelling still stands—a monument of mysterious escape, as well as of the incomprehensible decrees of Providence. The Saco river, which runs through the valley, was lifted from its original bed, and forced into a new channel. The whole place, which but a short time before was “a beautiful and verdant opening amid the surrounding rudeness and deep shadow, is now like a stretch of desolate sea-shore after a tempest, —full of wrecks, buried in sand and rocks, crushed and ground to atoms.”

After witnessing so much of the grand and gloomy, I was glad to retrace my course back to a more tame country. My last view of Mount Washington and its lordly companions was the most beautiful. The sun was near his setting, and the whole sky was suffused with a glow of richest yellow and crimson, while to the eastward hung two immense copper-coloured clouds just touching the outline of the mountains; and through the hazy atmosphere the mountains themselves looked cloud-like, but with more of the bright blue of heaven upon them. In the extensive middle distance faded away wood-crowned hills, and in the foreground an exquisite little farm, with the husbandman's happy abode almost hidden by groups of elms, and with the simple figures, only a few paces off, of a little girl sitting on a stone, with a bunch of summer flowers in her hand, and a basket

of berries and a dog at her side. One more yearning gaze upon the dear old mountains, and I resumed my pilgrimage towards the north.

CHAPTER X.

Montreal.

Montreal. June.

With some things in Montreal I have been pleased, but with others a good deal dissatisfied. The appearance which it presents from every point of view is imposing in the extreme. Its numerous church towers and extensive blocks of stores, its extensive shipping and noble stone wharves, combine to give one an idea of great wealth and liberality. On first riding to my hotel I was struck with the cleanliness of its streets; and, on being shown to my room, I was convinced that the hotel itself (Donegana's) was of the first water. It abounds in public buildings, which are usually built of lime-stone, and the city extends along the river St. Lawrence about three miles. The streets in the older parts of the town are as picturesque and narrow as those of the more ancient cities of the old world, but in the modern portions they are quite regular and comfortable. The principal street is Notre Dame, which always presents, on a pleasant day, a gay and elegant appearance.

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Generally speaking, its churches are below mediocrity, but it has one architectural lion worth mentioning, the Catholic Cathedral. It faces a square called Place d'Armes, and presents an imposing appearance. It is built of stone, and said to be after the Norman-Gothic order of architecture, but I should think it a mixture of a dozen *dis-orders*. Its extreme length is two hundred and fifty-five feet, breadth one hundred and thirty-five, and its height seventy-two feet. It has also two towers, which measure

two hundred and twenty feet to their summit. The windows in these towers are closed with coarse boards; and yet it cost four hundred thousand dollars. The ground-floor is covered with pews capable of seating eight thousand people, while the aisles and galleries might hold two thousand more. The galleries are supported by wooden pillars, which reminded me of a New York barber's sign. The interior has a naked and doleful appearance; the large window above the altar is wretchedly painted; the altar itself is loaded with gewgaws, and, of the many paintings which meet you in every direction, there is not one for which I would pay ten dollars. The organ resembles a bird-house, and the music perpetrated there every day in the year would jar upon the ear of even an American Indian. And when it is remembered that this church was built by one of the wealthiest corporations on the continent, it is utterly impossible to entertain a feeling of charity towards the founders thereof.

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The population of Montreal is now estimated at forty thousand, one-half of whom are Roman Catholics, one quarter Protestants, and the remainder nothing in particular. By this statement it will be readily seen that the establishments of the Catholics must be the most abundant. Nunneries are consequently very numerous, some of them well endowed; and to those who have a passion for such affairs must be exceedingly interesting.

But I wish to mention one or two more specimens of architecture. The market of Montreal is built of stone, situated near the river, and remarkably spacious and convenient in all its arrangements. It eclipses anything of the kind that we can boast of in the States. The only monument in the city of any note is a Doric column, surmounted with a statue, and erected

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in honour of Lord Nelson. The entire column is seventy feet high, and gives an air of elegance to that portion of Notre Dame where it stands. On the four sides of the pedestal are pictorial representations, in alto relievo, representing Nelson in some of his memorable battles. It was erected by the British inhabitants of Montreal at a cost of near six thousand dollars.

One of the more striking peculiarities of this city is the fact that every body has to live, walk, and sleep at the point of a bayonet. Military quarters are stationed in various portions of the city, and soldiers meet you at every corner, marching to and fro, and sometimes puffed up with ignorance and vanity. The last woman, I am sorry to say, who has become an outcast from society, attributes her misfortune to a soldier; but the officers of the British army stationed here are generally well-educated and agreeable gentlemen.

The people whom you meet in the streets of Montreal seem to come from almost every nation in the world. Now it may be the pompous Englishman, who represents some wilderness district in Parliament, and now it may be the cunning Scotchman, or a half-famished Irishman. Sometimes it is the speculating American, or the humble, but designing Jew, the gay and polite Habitan, or a group of wandering Indians from the far north. The better class of Montreal people (so called by a fashionable world) are the British settlers, or rather the English population. Generally speaking, they are highly intelligent, somewhat arbitrary in expressing their opinions, but they entertain hospitable feelings towards strangers. They boast of their mother-country, as if her glory and power were omnipotent, and an occasional individual may be found who will not scruple to insult an American if he happens to defend

his own. In religion, they are generally Episcopalians; they hate the Habitan, look with contempt upon the poor Irish, and address their brethren of Scotland with a patronising air. They drink immense quantities of wine; and those who happen to be the illiterate members of the Provincial Parliament, think themselves the greatest people on earth.

The island upon which Montreal is situated is seventy miles in circumference, and was once (if not now) the property of an order of Catholic priesthood. In the rear of the city rises a noble hill, called Mount Royal, from which it derives its name. The hill itself is thickly wooded, but the surrounding country is exceedingly fertile, and studded with elegant country seats and the rural abodes of the peasantry. A ride around the Mount, on a pleasant day, is one of the most delightful imaginable, commanding a view of Montreal and the St. Lawrence valley, which is grand beyond compare.

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To appreciate the unique features of Montreal, it is necessary that you should be there on the Sabbath, the gala-day of the Catholics. Then it is that the peasantry flock into the city from all directions, and, when they are pouring into the huge Cathedral by thousands, dressed in a thousand fantastic fashions, cracking their jokes and laughing as they move along, the entire scene is apt to fill one with peculiar feelings. It was beautiful to look at; but the thought struck me that I should hate to live in the shadow of that Cathedral for ever. But if you chance to take a walk in the suburbs on a Sabbath afternoon, you will notice much that cannot but afford you real satisfaction. You will find almost every cottage a fit subject for a picture, and the flocks of neatly-dressed, happy, and polite children playing along the roads, together with frequent groups of sober men, sitting in a

porch, and the occasional image of a beautiful girl or contented mother leaning out of a window—all these things, I say, constitute a charm which is not met with everywhere. But enough. Montreal is a fine city, and I trust that it will yet be my fortune to visit it again, and see more of its polished society.

CHAPTER XI.

Quebec.

Quebec. June.

I came from Montreal to this city in the day time, and consequently had an opportunity of examining this portion of the St. Lawrence. The river opposite Montreal runs at the rate of six miles per hour, and is two miles wide; it preserves this breadth for about sixty miles, and then expands into the beautiful and emerald-looking Lake of St. Peter, after which it varies from one to five in width until it reaches Quebec, which is distant from Montreal one hundred and eighty miles. Above St. Peter, the shores vary from five to fifteen feet in height, but below the lake they gradually become more elevated, until they measure some three hundred feet in the vicinity of Quebec. The country between the two Canadian cities is well cultivated, and on either side may be seen a continued succession of rural cottages.

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Our steamer approached Quebec at the sunset hour, and I must say that I have never witnessed a more superb prospect than the lofty Citadel-city, the contracted St. Lawrence, the opposite headland called Point Levi, and the far-distant land, which I knew to be Cape Tourment. A stiff breeze was blowing at the time, and some twenty ships were sailing to and fro, while we had to make our way into port by winding between and around some three hundred ships which were at anchor.

I have seen much in this goodly city which has made a deep

impression on my mind. The promontory called Cape Diamond, upon which it stands, is formed by the junction of the St. Charles and St. Lawrence rivers, and rises to the height of three hundred and fifty feet above the water. The city is built from the water's edge along the base of the cliff, and from thence in a circuitous manner ascends to the very borders of the Citadel and ramparts. There is but one street leading from the Lower to the Upper Town, and that is narrow and very steep, and the gateway is defended by a number of large cannon. The city is remarkably irregular, and, as many of the buildings are very ancient, its appearance is picturesque and romantic. The fortifications cover an area of forty acres, and beneath them are many spacious and gloomy vaults, for the reception of ammunition and stores during a time of war. Receding into the interior, from the very brow of the Fortress, are the Plains of Abraham, which are covered with a rich green sod, and planted with unnumbered cannon. Their historical associations are numerous, and, as they would fill a chapter in themselves, I will refrain from dwelling upon them at this time.

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The religious establishments of Quebec are numerous, and belong mostly to the Roman Catholics; like those of Montreal they are very ancient and well endowed; but they did not interest me, and I am sure my description of them would not interest my reader. As a matter of course, I visited the French Cathedral. It seems to be as old as the hills, and yet all the windows of the principal tower are roughly boarded up. On entering the edifice, which is crowded with gilded ornaments, I could not fix my eye upon a single object which suggested the idea of richness. The sculpture, the paintings, and even the gilding, are all without merit; and what greatly added to my disgust was, that I could not obtain a civil answer from a single one of the many

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boorish boys and men, who were fussing about the church.

In the front of an extensive promenade, just below the Citadel, stands the monument erected to the memory of Montcalm and Wolfe. The gentleman who contributed the largest sum for its erection, was Lord Dalhousie. It is a handsome obelisk, and was designed by a military gentleman named Young. The principal inscription on the column is characteristic of the English nation, and is what an American would call “a puff of Dalhousie”—even though it be chiselled in Latin. The annoying effect of this inscription, however, is counteracted by another, which is also in Latin, and very beautiful. It was composed by J. C. Fisher, Esq., LL.D., founder of the Quebec Gazette, and is as follows:

“Military virtue gave them a common death,
History a common fame,
Posterity a common monument.”

The Golden Dog is another curiosity which will attract the attention of the visitor to Quebec. It is the figure of a dog, rudely sculptured in *relievo*, and richly gilded, which stands above the entrance of an ancient house, which was built by M. Phillibert, a merchant of this city, in the time of M. Bigot, the last Intendant under the French Government. Connected with it is the following curious story, which I copy from an old record:

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“M. Phillibert and the Intendant were on bad terms, but, under the system then existing, the merchant knew that it was in vain for him to seek redress in the colony; and, determining at some

future period to prefer his complaint in France, he contented himself with placing the figure of a sleeping dog in front of his house, with the following lines beneath it, in allusion to his situation with his powerful enemy:

““Je suis un chien qui ronge l’os,
En le rongeant je prends mon repos—
Un tems viendra qui n’est pas venu—
Que je mordrai qui m’aura mordu.”

“This allegorical language was, however, too plain for M. Bigot to misunderstand it. A man so powerful easily found an instrument to avenge the insult, and M. Phillibert received, as the reward of his verse, the sword of an officer of the garrison through his back, when descending the Lower Town Hill. The murderer was permitted to leave the colony unmolested, and was transferred to a regiment stationed in the East Indies. Thither he was pursued by a brother of the deceased, who had first sought him in Canada, when he arrived to settle his brother’s affairs. The parties, it is related, met in the public street of Pondicherry, drew their swords, and, after a severe conflict, the assassin met a more honourable fate than his crime deserved, and died by the hand of his antagonist.”

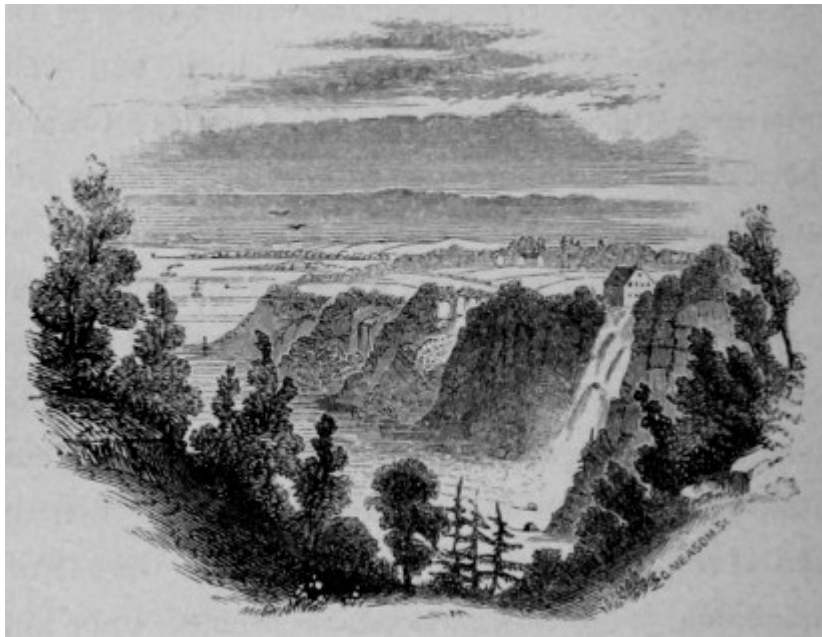
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I know not that there are any other curiosities in Quebec really worth mentioning, and I willingly turn to its natural attractions. The Fortress itself is undoubtedly one, if not the most formidable on the Continent, but I fell in love with it on account of its *observatory* features. To ramble over its commanding ramparts, without knowing or caring to know a solitary individual, has been to me an agreeable and unique source of entertainment. At one time I leaned upon the balustrade, and

looked down upon the Lower Town. It was near the hour of noon. Horses and carriages, men, women, and children, were hurrying through the narrow streets, and ships were in the docks discharging their cargoes. I looked down upon all these things at a single glance, and yet the only noise I heard was a hum of business. Even the loud clear shout of the sailor, as he tugged away at the mast-head of his ship, could hardly be heard stealing upward on the air. Doves were flying about high above the roofs, but they were so far below my point of vision, that I could not hear the beating of their wings. 161

But the finest prospect that I have enjoyed in this city was from the summit of the Signal-House, which looms above the Citadel. I visited this spot just as the sun was setting, and every thing was enveloped in a golden atmosphere. Beneath me lay the city, gradually lulling itself to repose; on the west, far as the eye could reach, faded away the valley of the Upper St. Lawrence; towards the north, winding its way between high and well-cultivated hills, was the river St. Charles; towards the eastward, rolling onward in its sublimity like an ocean across the continent, was the flood of the Lower St. Lawrence, whitened by more than a hundred sails; and towards the south reposed a picturesque country of hills and dales, beyond which I could just discern some of the mountain-peaks of my own dear “Fatherland.” Strange and beautiful beyond compare was the entire panorama, and how was its influence upon me deepened, as a strain of martial music broke upon the silent air, and then melted into my very heart! I knew not whence it came, or who were the musicians, but I “blessed them unaware,” and as my vision again wandered over the far-off hills, I was quite happy. 162

The population of Quebec is estimated at thirty thousand, and the variety is as great as in Montreal. A large proportion of the people whom you see parading the streets are soldiers, and chief among them I would mention the Scotch Highlanders, who are a noble set of men, and dress in handsome style.



FALLS OF MONTMORENCY.

Quebec, upon the whole, is a remarkable place, and well worth visiting. The environs of the city are also interesting, and a ride to the Falls of Montmorency, seven miles down the river, and back again by an interior road, will abundantly repay the tourist for all the trouble and expense to which he may be subjected.

CHAPTER XII.

A sail down the St. Lawrence—Sword-Fish—Chasing a Whale.

Tadousac. June.

I have not visited Canada for the purpose of examining her cities, and studying the character of her people, but solely with a view of hunting up some new scenery, and having a little sport in the way of salmon fishing. I am writing this chapter at the mouth of probably the most remarkable river in North America. But, before entering upon a description of my sojourn here, it is meet, I ween, that I should record an account of my journey down the St. Lawrence.

On reaching Quebec, I was informed that there was no regular mode of conveyance down the great river, and that I should have to take passage in a transient ship or schooner, which would land me at my desired haven. This intelligence had a 165 tendency to damp my spirits, and I had to content myself by sauntering about the Citadel-city. Among the places I visited was the fish market, where it was my good fortune to find a small smack, which had brought a load of fresh salmon to market, and was on the point of returning to the Saguenay for another cargo. In less than thirty minutes after I first saw him, I had struck a bargain with the skipper, transferred my luggage on board the smack, and was on my way to a region which was to me unknown.

We hoisted sail at twelve o'clock, and were favoured by a stiff

westerly breeze. Everything, in fact, connected with the voyage was beautifully accidental, and I had a “glorious time.” In the first place, our craft was just the thing—schooner-rigged, a fast sailer, and perfectly safe. The skipper, named Belland, was a warm-hearted and intelligent Frenchman, whose entire crew consisted of one boy. The day was superb, and the scenery of the river appeared to me more like the work of enchantment than nature.

The appearance of Quebec, from the eastward, is imposing in the extreme. Standing as it does upon a lofty bluff, its massive ramparts, and tin-covered roofs, domes, and cupolas, suggest the idea of immense power and opulence. Just below the city, the St. Lawrence spreads out to the width of three or four miles, while from the margin of either shore fade away a continued succession of hills, which vary from five hundred to fifteen hundred feet in height. Those upon the north shore are the highest, and both sides of the river, for a distance of some twenty miles below the city, are plentifully sprinkled with the white cottages of the Canadian peasantry. As you proceed, however, the river gradually widens, the hills upon the north shore become more lofty, reaching the elevation of two thousand feet; and, while you only occasionally discover a farm-house upon their summits, the southern shore continues to bear the appearance of a settled country, where the spire of a Catholic Church is frequently seen looming above a cluster of rural residences. In descending the river, the first pictorial feature which attracts attention is the Fall of Montmorency, pouring the waters of a noble tributary immediately into the St. Lawrence. Just below this fall the river is divided by the island of Orleans, which measures about twenty miles in length, and five in breadth. It is partly covered with forest, and

partly cultivated, and, though the shores are rather low, it contains a number of points which are a hundred feet high. At the eastern termination of this island is the parish of St. Laurent, a remarkably tidy French village, whose inhabitants are said to be as simple in their manners as they are virtuous and ignorant of the world at large. On a smaller island, which lies some thirty miles below Quebec, and directly opposite a noble cape called Tourment, the quarantine station for the shipping of the river is situated; and when I passed this spot I counted no less than forty-five ships at anchor, nearly all of which were freighted with foreign paupers, who were then dying of the ship fever at the rate of one hundred and fifty individuals per day. I might here mention that the vessels usually seen on this part of the St. Lawrence are merchant ships and brigs, which are chiefly and extensively employed in the lumber and timber trade. Another island in this portion of the St. Lawrence, which attracts attention from its peculiar sylvan beauty, is called Goose Island, and owned by a Sisterhood of Nuns, who have cultivated it extensively. The eastern portion of it is yet covered with forest; the channels on either side are not far from five miles wide, and it is distant about fifty miles from Quebec.

We landed here at sunset; and while my companions were building a watch-fire and cooking a supper of fish, pork, and onions, I amused myself by taking sundry observations. I found the vegetation of the island very luxuriant, the common hard woods of the north prevailing; but its foundation seemed to be composed of two distinct species of sandstone. Both varieties were of the finest grain, and while one was of a rich Indian red, the other was a deep blue. This portion of the St. Lawrence is a good deal blocked up by extensive reefs composed of these

identical sandstones, and at one point they extend so nearly across the river as to render the ship navigation extremely dangerous. On subsequently examining the high hills on the north shore, in this vicinity, I found them to be of solid granite, veined with red marble and extensive beds of quartz, and covered with a stunted forest of pine and hemlock. But this geological dissertation is keeping my pen from describing a night picture, which it was my privilege to witness on this beautiful but badly named island, where, for sundry reasons, we intended to spend the night.

Our supper was ended, and the skipper had paid his last visit to the little craft, and, with his boy, had smoked himself to sleep by our camp-fire. The sky was without a cloud, but studded with stars, and the breeze which kissed my cheek was soft and pleasant as the breath of one we dearly love. I had seated myself upon a rock, with my face turned towards the north, when my attention was attracted by a column of light which shot upward to the zenith behind the distant mountains. The broad expanse of the St. Lawrence was without a ripple, and the mountains, together with the column of light and the unnumbered stars, were distinctly mirrored in its bosom.

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While looking upon this scene, the idea struck me that the moon was about to rise; but I soon saw a crimson glow stealing up the sky, and knew that I was looking upon the fantastic performances of the Northern Lights. Broad, and of the purest white, were the many rays which shot upward from behind the mountain: and at equal distances between the horizon and the zenith were displayed four arches of a purple hue, the uppermost one melting imperceptibly in the deep blue sky. On again turning my eyes upward, I discovered that the columns and

arches had all disappeared, and that the entire sky was covered with a crimson colour, which resembled a lake of liquid fire tossed into innumerable waves. Strange were my feelings as I looked upon this scene, and thought of the unknown wilderness before me, and of the Being whose ways are past finding out, and who holdeth the entire world, with its cities, mountains, rivers, and boundless wildernesses, in the hollow of his hand.

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Long and intently did I gaze upon this wonder of the north; and at the moment that it was fading away, a wild swan passed over my head, sailing towards Hudson's Bay, and as his lonely song echoed along the silent air, I retraced my steps to the watch-fire and was soon a dreamer.

That portion of the St. Lawrence extending between Goose Island and the Saguenay, is about twenty miles wide. The spring tides rise and fall a distance of eighteen feet; the water is salt, but clear and cold, and the channel very deep. Here it was that I first saw the black seal, the white porpoise, and the black whale. But speaking of whales reminds me of a "whaling" fish story. A short distance above the Saguenay river there shoots out into the St. Lawrence, to the distance of about eight miles, a broad sand-bank, which greatly endangers the navigation.

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In descending the great river we had to double this cape, and it was at this point that I first saw a whale. The fellow had been pursued by a sword-fish, and when we discovered him his head was turned towards the beach, and he was moving with great rapidity, occasionally performing a most fearful leap, and uttering a sound that resembled the bellowing of a thousand bulls. The whale must have been forty feet long, and his enemy nearly twenty; and as they hurried on their course with great

speed, the sight was indeed terrible. Frantic with rage and pain, it so happened that the more unwieldy individual forgot his bearings, and in a very few minutes he was floundering about on the sand-bar in about ten feet of water, when the rascally sword-fish immediately beat a retreat. After awhile, however, the whale resolved to rest himself; but, as the tide was going out, his intentions were soon changed, and he began to roll himself about and slap the water with his tail for the purpose of getting clear. His efforts in a short time proved successful; and when we last saw him he was in the deepest part of the river, moving rapidly towards the Gulf, and spouting up the water as if congratulating himself upon his narrow escape.

In about two hours after witnessing this incident, our boat was moored at the mouth of the Saguenay; and of the comparatively unknown wilderness which this stream waters, my readers will find some information in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Saguenay River—Chicoutimi—Storm Picture—Hudson's Bay Company—Eminent Merchant—The Mountaineer Indians—Tadousac—Ruin of a Jesuit Establishment.

Tadousac. July.

About one hundred and fifty miles north of the St. Lawrence, and on one of the trails leading to Hudson's Bay, lies a beautiful Lake called St. John. It is about forty miles long, and surrounded with a heavily timbered and rather level country. Its inlets are numerous, and twelve of them are regular rivers. Its waters are clear, and abound in a great variety of uncommonly fine fish. The principal outlet to this Lake is the Saguenay river, which takes a southerly direction, and empties into the St. Lawrence. It is the largest tributary of the great river, and unquestionably one of the most remarkable on the continent. Its original Indian name was Chicoutimi, signifying *Deep Water*; but the early Jesuit missionaries, who have scattered their *Saint-anic* names over this entire country, thought proper to give it the name which it now bears, and the round-about interpretation of which is, *Nose of the Sack*. This name suggests to the world that the nose of St. John must have been a very long nose, and may be looked upon as a unique specimen of French poetry.

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The scenery of the Saguenay is wild and romantic to an uncommon degree. The first half of its course averages half a mile in width, and runs through an untrodden wilderness of pine and spruce covered hills. It abounds in waterfalls and rapids, and is only navigable for the Indian canoe. A few miles below

the most southern fall on the river the village of Chicoutimi is situated, where an extensive lumbering business is transacted, and the Hudson's Bay Company have an important post. The village has an ancient appearance, and contains about five hundred inhabitants, chiefly Canadian French. The only curiosity in the place is a rude Catholic Church, which is said to have been built by Jesuit missionaries upwards of one hundred years ago. It occupies the centre of a grassy lawn, surrounded with shrubbery, backed by a cluster of wood-crowned hills, and commands a fine prospect, not only of the Saguenay, but also of a spacious bay, into which there empties a noble mountain stream, now known as Chicoutimi River. In the belfry of this venerable church hangs a clear-toned bell, with an inscription upon it which the learning of Canada (with all its learned and unnumbered priests) has not yet been able to translate or expound. But, great as is the mystery of this inscription, it is less mysterious to my mind than are the motives of the Romish Church in planting the cross in the remotest corners of the earth, as well as in the mightiest of cities.

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About ten miles south of Chicoutimi there recedes from the west bank of the Saguenay, to the distance of ten miles, a beautiful expanse of water called Grand Bay. The original name of this bay was "Ha, Ha," descriptive of the surprise which the French experienced when they first entered into it, supposing that it was the Saguenay, until their shallop grounded on the north-western shore. At the head thereof is another settlement, similar to Chicoutimi. Between these two places the Saguenay is rather shallow, (when compared with the remainder of its course,) and varies in width from two and a half to three miles. The tides of the ocean are observable as far north as Chicoutimi, and this entire section of the river is navigable for ships of

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the largest class.

That portion of the Saguenay extending from Grand Bay to the St. Lawrence, a distance of sixty miles, is greatly distinguished for its wild and picturesque scenery. I know not that I can better pourtray to my reader's mind the peculiarity of this river than by the following method: imagine for a moment an extensive country of rocky and thinly-clad mountains, suddenly separated by some convulsion of Nature so as to form an almost bottomless chasm, varying from one to two miles in width; and then imagine this chasm suddenly half-filled with water, and that the moss of centuries has softened the rugged walls on either side, and you will have a pretty accurate idea of the Saguenay.

The shores of this river are composed principally of granite, and every bend presents you with an imposing bluff, the majority of which are eight hundred feet high, and many of them upwards of fifteen hundred. And, generally speaking, these towering bulwarks are not content to loom perpendicularly into the air, but they must needs bend over as if to look at their own savage features reflected in the deep. Ay, and that word deep tells but the simple truth; for the flood that rolls beneath is black and cold as the bottomless pit. To speak without a figure, and from actual measurement, I can state that many portions of the Saguenay are one thousand feet deep, and the shallowest spots not much less than one hundred. In many places, too, the water is as deep as five feet from the rocky barriers as it is in the centre of the stream. The feelings which filled my breast, and the thoughts which oppressed my brain, as I paddled by these places in my canoe, were allied to those which almost overwhelmed me when I first looked upward from below the Fall, to the mighty flood of Niagara. Awful beyond

expression, I can assure you, is the sensation which one experiences in sailing along the Saguenay, to raise his eyes heavenward and behold hanging directly over his head a mass of granite, apparently ready to totter and fall, and weighing perhaps a million tons. Terrible and sublime, beyond the imagery of the most daring poet, are these cliffs; and, while they proclaim the omnipotent power of God, they at the same time whisper into the ear of man that he is but as the moth which flutters in the noontide air. And yet, is it not enough to fill the heart of man with holy pride and unbounded love, to remember that the soul within him will but have commenced its existence when all the mountains of the world shall have been consumed as a scroll?

It is to the Saguenay that I am indebted for one of the most imposing storm pictures that I ever witnessed. It had been a most oppressive day, and, as I was passing up the river at a late hour in the afternoon, a sudden gust of wind came rushing down the stream, causing my Indian companion to bow, as if in prayer, and then to urge our frail canoe towards a little rocky island, upon which we immediately landed.

Soon as we had surmounted our refuge, the sky was overcast with a pall of blackness, which completely enveloped the cliffs on either side, and gave the roaring waters a death-like hue. Then broke forth from above our heads the heavy roar of thunder, and, as it gradually increased in compass and became more threatening and impetuous, its volleys were answered by a thousand echoes, which seemed to have been startled from every crag in the wilderness, while flashes of the most vivid lightning were constantly illuminating the gloomy storm-made cavern which appeared before us. Down upon his knees again

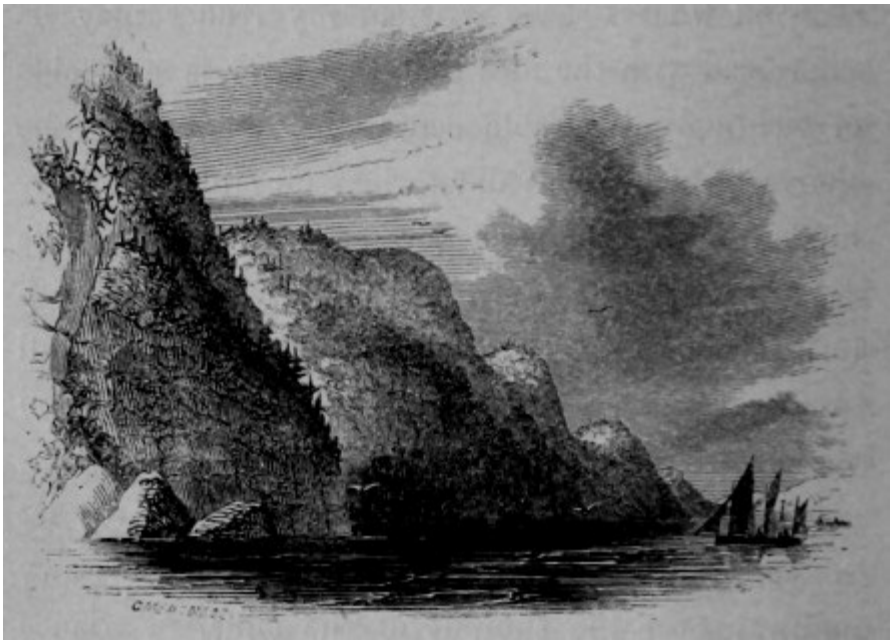
fell my poor Indian comrade, and, while I sat by his side, trembling with terror, the thought actually flew into my mind that I was on the point of passing into eternity.

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Soon, however, the wind ceased blowing, the thunder to roar, and the lightning to flash; and in less than one hour after its commencement, the storm had subsided, and that portion of the Saguenay was glowing beneath the crimson rays of the setting sun.

From what I have written, my reader may be impressed with the idea that this river is incapable of yielding pleasurable sensations. Sail along its shores on a pleasant day, when its cliffs are partly hidden in shadow, and covered with a gauze-like atmosphere, and they will fill your heart with images of beauty. Or, if you would enjoy a still greater variety, let your thoughts flow away upon the blue smoke which rises from an Indian encampment, hidden in a dreamy-looking cove; let your eye follow an eagle swooping along his airy pathway near the summit of the cliffs, or glance across the watery plain, and see the silver salmon leaping by hundreds into the air for their insect food. Here, too, you may always discover a number of seals, bobbing their heads out of water, as if watching your every movement; and, on the other hand, a drove of white porpoises, rolling their huge bodies along the waters, ever and anon spouting a shower of liquid diamonds into the air. O yes, manifold indeed, and beautiful beyond compare, are the charms of the Saguenay!

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CAPE TRINITY.

Although my description of this river has thus far been of a general character, I would not omit to mention, as perfect gems of scenery, Trinity Point, Eternity Cape, the Tableau, and la Tête du Boule. The peculiarities of these promontories are so well described by their very names, that I shall refrain from attempting a particular description of my own.

The wilderness through which this river runs is of such a character that its shores can never be greatly changed in their external appearance. Only a small proportion of its soil can ever be brought under cultivation; and, as its forests are a good deal stunted, its lumbering resources are far from being inexhaustible. The wealth which it contains is probably of a mineral character; and if the reports I hear are correct, it abounds in iron ore. That it would yield an abundance of fine marble, I am certain; for in passing up this stream, the observing

eye will frequently fall upon a broad vein of an article as pure as alabaster.

How is it, many people are led to inquire, that so little has been known of the Saguenay country until recently? This question is easily solved. It is a portion of that vast territory which has heretofore been under the partial jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company. I say partially, for the rights of that powerful monopoly, as I understand the matter, extended only to the protection and use of its wild animals; but it has endeavoured to convince the would-be settler that it was the sole proprietor of the immense domain, and that he had no right to live thereon. Its posts on the Saguenay and St. Lawrence, so far as collecting furs is concerned, are a dead letter, and the journeys of its distinguished Governor are hereafter to be confined to the extreme north.

The man who deserves the most credit for encroaching upon the so-called possessions of the Hudson's Bay Company, and proving to the world that its power is not without limit, is William Price, Esq., of Quebec. All the saw-mills situated on the Saguenay and the lower St. Lawrence, were established by him, and are now conducted at his expense. He gives employment to some two or three thousand men, and sends to England annually about one hundred ship-loads of lumber, in the shape of deals. He is a thorough-going business man, and, did I not know the fact to be otherwise, I should set him down (with regard to his enterprise) as a thorough native of the Union. Many of the ships alluded to ascend the Saguenay to obtain lumber, as far as Chicoutimi; and it struck me as singularly paradoxical to see ships winding up that river, whose legitimate home would seem to be the broad ocean. The current of the

Saguenay flows in some places at the rate of seven miles per hour; but when there is any wind at all, it blows heavily directly from the north or south, so that, with the assistance of the tide, the upward-bound ships or brigs, manage to get along without much difficulty. The only steam-boat which navigates this river is the Pocahontas, and is the property of Mr. Price. She is commanded by a gentleman who understands his business; and I can assure the lovers of scenery everywhere, that a sail up the Saguenay, in this steamer, would be an event they could not easily forget. For the benefit of summer tourists, I would here mention the fact, that for about three months in the year a Quebec steamer makes an occasional trip to the mouth of the Saguenay, by the way of the river Du Loup, which is on the Canadian route to Halifax.

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In speaking of the Saguenay, I must not omit to mention its original proprietors, a tribe of Indians who are known as the Mountaineers. Of course, it is the duty of my pen to record the fact, that where once flourished a large nation of brave and heroic warriors, there now exists a little band of about one hundred families. Judging from what I have heard and seen, the Mountaineers were once the very flower of this northern wilderness, even as the Chippeways were once the glory of the Lake Superior region. The Mountaineers of the present day are sufficiently educated to speak a smattering of French, but they know nothing of the true God, and are as poor in spirit, as they are indigent with regard to the necessaries of life. The men of this nation are rather short, but well-formed, and the women are beautiful. They are proud in spirit, intelligent, and kind-hearted; and many of them, it is pleasant to know, are no longer the victims of the baneful fire-water. For this blessing they are indebted to the Romish priesthood, which fact it gives

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me pleasure to record. The Mountaineers are a particularly honest people, and great friends to the stranger white-man. They are also distinguished for their expertness in hunting, and take pleasure in recording the exploits of their forefathers. And their language, according to a Catholic Missionary, Pierre de Roche, is one of the oldest and purest Indian languages on the continent. It abounds in Latin words, and is capable of being regularly constructed and translated. The qualities, in fine, which make the history of this people interesting are manifold, and it is sad to think of the rapidity with which they are withering away, even as the leaves of a premature autumn.

But it is time that I should give you a brief description of Tadousac, where I have been spending a few days, and whence I date my chapter. The meaning of that word is a French corruption of the Indian word Saguenay. It is situated directly at the mouth of the Saguenay, and commands a fine prospect of that river, as well as of the St. Lawrence, which is here nearly thirty miles in width. Immediately at the base of the hill upon which the hamlet stands, is a beautiful bay, hemmed in with mountains of solid rock. The place is composed of houses belonging to an Indian trading-post, and another dwelling occupied by a worthy Scotchman named Rivington, who is a pilot by profession. The door of my friend's cabin is always open to the admission of the tourist; and if others who may chance to stop here are treated as kindly as I was, they will be disposed to thank their stars. In front of the trading-post are planted a few cannon, and directly beyond them, at the present time, is a small Indian encampment.

In a rock-bound bay, about half a mile north of my temporary residence, is an extensive lumbering establishment, belonging to

William Price. This spot is the principal port of the Saguenay, and the one where belongs the Pocahontas steam-boat. About a dozen paces from the table where I am now writing, is the ruin of a Jesuit religious establishment, which is considered the great curiosity of this region. The appearance of the ruin is not imposing, as you can discover nothing but the foundations upon which the ancient edifice rested; but it is confidently affirmed, that upon this spot once stood the first stone and mortar building ever erected on the continent of North-America. And this statement I am not disposed to question, for, from the very centre of the ruin have grown a cluster of pine trees, which must have been exposed to the wintry blasts of at least two hundred years. The fate and the very names of those who first pitched their tents in this wilderness, and here erected an altar to the God of their fathers, are alike unknown. Who—who can tell what shall be on the morrow?

CHAPTER XIV.

The Salmon—Salmon Adventures.

Tadousac. June.

I intend to devote the present letter to the acknowledged king of all the finny tribes, the lithe, wild, and beautiful salmon. He pays an annual visit to all the tributaries of the St. Lawrence lying between Quebec and Bic Island, (where commences the Gulf of St. Lawrence), but he is most abundant on the north shore, and in those streams which are beyond the jurisdiction of civilization. He usually makes his first appearance about the twentieth of May, and continues in season for two months. Nearly all the streams of this region abound in waterfalls, but those are seldom found, which the salmon does not surmount in his “excelsior” pilgrimage; and the stories related of his leaps are truly wonderful. It is not often that he is found *man bound* at the head of the streams he may have ascended; but when thus found and captured, his flesh is white, skin black, and his form “long, lank, and lean as is the rebbid sea-sand.” His weight is commonly about fifteen pounds, but he is sometimes taken weighing full forty pounds. The salmon is an important article of export from this region, and is also extensively used by the Indians. The common mode for taking them is with a stationary net, which is set just on the margin of the river at low water. It is customary with the salmon to ascend the St. Lawrence as near the shore as possible, and their running time is when the tide is high; the consequence is, that they enter the net at one tide, and are taken out at another; and it is frequently the case, that upwards of three hundred are taken at one time.

The Indian mode for taking them is with the spear by torch-light. Two Indians generally enter a canoe, and while one paddles it noiselessly along, the other holds forth the light (which attracts the attention of the fish, and causes them to approach their enemy), and pierces them with the cruel spear. This mode of taking the salmon is to be deprecated, but the savage must live, and possesses no other means for catching them. It is but 189 seldom that the Indian takes more than a dozen during a single night, for he cannot afford to waste the bounties which he receives from Nature. For preserving the salmon, the Canadians have three modes: first, by putting them in salt for three days, and then smoking them; secondly, by regularly salting them down as you would mackerel; and, thirdly, by boiling, and then pickling them in vinegar. The Indians smoke them, but only to a limited extent.

I must now give you some account of my experience in the way of salmon-fishing with the fly, of which glorious sport I have recently had an abundance. If, however, I should give you a number of episodes, you will please to remember that “it is my way,” and that I deem it a privilege of the angler to be as wayward in his discourse as are the channels of his favourite mountain streams.

My first salmon expedition of the season was to the St. Margaret River. I had two companions with me; one an accomplished fly-fisher of Quebec, and the other the principal man of Tadousac, a lumber merchant. We went in a gig-boat belonging to the latter, and, having started at nine o’clock, we reached our place of destination by twelve. We found the river uncommonly 190 high, and a little rily. We made a desperate effort, however, and threw the line about three hours, capturing four

salmon, only one of which was it my privilege to take. He was a handsome fellow, weighing seventeen pounds, and in good condition; he afforded my companions a good deal of fun, and placed me in a peculiar situation. He had taken the hook when I was wading in swift water up to my middle, and as soon as he discovered his predicament, he made a sudden wheel and started down the stream. My rod bent nearly double, and I saw that I must give him all the line he wanted; and having only three hundred feet on my reel, I found it necessary to follow him with all speed. In doing so I lost my footing, and was swept by the current against a pile of logs; meantime, my reel was in the water and whizzing away at a tremendous rate. The log upon which I depended, happened to be in a balancing condition, and, when I attempted to surmount it, it plunged into the current and floated down the stream, having your humble servant astride of one end, and clinging to it with all his might. Onward went the salmon, the log, and the fisherman. Finally, the log found its way into an eddy of the river, and, while it was swinging about as if out of mere malice, I left it, and fortunately reached the shore. My life having been spared, I was more anxious than ever to take the life of the salmon which had caused the ducking, and so I held aloft my rod, and continued down the stream over an immense number of logs and rocks, which seemed to have been placed there for my especial annoyance. On coming in sight of my fish, I found him in still water, with his belly turned upward and completely drowned. I immediately drew him on a sand-bank near by, and, while engaged in the reasonable employment of drying my clothes, my brother fishermen came up to congratulate me upon my success, but laughing in the meantime most heartily. The lumber merchant said, that the log I had been riding belonged to him, and it was his intention to charge me one shilling for my passage from the

rift where I had hooked the salmon to the spot where I had landed him, which was in full view of the Saguenay; and my Quebec friend remarked, that he knew the people of Yankee-land had a queer way of doing things, but he was not acquainted with their peculiar mode of taking salmon. As may be readily imagined, we retraced our steps back to the log shantee where we had stopped, and, having carefully stowed away our salmon, we laid aside our fishing tackle, and made arrangements for a little sport of another kind. 192

The hamlet of St. Margaret, where we spent the night, contains some eight or ten log shantees, which are occupied by about twenty families, composed of Canadians, Indians, and half-breeds. They obtain their living by “driving” logs, and are as happy as they are ignorant. Anxious to see what we could of society among this people, we sent forth a manifesto calling upon the citizens generally to attend a dance at the cabin of a certain man, whom we had engaged to give the party at our expense. Punctual to the appointed hour the assembly came together. Many of the men did not take the trouble even to wash their hands, or put on a coat before coming to the party; but the women were neatly dressed, with blue and scarlet petticoats, over which were displayed night-gowns of white cotton. The fiddler was an Indian, and the dancing-hall (some twelve feet square) was lighted with a wooden lamp, supplied with seal-oil. The dance was without any particular method, and when a gentleman wished to trip the light fantastic toe, he only had to station himself on the floor, when one of his friends would select his partner, and lead her up for his acceptance. The consequence was, that if a man wished to dance with any particular lady, he was obliged to make a previous arrangement with his leading-up friend. The fiddler not only furnished all the 193

music, but also performed a goodly portion of the dancing—fiddling and dancing at the same time. The supper was laid on the table at ten o'clock, and consisted principally of dried beaver-tail and cariboo meat, fried and boiled salmon, (which was cooked out of doors near the entrance to the cabin), rye-bread, maple molasses, and tea.

The party broke up at twelve o'clock; when we retired to the cabin where we had secured lodgings, and it is an actual fact, that our sleeping-room on that night was occupied not only by ourselves, but by two women, one man, and four children, (divided into three beds), all members of the same family, with whom we had succeeded in obtaining *accommodations*. On the following morning we rose at an early hour, and again tried our luck at salmon-fishing, but only killed a few trout; whereupon we boarded our gig and started down the romantic Saguenay, telling stories and singing songs.

Another river in this region which affords good salmon fishing is the Esquemain. It empties itself into the St. Lawrence about twenty miles east of the Saguenay. It is a cold, clear, and rapid stream, abounding in rapids and deep pools. At its mouth is situated a saw-mill, but its water-works are so managed as not to interfere with the salmon. The fish of this stream ascend to a great distance, and, though rather small, are exceedingly abundant.

The best fishing in the river is at the foot of a waterfall, which forms a sheet of foam, about one mile above the mouth. My Quebec friend accompanied me to this place, and, though we only threw the fly about six hours (three in the evening and three in the morning), yet we killed thirteen salmon, without losing a

single line, and with the loss of only three flies.

Owing to the bushy shores of the stream, we were compelled to fish standing upon boulders situated in its centre; and whenever we hooked a fish, there was no alternative but to plunge into the current and trust to fortune. For some unaccountable reason (of course it could not have been our fault), we lost more than half of those we hooked; but it was worth a moderate fortune to see the magnificent leaps which the fish performed, not only when they took the fly, but when they attempted to escape. There was not one individual that did not give us a race of at least half a mile. The largest taken during this expedition was killed 195 by my companion, and caused more trouble than all his other prizes. Not only did this fellow attempt to clear himself by stemming the foam of a rapid, and rubbing his nose against a rock to break the hook, but he also swept himself completely round a large boulder, poked his head into a net, and ran with the speed of lightning to the extreme end of his line. It took my friend forty minutes to land this salmon; and I can assure you that he was particularly pleased when he found that his fish weighed one pound more than the largest I had taken. The fact was, our rods were almost precisely alike in length and strength; and, as two countries were represented in our persons, the strife between us was desperate. I will acknowledge that the Canada gentleman took the largest salmon; but the States' angler took them in the greatest number.

Notwithstanding all the fine sport that we enjoyed on the Esquemain, I am compelled to state that it was more than counterbalanced by the suffering that we endured from the black fly and musquito. The black fly is about half as large as the common house fly, and, though it bites you only in the day-time,

they are as abundant in the air as the sand upon the sea-shore, and venomous to an uncommon degree. The musquito of this region is an uncommonly gaunt, long-legged, and hungry creature, and his howl is peculiarly horrible.

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We had been almost devoured by the black flies during the afternoon, and as soon as darkness came, we secured a couple of beds in a Frenchman's house, and as we tumbled in, congratulated ourselves upon a little comfortable repose. It was an exceedingly sultry night, and, though we were both in a complete fever from the fly-poison circulating in our veins, the heat excelled the fever, and our bodies were literally in a melting condition. We endeavoured to find relief by lying on the bare floor, with no covering but a single sheet; and this arrangement might have answered, had it not been for the flood of mosquitoes which poured into the room, as one of us happened to open a window to obtain fresh air. Every spot on our bodies, which the flies had left untouched, was immediately settled upon by these devils in miniature. They pierced the very sheets that covered us, and sucked away at our blood without any mercy.

Unwilling to depart this life without one effort more to save it, we then dressed ourselves and sauntered into the open air. We made our way towards a pile of lumber near the saw-mill, and, without a particle of covering, endeavoured to obtain a little sleep; but the insect hounds soon found us out, and we bolted for another place. Our course now lay towards the rude bridge which spans the Esquemain, just above the mill. Our intentions at the time, though not uttered aloud, I verily believe were of a fearful character. On reaching the bridge, however, a refreshing breeze sprang up, and we enjoyed a brief respite

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from our savage enemies.

We now congratulated each other on our good fortune, and had just resolved to be happy, when we discovered a number of Indians in the river spearing salmon by torch-light; and as it was after midnight, and the heathen were spearing on our fishing-ground, we mournfully concluded that our morning sport was at an end. But, while in the very midst of this agreeable mood of mind, a lot of skylarking mosquitoes discovered our retreat, and we were again besieged. We now endeavoured to find relief on board the boat which had brought us from the Saguenay, and here it was that we spent the two last hours of that most miserable night.

Though not exactly in a fitting condition to throw the fly with any degree of comfort, we made an effort after salmon in the morning, and succeeded in killing a portion of the thirteen already mentioned. That we enjoyed the good breakfast which we had prepared for our especial benefit, and that we departed from Esquemain as soon as possible, are facts which I consider self-evident.

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The mouth of the Saguenay, as I have before remarked, is completely hemmed in with barriers of solid rock; and when the tide is flowing in, from one of these points, first-rate salmon fishing may occasionally be enjoyed. I have frequently had the pleasure of throwing the fly on the point in question, and on one occasion was so carried away with the sport that I took no notice of the rising tide. It was near the sunset hour, and on preparing for my departure home, I discovered that I was completely surrounded with water, and that my situation was momentarily becoming more dangerous. The water was bitter

cold and turbulent, and the channel which separated me from the main shore was upwards of a hundred yards wide. I was more than half a mile from the nearest dwelling, and could not see a single sail on the Saguenay, or the still broader St. Lawrence, excepting a solitary ship, which was ten leagues away. My predicament, I assure you, was not to be envied. I could not entertain the idea that I should lose my life; and, though I felt myself to be in danger, my sensations were supremely ridiculous. But something, I was persuaded, must be done, and that immediately; and so I commenced

throwing off my clothes for a final effort to save my life. I had stripped off every thing but shirt and pantaloons, and to a flock of crows which were cawing above my head I must have presented an interesting picture. I thought of the famous swimming adventures of Leander and Lord Byron, and also of the inconveniences of being drowned (as Charles Lamb did of being hanged); but just as I was about to make the important plunge, an Indian in his canoe came gliding around a neighbouring point, and I was rescued, together with one salmon and some dozen pounds of trout.

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But I have not finished my story yet. On the night following this incident, I retired to bed in rather a sober mood, for I could not banish the recollection of my narrow escape from a ducking, if not from a watery grave. The consequence was, that in my dreams I underwent ten times as much mental suffering as I had actually endured. I dreamed that in scaling the rocks which lead to the point alluded to, I lost my footing, and fell into the water. While in this condition, drinking more salt water than I wanted, floundering about like a sick porpoise, gasping for breath, and uttering a most doleful moan, I was suddenly awakened, and found my good landlord at my side, tapping me on the

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shoulder, for the purpose of summoning me—from the back of the nightmare I had been riding.

As I may not have another opportunity of alluding to this portion of the Saguenay, and to the rocky point already alluded to, I must give my reader another and a remarkable incident connected with them. Some years ago, the Hudson's Bay Company had in its employ as clerk, at Tadousac, an intelligent and amiable young man, whose name was McCray. For some unaccountable reason he became deranged; and on one occasion, a cold and stormy winter night, he took it into his head to cross the Saguenay upon the floating ice, which was running at the time. When first discovered, he was about half-way across the stream, and making frightful leaps of ten and fifteen feet from one block of ice to another. His friends followed in close pursuit, with a boat, as soon as possible; but on reaching the opposite shore, the unhappy man was not to be found. On the day following, however, some people who were hunting for him in the woods, discovered him perched in a tree, almost frozen to death, and senseless as a clod of the valley. He was taken home, the circulation of his blood restored, and he is now an inmate of the Quebec Lunatic Asylum. The mind of this worthy man was thought to be of a high order; and it is certain that he possessed an extensive knowledge of botany and geology. From remarks that escaped him subsequently to the wonderful feat he performed, it is supposed that, at the time of starting across the river, he was thinking of a particular book which he wished to obtain, and had been told could be purchased in Quebec, towards which place (unattainable by land) he had set out. It is worthy of record, that poor McCray is the only man who ever crossed the deep and angry Saguenay on the ice, as it is never solidly frozen; and it is almost certain, that the feat he

performed, can never be again repeated.

But to return to my piscatorial remarks. Next to the salmon, the finest sporting fish of this region is the trout. Of these I have seen two species, the salmon and the common trout. Of the former I believe there is but one variety; but that is an exceedingly fine fish for sport or the table, and is found in the lower tributaries of the St. Lawrence, from five to fifteen pounds. They are taken chiefly in the salt water, and possess a flavour which the trout of our Western lakes do not. Of the common trout, I have seen at least six varieties, differing, however, only in colour; for some are almost entirely white, others brown, some blue, some green, some black, and others yellow. These are taken everywhere in the St.

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Lawrence, and in all its tributaries. Those of the Saguenay are the largest, most abundant, and of the rarest quality. Upon the whole, I am inclined to set this river down as affording the finest trout-fishing that I have ever enjoyed, not even excepting that which I have experienced at the Falls of St. Mary, in Michigan. Almost every bay or cove in the Saguenay is crowded with trout; and, generally speaking, the rocks upon which you have to stand afford an abundance of room to swing and drop the fly. In some of the coves alluded to, I have frequently taken a dozen two-pound trout during the single hour before sunset.

Trout fishing, in this region, possesses a charm which the angler seldom experiences in the rivers and lakes of the United States, which consists in his uncertainty as to the character of his prize before he has landed him; for it may be a common or salmon trout, or a regular built salmon, as these fish all swim in the same water. It is reported of a celebrated angler of Quebec, that

he once spent a week on the Esquemain, and captured within that time seventy salmon, and upwards of a hundred trout. This is a very strange story, but I have faith enough to believe it true.

And now for a few remarks upon the fish of the St.

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Lawrence generally. Cod are taken to a very great extent, and constitute an important article of commerce. Herring and mackerel are abundant, also the hallibut and sardine. Shad are also taken, but not in sufficient quantities to export. The lobster, flounder, and oyster are also found in this river; and, with a few unimportant exceptions, these are the only fish that flourish in this portion of the great river. The sea-bass, the striped-bass, the blue-fish, and the black-fish, for which I should suppose these waters perfectly adapted, are entirely unknown.

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CHAPTER XV.

Seal-hunting on the St. Lawrence—The white Porpoise.

Tadousac. July.

Before breakfast, this morning, I had the pleasure of taking fifteen common trout, and the remainder of the day I devoted to seal-hunting. This animal is found in great abundance in the St. Lawrence, and by the Indians and a few white people is extensively hunted. There are several varieties found in these waters; and the usual market price for the oil and skin, is five dollars. They vary in size from four to eight feet, and are said to be good eating. Many people make them a principal article of food; and while the Indians use their skins for many purposes, they also light their cabins with the oil. In sailing on the river, they meet you at every turn; and when I first saw one, I thought that I was looking upon a drowning man; for they only raise their heads out of the water, and thus sustain themselves with their feet, fins, pads, flippers, or whatever you may call them. They live upon fish, and in many of their habits closely resemble the otter. Their paws have five claws, joined together with a thick skin; they somewhat resemble the dog, and have a bearded snout, like a cat, large bright eyes, and long sharp teeth. They are a noisy animal, and when a number of them are sunning themselves upon the sand, the screams they utter are doleful in the extreme, somewhat resembling the cry of children.

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My first seal expedition was performed in company with two professional hunters. We started from shore with a yawl and a canoe, and made our course for a certain spot in the St.

Lawrence, where the waters of the Saguenay and the flood tide came together, and caused a terrible commotion. The canoe led the way, occupied by one man, who was supplied with a harpoon and a long line; while the other hunter and myself came up in the rear, for the purpose of rescuing the harpooner in case an accident should happen, and also for the purpose of shipping the plunder. The seal seems to delight in frequenting the deepest water and more turbulent whirlpools; and the object of using a canoe, is to steal upon him in the most successful manner.

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We had not floated about the eddy more than twenty minutes, before a large black animal made his appearance, about ten feet from the canoe; but, just as he was on the point of diving, the hunter threw his harpoon, and gave him the line, to which was attached a buoy. The poor creature floundered about at a great rate, dived as far as he could towards the bottom, and then leaped entirely out of the water; but the cruel spear would not loosen its hold. Finally, after making every effort to escape, and tinging the surrounding water with a crimson hue, he gasped for breath a few times, and sunk to the end of the rope, quite dead. We then pulled him to the side of the boat, and with a gaff-hook secured him therein, and the hunt was renewed. In this manner did my companions capture no less than three seals, before the hour of noon.

On one occasion, I noticed a large number of seals, sunning themselves upon a certain sandy point; and as I felt an “itching palm” to obtain, with my own hands, the material for a winter cap, I spent the afternoon in the enjoyment of a “shooting frolic, all alone.” I borrowed a rifle of one of my friends, and having passed over to the sandy point in a canoe, I secreted myself in the midst of some rocks, and awaited the game. I had not remained quiet but a short time before a huge black seal

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made his appearance, scrambling up the beach, where he kept a sharp look-out for anything that might do him harm. I admired the apparent intelligence of the creature, as he dragged his clumsy and legless body along the ground, and almost regretted that it was doomed to die. True to my ridiculous nature, however, I finally determined to leave him unmolested for the present, hoping that he would soon be accompanied by one of his fellow seals, and that I should have a chance of killing a pair. I was not disappointed; and you will, therefore, please to consider me in full view of one of the finest marks imaginable, and in the attitude of firing. Crack went the rifle; but my shot only had the effect of temporarily rousing the animals; and I proceeded to reload my gun, wondering at the cause of my missing, and feeling somewhat dissatisfied with matters and things in general. Again was it my privilege to fire, and I saw a stick fly into the air, about thirty feet to the left of my game. The animals were, of course, not at all injured, but just enough frightened to turn their faces towards the water, into which they shortly plunged, and entirely disappeared. I returned to my lodgings, honestly told my story, and was laughed at for my pains and bad luck. It so happened, however, that the owner of the gun imagined that something might be the matter with the thing; and on examining it, he found that one of the sights had been accidentally knocked from its original position, which circumstance had been the “cause of my anguish,” and, though it restored to me my good name as a marksman, it afforded me but little satisfaction.

But, that my chapter about seals may be worth sealing, I will give you the history of an incident, which illustrates the sagacity of an Indian in killing his game. A Mik-mak hunter, with his family, had reached the shore of the St. Lawrence, hungry and

short of ammunition. On a large sand-bank which lay before him, at a time when the tide was low, he discovered an immense number of seals. He waited for the tide to flow and again to ebb, and as soon as the sand appeared above the water, he hastened to the dry point, in his canoe, carrying only a hatchet as a weapon. On this spot he immediately dug a hole, into which he crept, and covered himself with a blanket. He then commenced uttering a cry, in imitation of the seal, and in a short time had collected about him a very large number of those animals. He waited patiently for the tide to retire so far that the animals would have to travel at least a mile by land before reaching the water; and, when the wished-for moment arrived, he suddenly fell upon the affrighted multitude, and with his tomahawk, succeeded in slaughtering upwards of one hundred. To many this may appear to be an improbable story; but when it is remembered that this amphibious animal is an exceedingly slow land traveller, it will be readily believed. The manner in which our hunter managed to save his game, was to tie them together with bark, and when the tide rose, tow them to the main shore.

Since I have brought my reader upon the waters of the St. Lawrence, I will not permit him to go ashore until I have given him an account of another inhabitant of the deep which is found in very great abundance, not only in this river, but also in the Saguenay. I allude to the white porpoise. The shape of this creature is similar to that of the whale, though of a pure white colour, and usually only about fifteen feet in length. They are exceedingly fat, and yield an oil of the best quality; while the skin is capable of being turned into durable leather. They are extensively used as an article of food: the fins and tail when pickled are considered a delicacy; and their value is about

twenty-five dollars a piece. They are far from being a shy fish; and, when sailing about your vessel in large numbers, as is often the case, they present a beautiful and unique appearance. 210

For taking this fish the people of this region have two methods. The first is to use a boat with a white bottom, behind which the fisherman tows a small wooden porpoise, which is painted a dark slate-colour, in imitation of the young of the species. With these lures the porpoise is often brought into the immediate vicinity of the harpoon, which is invariably thrown with fatal precision. In this manner an expert man will often take three or four fine prizes in a day.

Another mode for taking these creatures is by fencing them in. It appears that it is customary for this fish to wander over the sand-bars, at high-water, for the purpose of feeding. Profiting by this knowledge, the fishermen enclose one of the sandy reefs with poles set about three feet apart, and sometimes covering a square mile. They leave an appropriate opening for the porpoises, which are sure to enter at high-water, and, owing to their timidity, they are kept confined by the slender barrier until the tide ebbs, when they are destroyed in great numbers with very little trouble. It is reported that a party of fishermen, some ninety miles above the Saguenay, once took one hundred and forty porpoises at one tide; and it is also asserted, 211 that in dividing the spoil the fishermen had a very bitter quarrel—since which time, as the story goes, not a single porpoise has ever been taken on the shoal in question.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Esquimaux Indians of Labrador.

Tadousac. July.

The vast region of country lying on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and extending to the eastward of the Saguenay as far as Newfoundland, is generally known under the name of Labrador. It is an exceedingly wild and desolate region, and, excepting an occasional fishing hamlet or a missionary station belonging to the worthy Moravians, its only inhabitants are Indians. Of these the more famous tribes are the Red Indians, (now almost extinct,) the Hunting Indians, the Mik-maks, and the Esquimaux. The latter nation is by far the most numerous, and it is said that their sway extends even to the coasts of Hudson's Bay. They are, at the same time, the wildest and most
rude inhabitants of this wilderness, and in appearance, as
well as manners and customs, closely resemble the inhabitants
of Greenland.

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During one of my nautical expeditions down the St. Lawrence, I chanced to be wind-bound for a couple of days at the mouth of a river on the north shore, where I found a small encampment of Esquimaux Indians. The principal man of the party was exceedingly aged, and the only one who could convey his thoughts in any other language than his own. He had mingled much with the French fur-traders of the north, and the French fishermen of the east, and possessed a smattering of their tongue. Seated by the side of this good old man in his lodge, with a moose-skin for my seat, a pack of miscellaneous furs to lean

against, and a rude seal-oil torch suspended over my head, I spent many hours of one long-to-be-remembered night in questioning him about his people. The substance of the information I then collected it is now my purpose to record;— but it should be remembered that I speak of the nation at large, and not of any particular tribe.

According to my informant, the extent of the Esquimaux nation is unknown, for they consider themselves as numerous as the waves of the sea. Much has been done to give them an education, and, though missionaries of the Cross have dwelt among them for about a century, yet the majority of this people are at the present time in heathen darkness. The men are chiefly employed in hunting and fishing, and the domestic labour is all performed by the women. Their clothes are made in the rudest manner imaginable, and generally of the coarser skins which they secure in hunting. They believe in a Supreme Being, who has a dwelling-place in the earth, the air, and the ocean, and who is both good and evil; and they also believe in the immortality of the soul, which they describe as similar to air, which they cannot feel. Their principal men are magicians and conjurors, distinguished, as I infer with good reason, for their profligacy. Whenever a man is sick, they attribute the cause to the alleged fact that his soul has departed from his body, and he is looked upon with contempt and pity. The first man who came into the world sprang from the bosom of a beautiful valley; in this valley he spent his infancy and childhood, feeding upon berries; and having on a certain occasion picked up a flower which drooped over one of his accustomed paths, it immediately became changed into a girl with flowing hair, who became his playmate, and afterwards his wife, and was the mother of all living. They believe in a heaven and a hell, and consider

that the road to the former is rugged and rocky, and that to the latter level and covered with grass. Their ideas of astronomy are peculiar, for they consider the sun, moon, and stars as so many of their ancestors, who have, for a great variety of reasons, been lifted to the sky and become celestial bodies. In accounting for the two former, they relate that there was once a superb festival given by the Esquimaux in a glorious snow-palace of the north, where were assembled all the young men and maidens of the land. Among them was a remarkably brave youth, who was in love with an exceedingly beautiful girl. She, however, did not reciprocate this attachment, and endeavoured by all the means in her power to escape from his caresses. To accomplish this end, she called upon the Great Spirit to give her a pair of wings; and, having received them, she flew into the air and became the moon. The youth also endeavoured to obtain a pair of wings, and, after many months, finally succeeded; and, on ascending to the sky, he became the sun. The moon, they say, has a dwelling-place in the west, and the sun another in the far east. They account for thunder and lightning by giving the story of two women who lived together in a wigwam, and on one occasion had a most furious battle. During the affray the cabin tumbled in upon them, causing a tremendous noise, while the women were so angry that their eyes flashed fire.

Rain, they say, comes from a river in the sky, which, from the great number of people who sometimes bathe in it, overflows its banks, and thus comes to the earth in showers.

When one of their friends has departed this life, they take all his property and scatter it upon the ground, outside of his cabin, to be purified by the air; but then in the evening they collect it together, and bury it by the side of his grave. They think it wrong for the men to mourn for their friends, and consider themselves

defiled if they happen to touch the body of the deceased; and the individual who usually performs the office of undertaker is considered unclean for many days after fulfilling his duty. The women do all the wailing and weeping; and during their mourning season, which corresponds with the fame of the deceased, they abstain from food, wear their hair in great disorder, and refrain from every ablution. When a friendless man dies, his body is left upon the hills to decay, as if he had been a beast. When their children die, they bury the body of a dead dog in the same grave, that the child may have a guide in his pathway to an unknown land, to which they suppose all children go.

Polygamy, as such, among the Esquimaux is practised only to a limited extent; but married men and women are not over-scrupulous in their love affairs. Unmarried women, however, observe the rules of modesty with peculiar care; and the maiden who suffers herself to be betrayed is looked upon with infamy. When a young man wishes to marry, he first settles the matter with his intended, and then, having asked and obtained her father's permission, he sends two old women to bring the lady to his lodge, and they are considered one. The Esquimaux mother is fond of her children, and never chastises them for any offence. Children are taught to be dutiful to their parents, and until they marry they always continue under the paternal roof.

The amusements of the Esquimaux do not differ materially from those of the Indian tribes generally. They are fond of dancing, playing ball, and a species of dice game; while the women know of no recreation but that of dancing and singing.

And thus ends my mite of information respecting one of the most extensive aboriginal nations of the far north.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Habitans of Canada.

River du Loup. July.

Since my last chapter, written on the banks of the Saguenay, I have completed my pilgrimage through Lower Canada, but before leaving the province, I will give you the result of my observations respecting some of its people. These are divided into three classes—the descendants of the French colonists, (commonly called “Habitans,”) the British settlers, and the Indian tribes.

The Habitans, of whom I am now to speak, are the most numerous, and so peculiar in their appearance and manners as to attract the particular attention of travellers. The men are usually tall and slender, of sinewy build, and with a dark brown complexion; the girls are black-eyed, and disposed to be beautiful; while the women are always dumpy, but good-looking. Their dress is similar to that of the French peasantry; the men wear the old-fashioned *capote* on their heads, every variety of fantastic caps and hats, and on their feet a moccassin made of cow-hide; the women wear jackets or mantelets, which are made of bright colours, and on their heads either a cap or a straw hat, made in the gipsy fashion. Occasionally they make an effort to imitate the English in their dress, and at such times invariably appear ridiculous.

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As a class, they are devoted principally to agriculture; but as their opportunities for obtaining instruction are exceedingly

limited, their knowledge of the art of husbandry is precisely what it was one hundred years ago. They seem to be entirely destitute of enterprise, and tread in the beaten steps of their fathers. They who live in the vicinity of Montreal and Quebec, generally supply those markets with vegetables; but those who reside in the more obscure parts, seem to be quite satisfied if they can only manage to raise enough off of their farms for the purpose of carrying them through the year. They are partial to rye bread, and never consider it in a cooking condition until it has been soured by age; and their standard dish, which they make use of on all occasions, is a plain pea-soup. The consequence is, that the pea is extensively cultivated.

You seldom find a farmer who is so poor as not to be able to sell from five to fifty bushels of wheat, and this article he appropriates to the same uses that most people do their money. Their plough is distinguished for its rudeness, and their farming implements generally would not be creditable even to a barbarous people. If an individual happens to have a stony field, the idea does not enter his head that he might build a fence with those very stones, and the consequence is, that he piles them in one immense heap in the centre of the field, and draws his rails a distance of perhaps two miles. But with all their ignorance of agriculture, the Habitans are sufficiently careful to make their little farms yield them all the necessaries they require, particularly their clothing and shoes, their candles, soap, and sugar.

There are but few professional mechanics among them, and the dwelling of the peasant is almost invariably the production of his own individual labour. Their houses are distinguished for pictorial beauty, always one story high, and generally neatly

whitewashed. Their cattle are small, and, owing to their neglect in feeding and protecting them, are exceedingly poor. Their horses are nothing but ponies, but distinguished for their toughness. The Habitans are partial to the luxury of riding, and their common vehicle is a rough two-wheeled cart, and occasionally a calash.

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The turn-out which I employed for travelling in the settled parts of Canada was a fair specimen of the class: the cost of the horse (four feet and a half high) was twenty dollars, and the cart (made entirely of wood) was four dollars. My coachman was a Habitan, and, in driving over a hilly road on a certain day, I had a fine opportunity of studying the conflicting traits of character which distinguish the race.

Whenever he wanted his horse to go fast, he pulled the reins with all his might, and continued to utter a succession of horrible yells. He invariably ran his animal up the hills, and deliberately walked him down. When angry at his unoffending beast, he showered upon his head a variety of oaths, which might be translated as follows: “infernal hog!” “black toad!” and “hellish dog!” and yet, when the animal was about to drop to the ground from fatigue and heat, he would caress him, and do every thing in his power to restore the animal and ease his own conscience.

I first employed this man to bring me to this place, and said nothing about continuing my journey. On ascertaining, however, that I was bound further down the St. Lawrence, he volunteered his services, and I employed him, although he had informed his wife that he would positively return on the night of the day he left her. I retained him in my

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employ for two days, and was particularly struck with the anxiety he manifested concerning the disappointment of his wife. He alluded to the impropriety of his conduct at least a dozen times, and usually added: "But you give me plenty of money, (it was only six dollars for taking me forty miles,) and I will buy something pretty for my wife, which will make her very glad—I guess she won't be sorry." I asked him what it was that he intended to purchase, and his answer was, "some riband, a pair of scissors, with some needles, and a calico dress." Who can deny that it is not pleasant to study the sunshine of the human heart, "by which we live?"

The Habitans profess the Roman Catholic religion with much zeal. Among them I believe may be found many worthy Christians; but they manifest their religious devotion in many peculiar ways. They are fond of social intercourse, and spend a great portion of their time in visiting each other. They reluctantly establish themselves beyond the sound of a chapel bell, and I positively believe that they spend more than half of their time in performing mass and in horse-racing.

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The Sabbath is their great holiday, and always decidedly the noisiest day of the week. Their general deportment, however, is inoffensive, and often highly praiseworthy. They are seldom guilty of committing atrocious crimes, and do not often engage in personal conflicts, which are so prevalent in the United States. They treat all men with kindness, and in their language and manners are remarkably polite. The little girl, playing with her doll in her father's door, would think her conduct highly improper should she omit to drop you a courtesy as you passed along; and even the rude boy, when playing ball or driving his team, invariably takes off his hat to salute the traveller.

The Habitans are particularly fond of the river St. Lawrence, and their settlements extend from Montreal about two hundred miles with the river on the north shore, and perhaps three hundred and fifty miles on the southern shore. Their principal roads run parallel with the river, are about half a mile apart, and generally completely lined with rural dwellings.

The political opinions of the Habitans are extremely liberal, and not much in accordance with the spirit of Canadian institutions. They hate England by nature and the advice of their priesthood, and scruple not to declare themselves actually in love with what they call the American Government. They complain that Englishmen treat them as if they were slaves, while the people of the United States always hail them as brothers. They are an unlettered race, but believe that their condition would be much happier were they the subjects of a President instead of a Queen. That is a matter I consider questionable.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Grand Portage into New Brunswick—Lake Timiscouta—
The Madawaska River.

On the Madawaska. July.

The traveller, who would go from Quebec to Halifax by the recently established Government route, will have to take a steamer for one hundred and twenty miles down the great river, and cross the Grand Portage road which commences at River Du Loup, and extends to Lake Timiscouta, a distance of thirty-six miles.

With the village of Du Loup I was well pleased. It contains about twelve hundred inhabitants, and a more general mixture of English, Scotch, and French than is usually found in the smaller towns of Canada. The place contains an Episcopal Church, which must be looked upon as a curiosity in this Roman Catholic country, for it is the only one, I believe, found eastward of Quebec. The situation of the village is romantic to an uncommon degree. It commands an extensive prospect of the St. Lawrence, which is here upwards of twenty miles wide, and bounded on the opposite shore by a multitude of ragged mountains. The river is studded with islands, and ships are constantly passing hither and thither over the broad expanse, and when, from their great distance, all these objects are constantly enveloped in a gauze-like atmosphere, there is a magic influence in the scenery. The principal attraction is a waterfall, about a mile in the rear of the village. At this point, the waters of the rapid and beautiful Du Loup dance joyously over a rocky bed,

until they reach a picturesque precipice of perhaps eighty or a hundred feet, over which they dash in a sheet of foam, and, after forming an extensive and shadowy pool, glide onward through a pleasant meadow, until they mingle with the waters of the St Lawrence.

But as I intend to take you over the Grand Portage, it is time that we should be off. The first ten miles of this road are dotted with the box-looking houses of the Canadian peasantry; but the rest of the route leads you up mountains and down valleys, which are all as wild and desolate as when first created. The principal trees of the forest are pine, spruce and hemlock, and the foundation of the country seems to be granite. This region 227 is watered by many sparkling streams, which contain trout in great abundance. The only curiosity on the road is of a geological character, and struck me as something remarkable. Crossing the road, and running in a northerly direction, and extending to the width of about two miles, is a singular bed of granite boulders. The rocks are of every size and form, and while from a portion of them rises a scanty vegetation, other portions are destitute of even the common moss. In looking upon this region, the idea struck me that I was passing through the bed of what was once a mighty river, but whose fountains had become for ever dry. This is only one, however, of the unnumbered wonders of the world, which are constantly appearing to puzzle the philosophy of man.

In passing over the Grand Portage, the traveller has to resort to a conveyance which presents a striking contrast with the usual national works of her Ladyship, the Queen. It is the same establishment which conveys the Royal Mail from Quebec to Halifax, and consists of a common Canadian cart, a miserable

Canadian pony, and a yet more miserable Canadian driver. Such is “the way they order things in Canada,” which, I fancy, is not exactly the way they do in France. The Grand Portage Road itself is all that one could desire, and as there is a good deal of summer and winter travelling upon it, it is surprising that the Government cannot afford a more comfortable conveyance.

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The eastern termination of the Grand Portage road, is at Lake Timiscouta, where is situated a pleasant hamlet of Canadians, and a picketed fort, which is now abandoned. The views from this spot are unique and exceedingly beautiful, particularly a western view of the lake, when glowing beneath the rays of the setting sun. The Indian word, Timiscouta, signifies the winding water, and accurately describes the lake, which has a serpentine course, twenty-four miles long, and from two to three wide. Excepting the cluster of houses already mentioned, there is not a single cabin on the whole lake; and the surrounding mountains, which are, perhaps, a thousand feet high, are the home of solitude and silence. The only vessels which navigate this lake are Indian canoes, paddled by Canadians. Not only does the isolated settler depend upon them for the transportation of his provisions, but even the English nobleman, when travelling in this region, finds it necessary to sit like a tailor in their straw-covered bottoms.

The only outlet to Lake Timiscouta, is the Madawaska River, which is but a contraction of the same water, but reduced to the width of a stone's throw, and leading to the St. John's, a distance of some forty miles. The meaning of Madawaska, as I am informed, is, *never frozen*; and the river obtained this name from the fact that certain portions, on account

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of the current, are never ice-bound. The scenery of the river is precisely similar to that of its parent lake, only that it is occasionally a little cultivated. The waters of both are clear, but not very deep or cold. They abound with fish, of which the common trout, the perch, and pickerel, (not pike), are the more valuable varieties.

The manner in which I sailed through Timiscouta and Madawaska, was exceedingly pleasant, if not peculiar and ridiculous. My canoe was manned by a couple of barbarous Canadians; and while they occupied the extreme stern and bow, I was allowed the "largest liberty" in the body thereof. It was an exceedingly hot day when I passed through; and having stripped myself of nearly all my clothing, I rolled about at my own sweet will, not only for the purpose of keeping cool, but that I might do a good business in the way of killing time. At one moment I was dipping my feet and hands in the water, "humming a lightsome tune of yore," and anon sketching the portrait of a mountain or a group of trees. Now I lay flat upon my back; and while I watched the fantastic movements of the clouds, as they crossed the blue of heaven, I attended to the comforts of the inner man, by sucking maple sugar. Now I called upon the boat-men to sing me a song: and while they complied with my request, I fixed myself in the poetical attitude of a Turk, and smoked a cigar. At one time we halted at a mountain spring, to obtain a refreshing drink; and at another, the men pulled up to some rocky point, that I might have the pleasure of throwing the fly. Thus "pleasantly the days of Thalaba went by."

My voyage down the Madawaska was not without a characteristic incident. There was a fleet of canoes descending at the same time; some of them laden with women and babies,

and some with furs, tin kettles, and the knapsacks of home-bound lumbermen. Two of the canoes were managed by a Canadian and a Scotchman, who seemed to cherish a deep-rooted passion for racing. They paddled a number of heats; and as they were alternately beaten, they both finally became angry, and began to bet extravagantly. The conclusion of the whole matter was, that they went ashore on a bushy point, among the mountains, and settled their difficulty by a “private fight.” They fought like brave men, “long and well;” and by the time one had a tooth knocked out of his head, and the other had nearly lost an eye, they separated, and quietly resumed their way. These were the only wild animals that I saw in the Madawaska wilderness.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Acadians.

Mouth of the Madawaska. July.

At the junction of the rivers Madawaska and St. John, and extending for some miles down the latter, is a settlement of about three hundred Acadians. How these people came by the name they bear, I do not exactly understand; but of their history I remember the following particulars. In the year 1755, during the existence of the Colonial difficulties between England and France, there existed, in a remote section of Nova Scotia, about fifteen thousand Acadians. Aristocratic French blood flowed in their veins, and they were a peaceful and industrious race of husbandmen. Even after the Government of England had become established in Canada, they cherished a secret attachment for the laws of their native country. But this was only a feeling; and they continued in the peaceful cultivation of their lands. In process of time, however, three titled Englishmen, named Lawrence, Boscawen, and Mostyn, held a council, and formed the hard-hearted determination of driving this people from their homes, and scattering them to the four quarters of the globe. Playing the part of friends, this brotherhood of conquerors and heroes sent word to the Acadians, that they must all meet at a certain place on business which deeply concerned their welfare.

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Not dreaming of their impending fate, the poor Acadians met at the appointed place, and were there informed of the fact, that their houses and lands were forfeited, and that they must leave

the country, to become wanderers in strange and distant lands. They sued for mercy, but the iron yoke of a Christian nation was laid more heavily upon their necks, in answer to that prayer, and they were driven from home and country; and as they sailed from shore, or entered the wilderness, they saw in the distance, ascending to heaven, the smoke of all that they had loved and lost. Those who survived, found an asylum in the United States, and in the more remote portions of the British Empire; and when, after the war, they were invited to return to their early home, only thirteen hundred were known to be in existence. It is a remnant of this very people who, with their descendants, are now the owners of the Madawaska settlement; and it is in an Acadian dwelling that I am now penning this paper.

But, owing to their many misfortunes (I would speak in charity), the Acadians have degenerated into a more ignorant and miserable people than are the Canadian French, whom they closely resemble in their appearance and customs. They believe the people of Canada to be a nation of knaves, and the people of Canada know them to be a half savage community. Worshipping a miserable priesthood is their principal business; drinking and cheating their neighbours, their principal amusement. They live by tilling the soil; and are content, if they can barely make the provision of one year take them to the entrance of another. They are, at the same time, passionate lovers of money, and have brought the science of fleecing strangers to perfection. Some of them, by a life of meanness, have succeeded in accumulating a respectable property; but all the money they obtain is systematically hoarded. It is reported of the principal man of this place, that he has in his house, at the present moment, the sum of 10,000 dollars, in silver and gold; and yet this man's

children are as ignorant of the alphabet as the cattle upon the hills. But, with all their ignorance, the Acadians are a happy people; but it is the happiness of a mere animal nature. 235

The scenery of this place, which does not seem to possess a name, is most agreeable, but its attractive features are of an architectural nature. The first is a block-house, and the second a Catholic church.

The block-house occupies the summit of a commanding and rocky knoll, and was built at a cost of nearly five thousand dollars, for the purpose of defending this portion of New Brunswick, during the existence of the late Boundary difficulty. The edifice is built of stone and timber, and may be described as a square box, placed upon another and a larger one, in a triangular fashion; the width may be thirty feet, and height one hundred and fifty. It is well supplied with port-holes; entered by a wooden flight of stairs, and covered with a tin roof. It contains two stories, besides a well-filled magazine. It is abundantly supplied with guns and cannon, and almost every variety of shot, shells, and balls. It was once occupied by three military companies, (about all that it could possibly hold) but the only human being who now has anything to do with it is a worthy man who officiates as keeper.

The panorama which this fortress overlooks is exceedingly picturesque, embracing both the valley of the Madawaska and that of St. John, which fade away amid a multitude of wild and uncultivated mountains. When first I looked upon this block-house, it struck me as being a most ridiculous affair; but, on further examination, I became convinced that it could not be taken without the shedding of 236

much blood.

Of the church to which I alluded, I have only to remark that it is a very small, and apparently a venerable structure, built of wood, painted yellow, with a red steeple. It is pleasantly situated amid a cluster of rude cabins, on the margin of the St. John, and in the immediate vicinity of a racecourse. It was my fate to spend a Sabbath in this Madawaska settlement. As a matter of course, I attended church. The congregation was large, and composed entirely of Acadians, decked out in the most ridiculous gew-gawish dresses imaginable. I noticed nothing extraordinary on the occasion, only that at the threshold of the church was a kind of stand, where a woman was selling sausages and small beer. The services were read in Latin, and a sermon preached in French, which contained nothing but the most common-place advice, and that all of a secular character. At the conclusion of the service the male portion of the congregation gradually collected together on the neighbouring green, and the afternoon was devoted to horse-racing, the swiftest horse belonging to the loudest talker and heaviest stake-planter, and that man was—a disciple of the Pope, and the identical priest whom I had heard preach in the morning. It will be hard for you to believe this; but I have written the truth, as well as my last line, about the Acadian Settlement on the Madawaska.

CHAPTER XX.

Sail down the Madawaska—The Falls of the St. John.

Falls of the St. John. July.

In coming to this place from the north, the traveller finds it necessary to descend the river St. John in a canoe. The distance from Madawaska is thirty-six miles, and the day that I passed down was delightful in the extreme. My canoe was only about fifteen feet long, but my *voyageur* was an expert and faithful man, and we performed the trip without the slightest accident.

The valley of this portion of the river is mountainous, and its immediate banks vary from fifteen to thirty feet in height. The water is very clear and rapid, but of a brownish colour, and quite warm, varying in depth from three to thirty feet, and the width is about a quarter of a mile. That portion of the stream (say some seventy miles of its source) which belongs exclusively to the United States, runs through a fertile and beautiful country, abounds in waterfalls and rapids, and is yet a wilderness. That portion which divides the United States from New Brunswick, is somewhat cultivated, but principally by a French population. Owing to the fact that the farms all face the river, and are very narrow, (but extend back to the distance of two and three miles) the houses have all been erected immediately on the river, so that, to the casual observer, the country might appear to be thickly inhabited, which is far from being the case. The principal business done on the river is the driving of logs and timber for the market of St. John; and, excepting the worthy and hard working lumbermen who toil in

the forests, the people are devoted to the tilling of their land, and are precisely similar to the Acadians in their manners and customs, and probably from the same stock. There is a miniature steam-boat on the river, but as the unnumbered canoes of the inhabitants are engaged in a kind of opposition line, the fiery little craft would seem to have a hard time. In navigating the river, the *voyageurs* paddle down stream, but use a pole in ascending; and two smart men, gracefully swinging their poles, and sending their little vessel rapidly against the current, taken in connection with the pleasant scenery of the river, present an agreeable and novel sight.

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We started from Madawaska at four o'clock in the morning, and having travelled some twenty miles, we thought we would stop at the first nice-looking tavern on the shore, (for about every other dwelling is well supplied with liquor, and consequently considered a tavern) for the purpose of obtaining breakfast. Carefully did we haul up our canoe, and having knocked at the cabin-door, were warmly welcomed by a savage-looking man, whose face was completely besmeared with milk, and also by a dirty-looking woman, a couple of dirty legged girls, and a young boy. The only furniture in the room was a bed and a small cupboard, while the fire-place was without a particle of fire. In one corner of the room was a kind of bar, where the boy was in attendance, and seemed to be the spokesman of the dwelling. We asked him if we could have some breakfast, and he promptly replied that we could.

“What can you give us?” was my next question.

“Anything you please,” replied the boy in broken English.

“We’ll take some ham and eggs, then.”

“We havn’t any, only some eggs.”

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“We’ll take some bread and milk.”

“We havn’t any bread, but plenty of milk.”

“Havn’t you any kind of meat?”

“No, plenty of *rum*! What’ll you have?”

I could stand this no longer, and having expressed my displeasure at the ignorance of the boy, and condemned his father for pretending to keep a tavern, I gave the former a sixpence, and took half-a-dozen eggs, with which we returned to our canoe.

While I was fixing my seat in the boat, and commenting upon wilderness hospitality, my companion amused himself by swallowing four of the purchased eggs in a leather cup of brandy. In two hours after this little adventure, our little canoe was moored above the Falls of the St. John, and we were enjoying a first rate breakfast, prepared by the lady of a Mr. Russell, who keeps a comfortable house of entertainment in this place.

After I had finished my cigar and enjoyed a resting spell, I pocketed my sketch-book, and spent the entire day examining the scenery of the falls. After making a broad and beautiful sweep, the river St. John here forms a sudden turn, and becoming contracted to the width of about fifty yards, the waters make a plunge of perhaps forty feet, which is mostly in a

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solid mass, though rather disposed to form the third of a circle from shore to shore. Below this pitch, and extending for about two miles, is a continued succession of falls, which make the entire descent upwards of eighty feet. The water rushes through what might be termed a winding chasm, whose walls are perhaps one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet high, and perpendicular.



FALLS OF ST. JOHN.

Generally speaking, the entire distance from the first fall to the last, presents a perfect sheet of foam, though around every jutting point is a black and apparently bottomless pool, which, when I peered into them, were alive with salmon, leaping into the air or swimming on the margin of the foam. On the western side of the Falls, to a great extent, the original forest has been suffered to remain, and a walk through their shadowy

recesses is an uncommon treat; and on this side also is the ruin of an old saw-mill, which, for a wonder, actually adds to the picturesque beauty of the spot. On the eastern side of the Falls is a commanding hill, which has been stripped of its forest, and now presents a stump-field of three hundred acres. It is a desolate spot, but in strict keeping with the enterprise of the province. The expense of clearing, or rather half clearing the hill in question, was six thousand dollars, and it was the original intention of the mother-government to erect thereon an extensive fortress; but owing to the birth of a sensible reflection, the idea was abandoned. The barracks of the place as they now exist, consist of two log-houses, which are occupied by a dozen sprigs of the British army. And thus endeth my account of the most picturesque spot in New Brunswick, which, I doubt not, may hereafter become a fashionable place of summer resort.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Hermit of Aroostook.

Mouth of the Aroostook. July.

I was on my way down the river St. John, in New Brunswick, and having heard that the Aroostook, (one of its principal tributaries,) was famous for its salmon and a picturesque waterfall, I had taken up my quarters at a tavern near the mouth of that stream, with a view of throwing the fly for a few days, and adding to my stock of sketches. I arrived at this place in the forenoon, and after depositing my luggage in an upper room, and ordering a dinner, I proceeded to arrange my tackle and pencils for an afternoon expedition. This preparatory business I performed in the sitting-room of the tavern, where there happened to be seated at the time, and reading the New York Albion, an oddly-dressed but gentlemanly-looking man. In form, he was tall and slender, appeared to be about fifty years of age, and there was such an air of refinement in his appearance and manners that he attracted my particular attention. I said nothing, however, and quietly continued my snelling operations, until summoned to dinner. While at the table, I sent for the landlord, to inquire about the stranger whom I had noticed, and his reply was as follows:—"His name is Robert Egger; he is a strange but good man, and lives the life of a recluse; his house is above the Fall, on the Aroostook, and about four miles from here. He has been in this part of the country for many years, but I seldom see him at my house, excepting when he wants to read the news, put a letter in the office, or purchase a bag of flour."

With this intelligence I was quite delighted, for I fancied that I had discovered a *character*, which eventually proved to be the case. On returning to the room where the stranger was seated, I introduced myself by offering him a cigar; and while fixing my rod, asked him a few questions about the surrounding country. His replies proved him to be an intelligent man, and as he happened to express himself a lover of the “gentle art,” I offered him the use of some fishing tackle, and invited him to accompany me. He refused my offer, but accepted my invitation, and we started for the Aroostook. He officiated as my guide; and when we approached the river, which was from two to five feet deep, about one hundred yards wide, very rapid, and filled with bridge piers in ruin, we jumped into a Frenchman’s canoe, and were landed on the northern shore. Here we came into a road which passed directly along the bank of the river; this we followed for one mile, until we arrived at a flouring-mill, situated at the mouth of a large and very beautiful brook, where the road made a sudden turn towards the north.

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Directly opposite the mill, on the Aroostook side, was a narrow and rapid rift, where, my friend told me, I was sure to hook a salmon. I did not like the appearance of the place, but took his advice and waded in. I tried my luck for some thirty minutes, but could not tempt a single fish. This, my friend did not understand; he said there were salmon there, and thought that the fault was mine. I knew what he wanted, and therefore handed him my rod, that he might try his fortune. He fished for nearly half an hour, and then broke the fly-tip of my rod. As I was cherishing an earnest desire to take at least one salmon, under the Fall, which I thought the only likely place to succeed, and towards which I had set my face, this little accident made me exceedingly

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nervous. My friend attempted to console me by remarking, that as it was getting towards evening, we had better return to the tavern, and take a fresh start in the morning. But this proposition did not suit me at all, and I promptly said so. "Just as you please," replied my companion, and so we repaired the rod, and continued up the river. Very rapid, with many and deep pools, was this portion of the stream; and our course along the shore, over logs and fallen trees, through tangled underbrush and around rocky points—was attended with every imaginable difficulty, and so continued for at least two miles. On coming in sight of the Fall, however, I was more than amply repaid for all my trouble, by the prospect which there presented itself. It was, perhaps, one hour before sunset, and there was a delightful atmosphere resting upon the landscape.

Directly before me, in the extreme distance, and immediately under the crimson sun, was a narrow rocky gorge, through which foamed the waters of the Aroostook, over a precipice of some thirty feet; and just below the Fall, rose a perpendicular rock, to the height of nearly a hundred feet, dividing the stream into two channels. The entire middle distance of the prospect was composed of a broad and almost circular basin of very deep and dark water, skirted mostly with a rocky shore, while directly across the surface of this pool, winding down the stream, was a line of foam, distinguishing the main channel; while the foreground of this picture consisted of a gravelly beach, two bark wigwams, several canoes, and some half dozen Indians, who were enjoying their evening meal by the side of an expiring fire.

We held a brief conversation with the Indians, and found out that they had visited the basin for the purpose of spearing salmon by

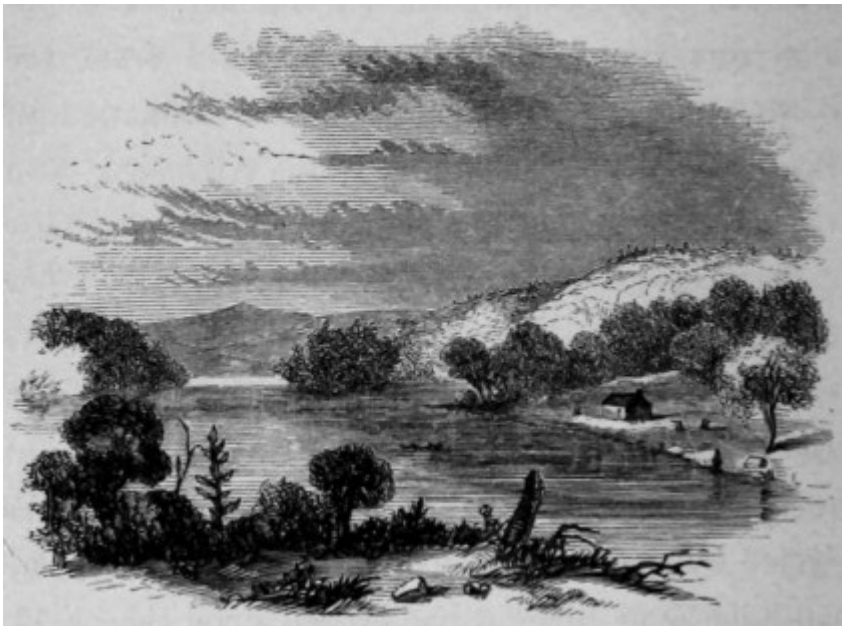
torchlight; and while my companion sat down in their midst to rest himself, I jumped into one of the canoes, and paddled to the foot of the fall, to try one of my fancy flies. I fished for about thirty minutes—caught one small salmon—lost two very large ones, and returned to the Indian camp, where I had previously concluded to spend the night, provided my guide did not insist upon returning to the tavern by moonlight. It so happened, however, that my interesting plan was vetoed by my companion, who told me that his dwelling was only a mile off, and that I must go and spend the night with him. I willingly assented to this proposition, and having picked up the salmon, we engaged the Indians to ferry us across the basin, and proceeded on our way. Our path was somewhat narrow, crooked, and intricate, and as I listened to the roaring of the waterfall, and thought of the mystery which hung over my companion, I could not but wonder what I was about, to what strange place I was going.

In due time, however, we emerged from the woods, and came out upon the side of a gentle hill, which sloped to the margin of the Aroostook, and was sufficiently open to command an extensive view of the river. Here my friend told me to tarry a few moments, for he had a canoe hidden among some willows, and wished to hunt it up, that we might recross the river once more. I heard his words, but neglected to assist him, for my whole attention was riveted by the scene upon which I was gazing. The sober livery of twilight had settled upon the world, and the flowing of the river was so peaceful, that I could distinctly hear the hum of unnumbered insects, as they sported in the air. On the opposite shore was a lofty forest-covered hill, and at the foot of it a small clearing, in the centre of which stood a rude log cabin—the dwelling-place of my friend. On my left,

the river presented the appearance of a lake: and apparently in the centre of it were two of the most exquisitely foliated islands imaginable. The valley seemed completely hemmed in with mountains, and these, together with a glowing sky, were all distinctly mirrored in the sleeping waters. Charming beyond compare was this evening landscape, and the holy time “was quiet as a nun, breathless with adoration.” But now my companion summoned me to a seat in the canoe, and we passed over the stream in safety; he hauled up his shallop, laid aside his paddle, and, slapping me on the shoulder, led the way to his cabin, repeating, in a loud clear voice, the following words:

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“Alone I live, between four hills,—
Fame Roostook runs between;—
At times, wild animals appear,
But men are seldom seen.”



On entering the hut, which was now quite dark, as it only contained one window, my companion turned abruptly round, and after making a frolicsome remark about my being in his power, he exclaimed—"That poetry I repeated to you just now was a home-spun article, but as you might fancy something a little more civilized, I would say to you, my young friend, in the language of Wordsworth's 'Solitary,'

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"This is my domain, my cell,
My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—
I love it better than a snail his house,
But now ye shall be feasted with our best."

Soon as these words had fallen from his lips, my friend proceeded to collect some wood for a fire, and while I was left to kindle the flame, he seized a tin-pail and went after some spring water, which he said was some distance off. In a few moments, I produced a sufficient quantity of light to answer my purpose, and then took occasion to survey the room, into which I had been thus strangely introduced. Everything about me seemed to be oddity itself. First was the huge fire-place, rudely made of rough stones and filled with ashes; then the blackish appearance of the log walls around, and the hemlock rafters above. In one corner stood a kind of wooden box, filled with blankets, which answered the purpose of a bed,—and in front of the only window in the cabin was a pine table, on which stood an inkstand and some writing paper, and under which sat a large gray cat, watching my movements with a suspicious eye. In one place stood a wooden chest, and a half-barrel of meal, and the only things in the room, to sit upon were a couple of wooden

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chairs. The crevices in the walls were stopped up with rags and clay, and from various rafters depended bundles of mint, hemlock, and other useful productions of the wood. A rusty old gun, and a home-made fishing rod occupied one corner; and on every side, resting upon wooden pegs, were numerous shelves, of every size and form, which were appropriated to a variety of uses. On one or two of them were the cooking utensils of my friend; on another, a lot of smoky books; and on others, a little of every thing, from a box of salt or paper of tea, down to a spool of thread or a paper of needles.

In a few moments my friend re-entered the cabin, and immediately began to prepare our evening meal, which consisted of bread, fried pork, and salmon, and a cup of tea. Plain was our food, but it was as nicely cooked as if it had been done by a pretty girl, instead of an old man; and the comic pomposity with which every little matter was attended to, afforded me much amusement. One thing I remember, which struck me as particularly funny. My host was talking about the conduct of Sir Robert Peel and the British Parliament, and, while in the midst of his discourse, opened a trap-door leading to his cellar, and descended therein. I knew not what he was after, and waited his re-appearance with some anxiety, when suddenly he bobbed up his ghost-like head, resumed the thread of his remarks, and held forth in one hand a huge piece of fat pork, and as he became excited about the conduct of the Prime Minister, he occasionally slapped the pork with the remaining hand, and then shook it in the air, as if it had been one of the murderous Irishmen to whom he was occasionally alluding. He reminded me of the grave-digger in Hamlet. I also remember, that when my friend was kneading his bread, the idea entered his head, from some remark that I had

dropped, that I did not comprehend the meaning of a certain passage in Shakspeare, so he immediately wiped one of his hands, leaned over for his ragged copy of the mighty bard, and immediately settled the question to our mutual satisfaction.

Supper being ended, I pulled out of my pocket a couple of cigars which I had brought with me, and we then seated ourselves comfortably before the fire and entered into a systematic conversation. The greater part of the talking was done by my companion, and in the course of the evening, I gathered the following particulars respecting his own history.

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He told me he was a native of Hampshire, England, and had spent his boyhood in the city of London, as a counting-house clerk. He claimed a good name for his family, and added that Mr. Jerdan, editor of the London Literary Gazette, was his brother-in-law, having married his only sister. He avowed himself about sixty years of age, and had been a resident of New Brunswick ever since the year 1809. He first came across the Atlantic as a government agent, for the transaction of business connected with the fur trade; and when he settled in the province, the whole country was an untrodden wilderness. Since that time he had followed a variety of employments, had acquired a competence, but lost it through the rascality of friends. He told me he was a widower, and that he had one son, who resided in Frederickton, and was rapidly acquiring a reputation for his knowledge of engineering. "It does my heart good to remember this fact," continued my friend, "and I do hope that my son will not disgrace his family, as some people seem to think I have done. The God-forsaken inhabitants of this region have a habit of calling me a crazy old man. God be praised,—I know they overshoot the mark in that particular; if I

have lost my reason, I can tell the mocking world, that I have endured trouble enough to make even a philosopher, a raving maniac. By patient and unwearied toil, I have won two small fortunes, but both of them were snatched away, and I was left a beggar. The Home Government took pity on me, and offered to make me a present of land, adding that I was at liberty to make my own selection. I accepted their offer and selected five hundred acres on the Aroostook, making the Fall we visited this evening the centre of my domain. I duly received a deed for the property, and having concluded that my fellow-men were as tired of me as I was of them, I bolted for the wilderness and have lived here ever since. Yes, sir, for twelve years have I been the only human inmate of this rude cabin; I ought to except, however, ‘a lucid interval’ of some nine months, which I spent in England, about four years ago, visiting my friends and the favourite haunts of my childhood. To enjoy even that little luxury, I was compelled to sacrifice a portion of my land.”

“But why do you not sell your entire property?” I remarked, “and take up your abode among men, where your knowledge might be made available?”

“Knowledge, indeed!” replied the hermit philosopher; “all that I possess, you might easily hide in the bowl of an acorn. I do know enough to cast my eyes heavenward, when crushed by misfortune, but the same knowledge was possessed by the worm upon which I accidentally trod this morning. What is man, at his best estate, but a worm? But this is not answering your question. My only reason for not selling this property is, that I cannot find a purchaser. Most gladly would I jump at the chance, and then I *would* mingle with my fellow-men, and endeavour to be *of* them. Travellers, who sometimes pass

through this region, tell me that my property is worth 5000 dollars; I know it to be worth at least that amount, but I should be glad to sell it for 3000 dollars, and that too, on a credit of ten years. The interest would, indeed, be a meagre income, but I have schooled myself in the ways of poverty; and though it once cost me 2000 dollars to carry me through a single year, I can tell you that my expenses for the last five years have not averaged more than 20 dollars, which I have had to obtain as best I could. But you must not misunderstand me. The little clearing which surrounds my rookery contains six acres, and, as I cultivate them with all diligence, they keep me from actual starvation.”

“But it strikes me, my dear sir, that you ask rather an extravagant price for your uncultivated land?” I asked this question with a view of obtaining some information in reference to the valley of the Aroostook, and was not disappointed. The reply of my friend was as follows:

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“I can convince you that you are mistaken. In the first place, the water privilege which my land covers, is acknowledged to be the most valuable on the Aroostook, and I may add that it is abundantly fertile. And then think of the valley, at the very threshold of which I am located. It is one of the most beautiful and luxuriant in this northern wilderness; and the only thing against it, though I say it, that should not, is the fact that nearly five miles of its outlet belongs to the English Government, while the remainder belongs to the United States. The whole of it ought to be yours, but if it were, I would not live here a year; I am near enough to you now; directly on the boundary-line between your country and mine. The Aroostook, I verily believe, is one of the most important branches of the St. John. Its general course is easterly, but it is exceedingly serpentine, and

according to some of your best surveyors, drains upwards of a million acres of the best soil in Maine. Above my place, there is hardly a spot that might not be navigated by a small steam-boat; and I believe the time is not far distant when your enterprising Yankees will have a score of boats employed here in carrying their grain to market. Before that time comes, however, you must dig a canal or build a railroad around my beautiful waterfall, which I am sure could be done for 20,000 dollars. An extensive lumbering business is now carried on in the valley, but its future prosperity must depend upon its agriculture. Already are its shores dotted with well-cultivated farms, and every year is adding to their number, and the rural beauty of those already in existence. The soil of this valley is rich, and composed principally of what is called *alluvial* (not *intervale*) land, together with the quality known as *upland*. In many portions, however, you will find some of the most charming *intervalles* in the world. The trees of this region are similar to those of your northern states. The staple crop of the Aroostook farmer is wheat; owing to the shortness of our seasons, corn does not arrive at perfection, and its cultivation is neglected. Rye, barley, and oats, all flourish here, but much more buckwheat is raised than any other grain besides wheat. Grasses flourish here in great perfection, and the farmer of Aroostook will yet send to market immense quantities of cattle. As to the climate, it is not so severe as is generally supposed. Snow falls early, and continues late, which prevents the ground from freezing very deep. And when summer comes, as you may testify, the weather is sufficiently warm for every necessary purpose. Now, Sir, do you not think I have made out a clear case?" I answered in the affirmative, and thanked him for the information he had given me. Like Oliver Twist, however, I was anxious for "more," and therefore

endeavoured to start him on another subject. In this laudable effort I fully succeeded; and by merely expressing the opinion that he must lead a very lonely life in this remote wilderness.

“Not at all, not at all,” replied my friend. “It is my good fortune to belong to that class of men who depend upon books, the works of nature, and themselves for happiness, and not upon a selfish and heartless world. As to my books, they are not very abundant, nor are they bound in fancy morocco, but the substance of them is of the right sort. Foremost among them is the Bible, which tells even a poor devil like me that he is a man. Perfect in their generation are the truths of this glorious old book; they have an important bearing upon everything; and they should be studied and cherished with jealous care. But the earth-born minds, with whom I hold daily communion, are the mighty Shakspeare, the splendid Gibbon, the good and loving brother poets Thompson and Wordsworth, the gifted but wayward Burns, the elegant and witty Addison, and the ponderous Johnson. These are the minds which always afford me solid satisfaction. As to the immense herd who keep the printing-presses of the present day constantly employed, I know nothing about them, and care still less. And now as to the pleasures which are brought to me by the revolving seasons. They are indeed manifold, and it is pleasant to remember that ‘Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.’ The hills which surround my cabin, I look upon as familiar friends, not only when crowned with a wreath of snow, but when rejoicing in their summer bloom; and a more peaceful and heart-soothing stream can nowhere be found, than the one which flows along by my door, and you know from experience that it abounds in the finest of salmon and trout. The surrounding woods furnish me with game, but their greatest treasures are the ten thousand

beautiful birds, which make melody in their little hearts, and afford me unalloyed pleasure for at least one half the year. I seldom have occasion to kill these feathered minstrels for food, and the consequence is, whenever I go out into my fields to work, they gather around me without fear, and often come so near, as to be in my very way. The quail and the wren, the jay and the blue-bird, the mocking-bird, the partridge, the fish-hawk, the eagle and the crow, and also the swallow, the owl, and whip-poor-will, all build their nests within a stone's throw of my door, and they know that the friendless old man will do them no harm. And then what exquisite pleasure do I continually enjoy in watching the ever-varying changes of the year! First, when the primrose tells me that the rains are over and gone, and I go forth in the refreshing sunshine to sow my seeds; secondly, when the glorious summer is in its prime, with its dewy mornings and lovely twilights; also in the sober autumnal time, when I thoughtfully count the leaves floating on the bosom of the stream; and then again when the cold winds of winter are howling around my cabin, and I sit in my pleasant solitude before a roaring fire, building palaces in my mind, as I peer into the burning embers. Yes, sir, I have learned to live without excitement, and to depend upon myself for the companionship I need. I do, indeed, occasionally steal out of my beautiful vale, and mingle with my fellow-men; but I always return perfectly contented with my lot. After all, I do not believe that the world *could* add greatly to my stock of happiness, even if I were a worshipper of Mammon, a brawling politician, or a responsible statesman.”

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“But, Mr. Egger, it strikes me that your manner of life is not in keeping with the Bible, for which you have expressed so much reverence.”

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“That may be true,” was the reply, “but I make no sanctimonious pretensions. I do but little to promote the happiness of my fellow-men, and I congratulate myself with the idea that I do as little to make them miserable. The influence of my example amounts to nothing, and I give no bread to the poor, because I have none to give. But let us drop the subject; I feel that your questions may so annoy me, that I shall be compelled to abandon the glorious old wilderness, and become a denizen of the busy and noisy world.”

A breach having thus been made in our discourse, I examined my watch and found it to be near twelve o’clock. My companion took the hint, and immediately proceeded to fix a sleeping-place that would accommodate us both. This was done by spreading the clothes of the wooden bedstead upon the floor. While going through with this little operation, he held high above his head a ragged old bed-quilt, and asked me what I thought Queen Victoria would say, if she had such an article to rest her royal limbs upon? He then pointed to the particular spot which he wanted me to occupy, giving as a reason for the request, that there was a hole on the opposite side of his mansion, where toads, rats, and weasels were frequently in the habit of entering, and he was afraid they might annoy me, though he had never been disturbed by their nocturnal visits. This information appeared to me somewhat peculiar, but did not prevent me from undressing myself to lie down. When about half through this business, however, I was actually compelled to take a seat on account of a laughing-fit, brought upon me by one or two stories, which my host related for my special benefit. What a strange man indeed! thought I; and making another effort, I tumbled into bed. In the meantime, my companion had stripped himself of everything but his shirt, and, in spite of the frailty of

his “spindle shanks,” was throwing himself into the attitudes for which Kemble was distinguished, whose acting he had often witnessed in olden times. I was already quite exhausted with excess of laughter, and I verily believed that the queer antics of the anchorite and philosopher would be the death of me. But I felt that I must go to sleep, and, in self-defence, partly covered my head with the end of a quilt, and almost swore that I would not be disturbed again.

I did not swear, however, and was consequently again disturbed. I had just fixed my head upon the pillow, as I thought for the last time, when I was startled by a tremendous yell proceeding from without the cabin. I rushed out of the house, as if the Old Harry himself had been after me, and beheld my spare and venerable friend, sitting upon a stump, gazing upon the rising moon, and listening to the distant howl of a wolf, with one of his feet dangling to and fro, like the pendulum of a clock. “Wasn’t that a musical yell, my boy?” were the first words spoken by the hermit mad-cap; and then he went on to point out all the finer features of the scene spread out before us. Silently flowed the stream, grand and sublime looked the mountains, clear and very blue the sky, spirit-like the moon and stars, and above the neighbouring waterfall ascended a column of spray, which was fast melting into a snowy cloud. After enjoying this picture for a reasonable time, my companion then proposed that we should enjoy a swim in the river, to which arrangement I assented, even as did the wedding guest of Coleridge to the command of the Ancient Mariner. Our bath ended, we returned to the cabin, and in the course of half-an-hour, the hermit and the stranger were side by side in the arms of sleep.

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On opening my eyes in the morning, the pleasant sunshine

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was flooding the floors through the open door, and my friend, who had risen without disturbing me, was frying some trout which he had just taken in the stream. I arose, rolled up the bed, and prepared myself for breakfast, which was particularly relished by the giver and the receiver. I spent the forenoon rambling about the estate of my old friend, and enjoying the surrounding scenery; I then proposed to him that he should go down and be my guest at the tavern on the St. John for a day or two, which invitation was accepted. On my return, I took a sketch of the secluded vale where stands the cottage of my friend, also a profile of his own handsome face, and a view of his waterfall. The time of my departure having arrived, I left him with a heavy heart—I for my distant city-home, and he to return to his solitary cottage among the mountains.

CHAPTER XXII.

The River St. John.

Woodstock. July.

I have recently performed a pilgrimage along the valley of the Lower St. John, and as I am about to leave the river, it is meet that I should give my reader a record of my observations. The distance from the Falls of St. John to the city of that name, is two hundred and twenty miles. The width varies from a quarter of a mile to nearly two miles, and the depth from two to forty feet. That portion lying north of Frederickton, abounds in rapids and shallows, and is navigated only by flat-bottomed boats, which are taken up stream by horse power, but descend with the current. Here, for the most part, the shores are mountainous, and only partly cultivated, with high and picturesque banks; the lowest portion, however, is of a level character, and presents the appearance of an ancient and highly cultivated country, and is navigated by steam-boats, and the common sail craft of the country. The soil, all along the shores, is good, but seems better adapted for grass than wheat, and I can see no good reason for its not becoming greatly distinguished as a grazing country.

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The river is not distinguished for any pictorial feature, (though it abounds in beautiful landscapes,) excepting a place called the Narrows, situated at the southern extremity. At this point, the stream is not more than five hundred yards wide, and as it is bounded on either side by a high, rocky barrier, the current ordinarily passes through with great rapidity. The tides of the

ocean ascend about thirty miles, and it is only when the tide is high that the point in question can be navigated. Though these Narrows are a great annoyance to the navigator, by the lover of the picturesque they are highly esteemed. Not only are they beautiful in themselves, but, owing to the peculiarity of the place, it is frequently the case that the broad expanse of water above it, is covered with a fleet of sloops, schooners, steam-boats, tow-boats, and timber-crafts, which present a peculiar and agreeable panorama. The river abounds with salmon and shad, the former of which, though rather small, may be taken by the angler in the principal tributaries. They are not sufficiently abundant, however, to constitute an important article of commerce, and the common modes for taking them are with the spear, and the drift-net.

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The principal towns on the St. John are, Woodstock, French Village, Frederickton, and St. John. The first of these is one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth, and though a ragged, yet an interesting village. So far as its natural productions are concerned, I am disposed to compliment this Province in the highest terms; but I must say that the ignorance, idleness, and gouging character of its common people, have made me quite willing to take my departure therefrom. The expenses of travelling are enormous, and so also are all the little incidentals which go to make a man comfortable.

The stage-route from the Grand Falls to St. John passes through Woodstock, but the distance from this place to the American town of Houlton, is ten miles, and in this direction there is also an established stage-route to Bangor.

The next place on the St. John, of any note, is French Village. It

usually contains a thousand souls—most of them Indians. They live in frame and log-houses, and though they pretend to do some farming, they are chiefly engaged in hunting and fishing. They are a good-looking race, speak English fluently, and are the followers of a Catholic priest, who lives among them, and officiates in a small chapel, which was built by the Jesuits at an early day. This society is said to be one of the most wealthy in the Province. The chief of the village is one Louis Beir. He lives in a very comfortable, and well-furnished house, is rather a handsome man, dresses in a half-savage manner, and while he offers his visitor a comfortable chair, he invariably seats himself upon the floor in true Indian fashion.

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Frederickton is at the head of steam-boat navigation, and distant from St. John eighty miles. Between these two places there runs a morning and evening boat, and the summer travel is very extensive. Frederickton contains about eight thousand inhabitants, composed principally, of Irish, Scotch, and English. It contains three principal streets, running north and south, and some half-dozen handsome public buildings, including an Episcopal church, after the Tuscan order, a Court House and a College. The town is situated on a level plain, and its suburbs are made exceedingly beautiful by the number of rural residences which attract the eye in every direction. The elm and poplar both seem to flourish here, and add much to the picturesqueness of the place and vicinity. The business of Frederickton is only of a second-rate character, and it has become what it is, merely from the fact that it has heretofore been the seat of Government. This fact has also had a tendency to collect a good society in the place, and its “ton,” though in a small way have been disposed to cut quite a dash. The “mother Parliament,” I believe, have recently removed the seat of

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government to St. John, and the lovers of Frederickton are sorry, and a little angry.

The city of St. John stands at the mouth of the river of that name, and is also laved by the waters of the Bay of Fundy. I hate cities, but suppose that I must stop a moment in the one alluded to. It is a business place, planted among rocks, contains some twenty thousand inhabitants, (two-thirds of whom are Irish,) and in its port, at the present time, is moored a fleet of two hundred ships. Its public buildings are numerous, the finest of which are the Court House, an Episcopal church, of the Doric order, another after the Gothic, and a Presbyterian church, after the Corinthian order. The city is defended by a fortress, which presents a handsome appearance as you approach the port. The merchants of the place are chiefly employed in the square-timber trade, and have heretofore done an extensive business. 271

This trade, however, I am inclined to believe, is rapidly running out. On the opposite side of the St. John's river is a picturesque point, or hill, which is called Carlton Hill. It is surmounted by a massive block-house, and commands an extensive prospect of the Bay of Fundy, the spring tides of which rise to the height of sixty feet, and when coming in make a terrible roar.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Penobscot River.

Off the Coast of Maine. July.

A week ago I was fighting with mosquitoes and flies, on the head waters of the Penobscot, and now that I am upon the ocean once more, I fancy that my feelings are allied to those of an old moose that I lately saw standing in a mountain lake, with the water up to his chin. The noble river which I have mentioned, “is all my fancy painted it,” and in spite of its insect inhabitants, I shall ever remember it with pleasure.

The length of this stream, from the mouth of its bay, to where its principal branches come together, is about one hundred and forty miles; from this junction, to the fountain head of the west branch, the distance is supposed to be one hundred and fifty miles, while the east branch is probably only one hundred miles in length. Both of these streams rise in the midst of a mountain wilderness, looming above which, is old Katahden, the loftiest mountain in Maine, and elder brother to Mount Washington, in New Hampshire. This mountain is distant from Moosehead Lake only about twenty miles; but it towers into the sky so grandly, that nearly all the people who inhabit the northern part of Maine, look upon it as a familiar friend. The two branches of the Penobscot, run through a mountainous region, both of them abounding in rapids, though the west branch contains a number of picturesque falls. The soil of this region, generally speaking, is good, but remains in its original wilderness. Its stationary inhabitants are few and far between;

but it gives employment to about three thousand lumbermen. They spend the winter in wielding the axe in the forests, and the spring and summer in driving down the stream logs which they have prepared for the saw-mills, which are mostly situated on the lower part of the Penobscot. Nine months in the year they labour without ceasing, but usually appropriate to themselves a three months holiday, which is the entire autumn. They are a young and powerfully built race of men, mostly New Englanders, generally unmarried, and, though rude and intemperate in their manners, are very intelligent. They seem to have a passion for their wild and toilsome life, and, judging from their dresses, I should think possess a fine eye for the comic and fantastic. The entire apparel of an individual usually consists of a pair of grey pantaloons, and two red flannel shirts, a pair of long boots, and a woollen covering for the head, and all these things are worn at one and the same time. The head-covering alluded to, when first purchased, is what might be called a hat; but the wearers invariably take particular pains to transform the article into such queer shapes, as to render it indescribable. Sometimes they take the crown and tic it in the shape of a fool's-cap, and sometimes they trim the rims with a jack-knife, into many different fashions. Their wages vary from twenty to thirty dollars per month; and they are chiefly employed by the lumber merchants of Bangor, who furnish them with necessary supplies.

The Penobscot, I suppose, is unquestionably the most fruitful lumber river in the United States, and its pine and hemlock forests seem yet to be inexhaustible. And the State of Maine is indebted to the lumber business for many of its beautiful cities and towns.

From the Forks of the Penobscot to Bangor, the distance is about sixty miles. This portion of the river is about a quarter of a mile wide. The banks are rather low and level, and somewhat cultivated. The water is deep and clear, and the current strong. Generally speaking, the scenery of the river is not remarkable, and were it not for its numerous islands, it might be considered tame, by the lover of a mountain land. The islands alluded to, however, are exceedingly beautiful. Covered as they are with venerable elms, and containing no underbrush, but a continuous plot of green, they have all the appearance of cultivated parks. The stage-route, from Woodstock, after reaching the Penobscot, continues along the eastern bank, and as the coaches are comfortable, and the horses good, the ride is very pleasant. The principal village, of which there are four, is Old Town. It is a busy little place, and the present termination of a railroad from Bangor, which is twelve miles distant. Directly opposite Old Town is a small island, where reside a remnant of the Penobscot Indians. They number some four hundred souls, and are just sufficiently civilized to lead a very miserable sort of life.

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I come now to speak of Bangor. It is a well-built and handsome city, eighty miles from the ocean, and contains about eight thousand inhabitants. It is at the head of tide water navigation, and has a good harbour, where I counted from one point near two hundred sails. The principal article of trade is lumber, which is distinguished for its good qualities. All the heaviest merchants are engaged in the lumber trade, and almost every body deals in it to a limited extent. A few thousand shingles will pay your tailor for a coat, a few loads of plank will settle your account with the butcher, and bundles of clap-boards are gladly received by the grocer, in exchange for his tea

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and sugar.

With the people of Bangor I was much pleased. Their manners and habits are stamped with the true New England character, they mind their own business, and are distinguished for their intelligence, virtue, and hospitality. When I reached this place, my beard was more than half as long as that of the Wandering Jew; and it took me nearly a whole day to forget the bad French which I had acquired in Canada and New Brunswick, and transform myself into the semblance of a civilized man. I had been in the woods for so long a time, that I seized the first paper I saw to find out whether I had forgotten to read. You may readily imagine, therefore, what a refreshing effect the appearance and conversation of intelligent people had upon my feelings. But the class of citizens who made the deepest impression upon me, were the children of Bangor. I met them at every corner, and heard their happy voices in every dwelling, and a more perfectly beautiful race of creatures, I never before saw in any city.

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The distance from Bangor to the ocean is eighty miles. For twenty miles the river averages three quarters of a mile in width, when it gradually widens into an expansive bay or gulf. The water is deep, always covered with vessels, and abounds with salmon, which are only taken with the net. The shores are hilly, and well-cultivated, and the towns of Bucksport, Frankfort, Belfast and Thomaston, as you pass them, present each a thriving and pleasant appearance.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

Moosehead Lake.—The River Kennebeck.

Portland. August.

Moosehead Lake is the largest and the wildest in New England. It lies in the central portion of the State of Maine, and distant from the ocean near one hundred and fifty miles. Its length is fifty miles, and its width from five to fifteen. It is embosomed among a brotherhood of mountains, whose highest peak has been christened with the beautiful name of Katahden. All of them, from base to summit, are covered with a dense forest, in which the pine is by far the most abundant. It is the grand centre of the only wilderness region in New England, whose principal denizens are wild beasts. During the summer months, its tranquil waters remain in unbroken solitude, unless some scenery-hunting pilgrim, like myself, should happen to steal along its shores in his birchen canoe. But in the winter the case is very different, for then, all along its borders, may be heard the sound of the axe, wielded by a thousand men. Then it is that an immense quantity of logs are cut, to be manufactured into lumber at the extensive mills down the Kennebeck, which is the only outlet to the lake.

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A winter at Moosehead must be attended with much that is rare, and wild, and exciting, not only to the wealthy proprietor who has a hundred men to superintend, but even to the toiling chopper. Look at a single specimen of the gladdening scenes enacted in that forest world. It is an awful night, the winds wailing, the snow falling, and the forests making a moan. Before

you is a spacious, but rudely built log cabin, almost covered with snow. But now, above the shriek of the storm, and the howl of the wolf, you hear a long, loud shout, from a score of human mouths. You enter the cabin, and lo, a merry band of noble men, some lying on a buffalo-robe, and some seated on a log, while the huge fire before them reveals every feature and wrinkle of their countenances, and makes a picture of the richest colouring. Now the call is for a song, and a young man sings a song of Scotland, which is his native land; a mug of cider then goes round, after which an old pioneer clears his throat for a hunting legend of the times of old; now the cunning jest is heard; and peals of hearty laughter shake the building; and now a soul-stirring speech is delivered in favour of Henry Clay. The fire-place is again replenished, when with a happy and contented mind each woodman retires to his couch, to sleep, and to dream of his wife and children, or of the buxom damsel whom he loves.

The number of logs which these men cut in a single winter is almost incredible, and the business of conveying them to the lake upon the snow gives employment to a great many additional men and their oxen. The consequence is, that large quantities of flour, potatoes, pork, and hay, are consumed; and as these things are mostly supplied by the farmers of the Kennebeck, winter is the busiest season of the year throughout the region. When the lake is released from its icy fetters in the spring, a new feature of the logging business comes into operation, which is called rafting. A large raft contains about eighteen thousand logs, and covers a space of some ten acres. In towing them to the Kennebeck, a small steam-boat is employed, which, when seen from the summit of a hill, looks like a living creature struggling with a mighty incubus. But the most picturesque thing connected

with this business is a floating log-cabin, called a Raft House, which ever attends a raft on its way to the river. During the summer, as before stated, Moosehead Lake is a perfect solitude, for the “log chopper” has become a “log driver” on the Kennebeck,—the little steamer being moored in its sheltering bay, near the tavern at the south end of the lake, and the toiling oxen having been permitted to enjoy their summer sabbath on the farm of their master.

The islands of Moosehead Lake, of any size, are only four; Moose and Deer Islands at the southern extremity, Sugar Island in the large eastern bay, and Farm Island in a north-western direction from that. All of these are covered with beautiful groves, but the time is not far distant when they will be cultivated farms. Trout are the principal fish that flourish in its waters, and may be caught at any time in great abundance. And thereby hangs a fish story.

It was the sunset hour, and with one of my companions I had gone to a rocky ledge for the purpose of trying my luck. My bait was squirrel meat, and I was the first to throw the line. It had hardly reached the water, before I had the pleasure of striking and securing a two pound trout. This threw my friend into a perfect fever of excitement, so that he was exceedingly slow in cutting up the squirrels; and it may be readily supposed that I was somewhat excited myself; so I “grabbed” the animal out of his hands, and in less than a “jiffy,” and with my teeth, made a number of good baits. The conclusion of the whole matter was, that in less than forty minutes we had caught nearly seventy pounds of salmon trout. But the fish of Moosehead are not to be compared with those of Horicon in point of delicacy, though they are very large, and very abundant. The reason of this

is, that its waters are not remarkably clear, and a good deal of its bottom is muddy. Moose River, which is the principal tributary of the Lake, is a narrow, deep, and picturesque stream, where may be caught the common trout, weighing from one to five pounds.

In this portion of Maine every variety of forest game may be found, but the principal kinds are the grey wolf, the black bear, the deer, and the moose. Winter is the appropriate season for their capture, when they afford a deal of sport to the hunter, and furnish a variety of food to the forest labourers. Deer are so very plentiful, that a certain resident told me, that, in the deep snow of last winter, he caught some dozen of them alive, and having cut a slit in their ears, let them go, that they might recount to their kindred their marvellous escape. But the homeliest animal, the most abundant, and the best for eating, is the moose. I did not kill one, but spent a night with an old hunter who did. During the warm summer nights these animals, for the purpose of getting clear of the black-fly, are in the habit of taking to the water, where, with nothing but their heads in sight, they remain for hours. It was the evening of one of those cloudless nights, whose memory can never die. We were alone far up the Moose River, and it seemed to me, “we were the first that ever burst into that forest sea.” Embarked on board a swan-like canoe, and with our rifles ready, we carefully and silently descended the stream. How can I describe the lovely pictures that we passed? Now we peered into a dark recess in the centre of a group of elms, where unnumbered fire-flies were revelling in joy;—and now a solitary duck shot out into the stream from its hidden home, behind a fallen and decayed tree; now we watched the stars mirrored in the sleeping waves, and now we listened to the hoot of the owl, the drum of the partridge, the

song of a distant waterfall, or the leap of a robber-trout. It was not far from midnight when my companion whispered, "Hush, hush!" and pointed to a dim spot some hundred yards below. The first chance was allotted me, so I took the best aim I could, and fired. I heard the ball skip along the water, and on coming near, found my mark to be only a smooth rock. Two hours more passed on, one small moose was killed, and at day-break we were in our cabin fast asleep.

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The principal outlet to Moosehead Lake is the Kennebeck, which "now demands my song." It is the second river in Maine, and one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. Instead of watering a wilderness, as I had supposed, all along its valley for over a hundred miles are fertile and extensive farms, with here and there a thriving village, inhabited by an intelligent and industrious people. Its principal tributary is Dead River, and the spot at the junction of the two is called the Forks. The cultivated region stops here, and between this point and Moosehead, the distance is about twenty-five miles, which is yet a forest wilderness.

The principal attraction at the Forks is a tavern kept by one Burnham, who is a capital fellow to guide the lover of Nature or the trout fisherman to Moxy Fall and Nameless Lake, which are in the immediate vicinity. The mountains about here are very lofty, and exceedingly picturesque, abounding in the maple, the oak, the pine, and hemlock. Emptying into the Kennebeck, a few miles north of the Forks, is a superb mountain-stream, named Moxy, after an Indian who was drowned there many years ago. Winding for a long distance among rocky ravines, and eternally singing to the woods a trumpet-song, it finally makes a sudden plunge into a chasm more than a hundred feet in

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depth. The perpendicular rocks on either side rise to an immense height, their tops crowned with a “peculiar diadem of trees,” and their crevices filled up with dark-green verdure, whence occasionally issues, hanging gracefully in the air, beautiful festoons of the ivy, and clusters of the mountain blue-bell. The depth of the pool was never told, and its waters wash against the granite walls in a perpetual gloom. On one occasion I visited it when there was a high freshet, and saw what I could hardly have believed from a description. I stood on an elevated point in front of the Fall, when my eyes rested upon an immense log, some sixty feet long, coming down the foaming stream with all the fury of a maddened steed; presently it reached the precipice,—then cleaved its airy pathway into the hell of waters,—was completely out of sight for three minutes, then, like a creature endowed with life, shot upward again entirely out of the water, made another less desperate plunge, and quietly pursued its course into the Kennebeck.

In speaking of the Nameless Lake, it is necessary that I should be a little egotistical. It is a fairy-like sheet of pure water in the heart of the mountain wilderness, only about a mile in length, but full of trout. The proprietor was of the party that accompanied me on my first visit. While approaching it, the remark was made, that it was yet without a name; when it was agreed that it should be christened after that individual, who should on that day throw the most successful fly. As fortune would have it, the honour was awarded to me; and on a guide-board in the forest, three miles from Burnham’s, may be seen the figure of a hand, and the words “Lake Lanman.” There stands my written name, exposed “to the peltings of the pitiless storm;” and in a few years, at the longest, it will be washed away, and the tree which supports it mingling with the dust. Will it be even

thus with the memory of name?

Not to attempt a description of the scenery of the Kennebeck, which could be only faithfully given by the pictures of an artist, I will take my reader down its beautiful valley, and tell him what I know respecting its beautiful villages.

The first in order is Bingham, situated on a fertile “interval,” surrounded with picturesque hills, charming and quiet as a summer day, and containing within the jurisdiction of its town an uncommonly fine farm, belonging to a Mr. Parlin, who manufactures large quantities of maple sugar.

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Solon is the next village in the Kennebeck valley, remarkable for nothing but Caritunk Falls, which are twenty feet high, and run through a gorge fifty feet wide. Here I saw some twenty men “driving” the logs that had been lodged all along the river when it was low. It is a laborious life which these men lead, but they receive good pay, and meet with many interesting adventures. They generally have the soul to enjoy fine scenery, and therefore demand the respect of the intelligent traveller.

Anson, though in the valley of the Kennebeck, is situated on Seven Mile Brook, and is a flourishing business place. From its neighbouring hills may be seen the sky-piercing peaks of Mount Blue, Saddleback, Bigelow, and Mount Abraham, which are the guardian spirits of Maine. The town is distinguished for its agricultural enterprise, and the abundance of its wheat, having actually produced more than is reported from any other town in the State.

Norridgwock, so named by the Kennebeck Indians, because,

when fighting with their enemies at this place, they could find *no-ridge-to-walk* upon, which was a desirable object. It is a charming little village, and associated with a celebrated Indian Chief named Bomazeen, and also with a Jesuit Missionary, whose name I do not remember. Not far from here is a picturesque fall, also a picturesque bend of the Kennebeck, where empties Sandy River, upon which are many extensive farms.

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Skowhegan is a thriving village, where there are fine falls, which I never could look upon without thinking of the famous Glen's Falls in New York, of which they are a complete counterpart, though on a smaller scale. Many and very dear to me are my recollections of its "choice bits" of scenery, of the fine singing I there heard, of the acquaintances there formed, and of the pleasant literary communings which were mine in company with one of the best and most intellectual of women, who has for many years been my "guide, counsellor, and friend."

Waterville, the next town on the river, is the seat of a Baptist College, and the head of navigation on account of the Ticonic Falls. It is the centre of an extensive farming district, which fact, together with the literary taste of its people, makes it an interesting place.

Augusta, the capital of the State, is also on the Kennebeck, and with its State House and other State buildings, its admirably conducted hotels, its commanding churches, its large bridge, and pleasant residences, is one of the most picturesque and interesting towns in the whole of New England.

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Hallowell, two miles below Augusta, was once a great place of business, and is still a very pleasant place, though unable to compete with its rival the Capital. In my mind, it is chiefly associated with some fine people, and particularly with three beautiful sisters, who are great lovers of poetry and fine musicians.

Gardiner, further down, is a tremendous place for saw-mills; and lumbering I look upon as one of the surest kinds of business. It contains the handsomest church-building in the State, and a number of fine residences belonging to its wealthy citizens, of which that one belonging to Mr. Gardiner (after whom the place was named), is the most elegant.

Bath is the next and most southern town on the Kennebeck; it is a large place, where there is a great deal of shipping done, and now in a flourishing condition. The sail down the river from here is a most delightful one, for the eye revels on a continual succession of pleasant farms, quiet headlands, solitary islands, and vessels of every kind passing up and down the stream. Even to the present day, the Kennebeck abounds in salmon, which are caught with nets from the first of May till midsummer. To 290 take them with the hook is indeed rare sport, and for the manner in which I conquered a solitary individual I refer my reader to a certain passage in "Scrope on Salmon Fishing." Few are the rivers that I love more than the Kennebeck, and very dear to me are its manifold associations.

I date this chapter from Portland, which is a thriving city of twenty thousand inhabitants, and interesting to the admirers of genius, because it is the native place of Mrs. Seba Smith, the poet Longfellow, and John Neal.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Fishing Party on the Thames—Watch Hill—Night Adventures.

Norwich. August.

A few mornings ago, just as the sun had risen above the eastern hills, which look down upon the Thames at Norwich, the prettiest sail-boat of the place left her moorings, and with a pleasant northerly breeze started for the Sound. Her passengers consisted of six gentlemen, all equipped in their sporting jackets, and furnished with fishing tackle, and their place of destination was Watch Hill, a point of land in Rhode Island, extending into the Atlantic, a few miles from Stonington. We were on a fishing frolic, as a matter of course, and a happier company, I ween, were never yet afloat, for the sport of a morning breeze. What with the story, the jest, the iced lemonade and exquisite cigar, the minutes glided by as swiftly and unobserved as the tiny waves around us. Now we met a solitary fisherman, towing for bass, and as we hailed him with a friendly shout and passed on, he began to talk in an under tone, and his voice did not die away until we had turned a point. What would I not give for an accurate record of that old man's life! Anon, we witnessed the soothing picture of a well-conducted farm, with its green-girt cottage, spacious barns, neat and flowing fields, with its horses, oxen, cows, sheep, hogs, and poultry. Now we saw some noble men, such as Vernet delighted to paint, hauling the seine, and, as the "fruit of all their toil" were thrown upon the sand, their flipping forms reflected back the sunlight, reminding us of—anything the reader may be

pleased to imagine. Now, we were overtaken and tossed about by a steamer bound to New Haven; and then we sailed in company with a boat, a sloop, and schooner; meeting others, beating up, from Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. And the termination of this pleasing panorama was composed of Gale's Ferry, the commanding town, fort, and monument of Groton, together with the city of New London, among whose anchored shipping floated a saucy Revenue Cutter, and at whose docks were chained a goodly number of storm-beaten whalers.

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Having taken in our stores, and obtained from the fish-market a basket of bait, we again hoisted sail, bound first to Commit Rock, and binding ourselves to capture all of the watery enemy which might tempt the power or the dexterity of our arms.

When about three miles from New London, all eyes were attracted by a beautiful craft on our lee, laden with a party of ladies and gentlemen. "They're going toward a reef!" exclaimed our captain; and no sooner had the words escaped his lips, than the stranger struck, and stove a hole through her bottom. We were just in time to save the party from a watery grave; and when we had landed them in safety on the beach, we were well repaid for our trouble by the consciousness of having done a good act, and by the thankful words and benignant smiles of the ladies fair. A dozen minutes more and we were within an oar's length of the fishing rock. "All ashore that's coming!" shouted our mate, as he held the boat fast, standing on the rock, when we all leaped out, and plenty of line having been given her, the boat swung to, and "like a cradled thing at rest," floated upon the waves. Then commenced the sport. The breeze was refreshing, and the breath of the salt sea-foam buoyed up our spirits to a higher pitch, and gave new vigour to our sinews.

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The youngest of the party was the first who threw his hook, which was snapped in the twinkling of an eye. Another trial, and a four-pound black-fish lay extended upon the rock. Another, and another, and another, until fourscore, even numbered, came following after. Tired of the sport, two of the party entered the boat, and hoisted sail for a little cruize. Half an hour had elapsed, when the steady breeze changed into a frightful gale, capsizing within hailing distance, a small fishing smack, with two old men in it. Hanging on, as they were, to the keel of the boat, their situation was extremely dangerous, as there was not a vessel within two miles. The poor men beckoned to us to help them; but as our boat was gone, we could not do so, which of course we much regretted.

For one long, long hour did they thus hang, “midway betwixt life and death,” exposed to the dangers of being washed away by the remorseless surge, or swallowed up, as we were afterwards told, by a couple of sharks, which were kept away only by the hand of Providence. This incident tended to cool our ardour for fishing; and as we were satisfied with that day’s luck, we put up our gear, during which time the boat arrived, and we embarked for the Hill.

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We made one short turn, however, towards the boat which had picked up the fishermen, as we were anxious to tell them why we did not come to their relief. We then tacked about, and the last words we heard from our companions were,—“Thank you—thank you—God bless you all,” and until we had passed a league beyond Fisher’s Island, our little vessel “carried a most beautiful bone between her teeth.”

At sunset we moored our little craft on the eastern shore of

Paucatuck Bay. On ascending to the Watch Hill hotel, we found it to be a large, well-furnished house, and our host to be a fat, jolly Falstaff-ish sort of man, just suited to his station. At seven o'clock we sat down to a black-fish supper, then smoked a cigar, and while my companions resorted to the ten-pin alley, I buttoned up my pea-jacket, and sallied forth on an exploring expedition. As I stood on the highest point of the peninsula facing the south, I found that the light-house was situated directly before me, on the extreme point, that a smooth beach faded away on either side, the left-hand one being washed by the Atlantic, and that on the right by the waters of Fisher Island Bay, and that the dreary hills in my rear were dotted by an occasional dwelling. The breeze had died away, and the bright, full moon was in the cloudless sky. Many sails were in the offing, passing by and being passed by the Providence and Stonington steam-boats bound to New York. The scenery around me, and the loveliness of the sky, with its galaxy of stars above, caused me to forget myself, and I wandered far away upon the shore—alone, in the awful presence of the great Atlantic Ocean. No sounds fell upon my ear, save the muffled roar of the ground swell, and the faint whispers of the tiny waves as they melted upon the sand. I traced my name, and beside it that of another, a being beauteous, for whose cabinet of curiosities I gathered many a round, smooth pebble, and many a delicate sea-shell. I wandered on, now gazing with wonder and admiration into the cerulean vault of Heaven, or into the still deeper blue of the mighty sea; and now singing with a loud voice one of the sacred songs of the sweet singer of Israel. Now, a thousand images of surpassing loveliness darted across my vision, as I thought of God—of an eternal life in heaven—and of love, divine and human; and then there came a weight upon my spirit, as I remembered the powers of darkness, the destiny of the

condemned, and the miseries engendered by our evil passions. One moment I deemed myself immortal, released for ever from the contaminating influence of sin, and then I thought of the valley of death, and trembled. In that communion with the mysteries of the universe, strongly blended as they were, I felt that I could wander on without fatigue, until the whole earth should be trodden by my pilgrim feet. But the chilly air and the fading night warned me to retrace my steps, and in an hour I had reached my home.

When the sun rose from his ocean-bed on the following morning, surrounded by a magnificent array of clouds, I was up, and busily engaged preparing for a day's fishing,—first, and before breakfast, for bluefish, afterwards for black-fish, and then for bass. While my companions were asleep, I went out with an old fisherman, and by breakfast time had captured thirty bluefish, weighing about two pounds a-piece. The manner of catching these is to tow for them with a long line, the bait being a piece of ivory attached to a strong hook. They are a very active and powerful fish, and when hooked make a great fuss, skipping and leaping out of the water.

At nine o'clock our party were at anchor on a reef about one mile from shore; and for the space of about two hours we hauled in the black-fish as fast as possible, many of them weighing eight to ten pounds a-piece. For them, you must have a small straight hook, and for bait, lobsters or crabs. A broiled black-fish, when rightly cooked, is considered one of the best of saltwater delicacies.

But the rarest of all fishing is that of catching bass; and a first-rate specimen I was permitted to enjoy. About eleven o'clock, I

jumped into the surf-boat of an old fisherman, requesting him to pull for the best bass ground with which he was acquainted. In the mean time my friends had obtained a large boat, and were going to follow us. The ground having been reached, we let our boat float wherever the tide and wind impelled it, and began to throw over fines, using for bait the skin of an eel six inches long. Those in the neighbouring boat had fine luck, as they thought, having caught some dozen five-pounders, and they seemed to be perfectly transported because nearly an hour had passed and I had caught nothing. In their glee they raised a tremendous shout, but before it had fairly died away, my line was suddenly straightened, and I knew that I had a prize. Now it cut the water like a streak of lightning, although there were two hundred feet out, and as the fish returned I still kept it taught; and after playing with him for about forty minutes, I succeeded in drowning him, then hauled up gradually, and with my boat-hook landed him in the boat safe and sound. The length of that striped bass was four feet two inches, and his weight, before cleaned, fifty-eight pounds. The reader can easily imagine the chop-fallen appearance of my brother fishermen, when they found out that “the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.” At three o’clock in the afternoon, a piece of that bass tended to satisfy the appetite which had been excited by his capture.

Satisfied with our piscatorial sports, we concluded to spend the rest of the day quietly gathering shells upon the beach; but causes of excitement were still around us. No sooner had we reached the water’s edge, than we discovered a group of hardy men standing on a little knoll, in earnest conversation, while some of them were pointing towards the sea. “To the boat—to the boat,” suddenly shouted their leader, when they all

descended with the speed of Swiss mountaineers; and on reaching a boat which had been made ready, they pushed her into the surf, when three of them jumped in, and thus commenced the interesting scene of hauling the seine. There was something new and romantic to us in the thought, that the keen and intelligent eye of man could even penetrate into the deep, so far as to designate the course of travel of the tribes of the sea. And when the seine was drawn, it was a thrilling sight to see those fishermen tugging at the lines, leaping into the surf, which sometimes completely covered them, to secure the tens of thousands of fish which they had caught. There was a grace and beauty about the whole scene, which made me long for the genius of a Mount or a Bingham.

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A little before sunset, I was again strolling along the shore, when the following incident occurred. The reader will please return with me to the spot. Yonder on that fisherman's stake, a little sparrow has just alighted, facing the main. It has been lured away from the green bowers of home by the music of the sea, and is now gazing, perhaps with feelings kindred to my own, upon this most magnificent structure of the Almighty hand. See! it spreads its wing, and is now darting towards the water—fearless and free. Ah! it has gone too near! for the spray moistens its plumes! There—there it goes, frightened back to its native woodland. That little bird, so far as its power and importance are concerned, seems to me a fit emblem of the mind of man, and this great ocean an appropriate symbol of the mind of God.

The achievements of the human mind “have their passing paragraphs of praise, and are forgotten.” Man may point to the Pyramids of Egypt, which are the admiration of the

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world, and exclaim, "Behold the symbols of my power and importance!" But most impotent is the boast. Those mighty mysteries stand in the solitude of the desert, and the glory of their destiny is fulfilled, in casting a temporary shadow over the tent of the wandering Arab.

The achievements of the Almighty mind are beyond the comprehension of man, and lasting as his own eternity. The spacious firmament, with its suns, and moons, and stars; our globe, with its oceans, and mountains, and rivers; the regularly revolving seasons; and the still, small voice continually ascending from universal nature, all proclaim the power and goodness of their Great Original. And everything which God has created, from the nameless insect to the world of waters, and highway of nations, was created for good, to accomplish some omnipotent end. As this ocean is measureless and fathomless, so is it an emblem, beautiful but faint, of that wonderful Being, whose throne is above the milky-way, and who is himself from everlasting to everlasting. But see, there is a heavy cloud rising in the west, the breeze is freshening, flocks of wild ducks are flying inland, and the upper air is ringing with the shrill whistle of the bold and wild sea-gull, whose home is the boundless sea; therefore, as the poet Noble has somewhere written, "the shortest homeward track's the best."

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Still in the present tense would I continue. The witching hour of midnight has again returned. A cold rain-storm has just passed over, and the moon is again the mistress of a cloudless sky, but the wind is still raging in all its fury.

"I view the ships that come and go,
Looking so like to living things.

O! 'tis a proud and gallant show
Of bright and broad-spread wings,
Making it light around them, as they keep
Their course right onward through the unsounded deep."

Dana.

God be with them and their brave and gallant crews. But again,

"Where the far-off sand-bars lift
Their backs in long and narrow line,
The breakers shout, and leap, and shift,
And send the sparkling brine
Into the air; then rush to mimic strife;
Glad creatures of the sea, and full of life!"

Ibid.

But I must stop quoting poetry, for as "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever," I should be for ever writing about the sea. Heavens! What a terrible song is the ocean singing! with his long white hair streaming in the wind. The waving, splashing, wailing, dashing, howling, rushing, and moaning of the waves, is a glorious lullaby, and a fit prelude to a dream of the sea.

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At an early hour on the following day we embarked for home; but a sorry time did we have of it, for the winds were very lazy. We were ten hours going the distance of twenty-two miles. It was now sunset, not a solitary breath of air, and we were off Gale's Ferry. Ashore we went, resolved to await the coming of the Sag Harbor steam-boat, which usually arrived about nine o'clock, and by which we were taken in tow. Snugly seated in our boat, and going at the rate of eighteen miles, we were

congratulating ourselves upon an early arrival home. But, alas, at this moment the painter broke, the steamer, unconscious of our fate, still sped onward, while we sheered off towards the shore, almost disgusted with human life in general—for our boat was large, and we had but one oar. But what matter? We were a jolly set, and the way we gave three cheers, as a prelude to the song of “Begone Dull Care,” must have been startling to the thousand sleeping echoes of hill, forest, river, and glen.

Having crept along at snail’s pace about one mile, we concluded to land, and, if possible, obtain a place to sleep, and something to eat; for not having had a regular dinner, and not a mouthful of supper, we were half starved. With clubs in our hands, to keep off hobgoblins and bull dogs, we wended our way towards a neighbouring farm-house, where we knocked for admittance. Pretty soon a great gawky-looking head stuck itself out of an upper window, to which we made known our heartfelt desires, receiving in return the following answer: “My wife is sick—hain’t got any bread—you can go in the barn to sleep if you want to;” and we turned reluctantly away, troubled with a feeling very nearly allied to anger. “Come, let’s go off in this direction,” exclaimed one of the party, “and I’ll introduce you to my old friend, Captain Somebody;”—and away we posted, two by two, across a new-mown field. Presently our two leaders were awe-stricken by the sudden appearance of something white, which seemed to be rising out of the earth beside a cluster of bushes, and the way they wheeled about and put for the river, (accompanied by their fellows, whose fright was merely sympathetic,) was “a caution” to all unbelievers in ghosts and other midnight spectres.

At last we halted to gain a little breath, an explanation was

made, and our captain forthwith resolved to investigate the matter. He now took the lead, and on coming to the mysterious spot, discovered an old blind white horse, who had been awakened by a noise, and, following the instinct of his nature, had risen from his lair, to be better prepared for danger. I doubt whether the echoes are yet silent, which were caused by the loud and long peals of laughter which resounded to the sky. Being in a strange land, without chart or compass, we could not find the mortal dwelling place of Captain Somebody, and so we changed our course of travel.

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We stopped at another house, farther on, but to save our lives we could not obtain an interview, although we entered the hen-coop, and set the cocks and hens a cackling and crowing, the pig-pen, and set the hogs a squealing, while a large dog and two puppies did their best to increase and prolong the midnight chorus. If our farmer friend did not deem himself transported to Bedlam, about that time, we imagine that nothing on earth would have the power to give him such a dream. Our ill-luck made us almost desperate, and so we returned to the boat, resolved to row the whole distance home, could we but find an extra oar.

It was now eleven o'clock, and the only things that seemed to smile upon us were the ten thousand stars, studding the clear, blue firmament. Anon, a twinkling light beamed upon our vision; and as we approached, we found it to proceed from a little hut on an island, where a Thames lamplighter and his boy were accustomed to pass the night after their work was done. Having again landed, we received a hearty welcome, as the host proved to be an old acquaintance of our captain and mate. "Have you anything to eat?" was almost the first question of every tongue. "No, nothing but this barrel of crackers and

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some cheese,” exclaimed the man of light. “And we,” shouted one of our crew, “have plenty of fish;—can’t we have a chowder?” “Ay, ay! a chowder, a chowder it shall be,” were the words which rang aloud to the very heavens. A wherry was despatched to the main-land, to the well-known habitation of an old fisherman, for the necessary iron pot and bowls for the potatoes and onions, which were dug for the occasion; for the pork, the pepper, and salt; all which, added to our biscuit and black-fish, nicely cleaned and prepared, constituted a chowder of the very first water. There was one addition to our company, in the person of the old fisherman; and our appearance, as we were seated in a circle on the floor, each with a bowl of thick hot soup in his hands, constituted a picture rich and rare. After we had finished it was acknowledged by all, that a better meal had never been enjoyed by mortal man. In about thirty minutes from this time the odd one of the company bade us “good night,” and the midnight brotherhood resigned themselves to sleep. The last sounds I heard, before closing my eyes, were caused by the regular opposition steam-boats from New York, as they shot by the island almost as “swift as an arrow from a shivering bow.”

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The first faint streak of daylight found us on board our boat, homeward bound, wafted on by a pleasant southerly breeze. At the usual hour, we were all seated at our respective breakfast tables, relating our adventures of the excursion just ended.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

A week in a Fishing Smack—Fisherman—A beautiful morning at sea—A day at Nantucket—Wreck of a ship—Night on the Sound.

Norwich. August.

On a pleasant Monday morning I started from Norwich, bound to New London, and from thence to any other portion of the world where I might have some sport in the way of salt-water fishing. In less than an hour after landing from the steam-boat, I had boarded the handsome smack Orleans, Captain Keeney, and by dint of much persuasion, secured a berth on board, to accompany him on a fishing voyage. In addition to my previous preparations, I had only to purchase a Guernsey shirt and tarpaulin; and by the time I was regularly equipped, the sails were hoisted, and we were on our course for Nantucket. An intimate acquaintance was soon formed between myself and crew, which consisted of the master, two sailors, and the cook. The whole time that I spent in their company was six days, as I reached home on the following Saturday evening. The incidents that I met with were somewhat new, as a matter of course, and I employed a few moments of every evening during my absence, in briefly recording the events of the past day; and that medley I now put together as a literary chowder.

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Monday Evening.—My observations to-day have been limited to our little vessel, in consequence of a dense fog, which drenched us to the skin, and seems likely to continue. I have obtained some information, however, concerning the character

of an interesting class of men. Smack-fishermen are a brave, hardy, honest, and simple-hearted race, and as my captain tells me, spend nine-tenths of their time “rocked in the cradle of the deep.” Their vessels, or smacks, are generally of about forty tons burthen; the number of those which supply New York and Boston with fish is said to be near a thousand, and they are all at home anywhere on the coast between the Kennebeck and the Delaware. Of the perils which these fishermen endure, and the privations they suffer, how little is known or thought by the great world at large! Yet I believe there is as much true happiness in their lives, as in those of any other class. Their fathers were fishermen before them, and as they themselves have mostly been born within hearing of the surf, they look upon the unsounded deep as their fitting home—their only home, and would not part with it for a palace or a crown. Four is the usual number of a smack’s crew, and the master is invariably called a skipper. Most of them are worthy husbands and fathers, whose families are snugly harboured in some convenient sea-port, with enough and to spare of the good things of life. They are a jovial set of men, hailing each other upon the ocean as friends, and meeting upon land as brothers. Each skipper thinks his craft the handsomest and swiftest that floats, and very exciting are the races they sometimes run. Their affection for their own vessel is like that of the Arab for his steed, and like the Arab, too, they have been known to weep over the grave of their darling and their pride.

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The kinds of fish which they mostly bring to market are shad, salmon, lobsters, mackerel, cod, bluefish, haddock, black-fish, pangies, bass, and halibut. The first three are generally purchased of local fishermen, but all the rest are caught by themselves. The haunts of the black-fish are rocky reefs,

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those of the bass and bluefish, in the vicinity of sandy shoals or tide rips, and those of the remainder in about fifteen fathom water. These are the varieties they capture by way of business; but when in a frolicsome mood, they frequently attack a sword-fish, a shark, or black whale; and soul-thrilling indeed, and laughable withal, are the yarns they spin concerning these exploits.

As to their mode of living, while at sea, it is just what it should be, and what they would have it, although it would be positively shocking to a Bond Street gentleman. But they always possess a good appetite, which is what money cannot purchase, and without which the greatest delicacy in the world would be insipid or loathsome. Fish, sea-biscuit, corned-beef, and pork, potatoes, onions, and pancakes, constitute their provisions, and what besides these would a reasonable man desire? It is with a mixture of some of these, that a *chowder* is concocted, and where can anything more delicious be found? And with these ingredients, moreover, they manage very well to keep body and soul together, unless a storm on a rock-bound coast happens to make a sudden separation.

I have just been on deck, and must say that I resume my pen with a heavier heart. The fog has not dispersed in the least, a regular gale of wind is blowing from the north, and the waves, seemingly in a revengeful mood, are tossing our bark about, as if the skipper, like the Ancient Mariner, had shot another albatros. But, like a fearless man as he is, he stands at the helm, watching the sails with a steady eye, and the men with their storm-jackets on are standing by, muttering something about the coming darkness, and a reef somewhere on our lee. Never before have I so distinctly understood the force of the

Psalmist's simile, when he compares a wave to a drunken man reeling to and fro. Both have it in their power to cause a mighty mischief, and both become exhausted and perish—one upon a sandy beach, and the other sweeping over the peninsula of time, finds a grave on the shore of oblivion. Heavens! how the wind whistles, and the waters roar! Ay, but a still small voice salutes my ear, and I lay me down to sleep, with a prayer upon my lips, and a feeling of security at my heart, as I place implicit confidence in Him who holdeth the ocean in the hollow of his hand.

Tuesday Evening.—I was awakened out of a deep sleep this morning by the following salutation from the skipper, as he patted me on the shoulder,

“It’s a beautiful morning, and you ought to be up—the fog is gone, and the wind is down; won’t you come up and take the helm awhile—so that the boys and I may obtain a little sleep before reaching the fishing-ground, which will be about, ten o’clock?”

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I was delighted to accept the invitation, and in a very short time the sailors were asleep, and I in my new station, proud as a king, and happy as a sinless boy. And, oh! that I could describe the scene that fascinated my eyes as I lay there upon the deck, with one arm reposing on the rudder, and my other hand grasping a Claude glass! I felt as I once felt before, when standing on the famous precipice of Niagara, that then, more than ever, I desired God to be my friend. I also felt, that if the world did not demand the feeble services of my life, I should wish to remain upon the ocean for ever, provided I could have “one fair being for my minister.” More earnestly than ever did I

long for a complete mastery of my art. The fact of being out of sight of land, where the blue element announced that the ocean was soundless, filled my soul with that “lone, lost feeling,” which is supposed to be the eagle’s, when journeying to the zenith of the sky. The sun had just risen above the waves, and the whole eastern portion of the heavens was flooded with the most exquisite colouring I ever beheld—from the deepest crimson to the faintest and most delicate purple, from the darkest yellow to an almost invisible green; and all blended, too, in forms of marvellous loveliness. A reflection of this scene was also visible in the remaining quarters of the horizon. Around me the illimitable deep, whose bosom is studded with many a gallant and glittering ship,

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that have the plain
Of ocean for their own domain.

The waves are lulling themselves to rest, and a balmy breeze is wandering by, as if seeking its old grandfather, who kicked up the grand “rumpus” last night; whereby I learn, that the offspring of a “rough and stormy sire,” are sometimes very beautiful and affectionate to the children of men. But look, even the dwellers in the sea and of the sea are participating in the hilarity of this bright morning! Here, a school of herrings are skipping along like a frolicsome party of vagabonds as they are—and yonder a shark has leaped out of the water, to display the symmetry of his form, and the largeness of his jaw, and looking as if he thought “that land-lubber would make me a first-rate breakfast,” there, a lot of porpoises are playing “leap-frog,” or some other outlandish game; and, a little beyond them, a gentleman sword-fish is swaggering along to parts unknown, to fight a duel in cold blood with some equally cold-blooded native of

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the Atlantic; and now, a flock of gulls are cleaving their course to the south, to the floating body, perhaps, of a drowned mariner, which their sagacity has discovered a league or two away—and now, again, I notice a flock of petrels, hastening onward to where the winds blow, and the waves are white. Such are the pictures I beheld in my brief period of command. It may have been but fancy, but I thought my little vessel was trying to eclipse her former beauty, and her former speed. One thing I know, that she “walked the water like a thing of life.”

I fancied, too, that I was the identical last man whom Campbell saw in his vision, and that I was then bound to the haven of eternal rest. But my shipmates returning from the land of Nod, and a certain clamour within my own body having caught my ear, I became convinced that to break my fast would make me happier than anything else just at that time, and I was soon as contented as an alderman at five P.M. About two hours after this, we reached our fishing-place, which was twenty miles east of Nantucket. We then lowered the jib and topsail, and having luffed, and fastened the main-sheet, so that the smack could easily float, we hauled out our lines, and commenced fishing, baiting our hooks with clams, of which we had some ten bushels on board. Cod fishing (for we were on a coddling cruise) is rather dull sport; it is, in fact, what I would call hard labour. In six hours we had caught all the skipper wanted, or that the well would hold, so we made sail again, bound to New York; and at supper-time the deck of our smack was as clean and dry, as if it had never been pressed save by the feet of ladies. At sunset, however, a fierce southerly wind sprang up, so that we were compelled to make a harbour; and just as I am closing this record, we are anchoring at Nantucket, with a score of storm-beaten whales on our starboard bow.

Wednesday Evening. The weather to-day has been threatening, and the skipper thought it best to remain at our moorings; but with me the day has not been devoid of interest; for, in my sailor garb, I have been strolling about the town, studying the solemn drama of life, while playfully acting a subordinate part myself. This morning, as it happened, I went into the public cemetery, and spent an hour conning over the rude inscriptions to the memory of the departed. In that city of the dead, I saw a number of the living walking to and fro, but there was one who attracted my particular attention. He was a seaman of noble presence, seated upon an unmarked mound, with his feet resting upon a smaller one beside it, his head reclined upon one hand, while the other was occasionally passed across his face, as if wiping away a tear. I hailed him with a few kind questions, and my answer was the following brief tale.

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“Yes, sir, four years ago, I shipped aboard that whaler yonder, leaving behind me, in a sweet little cottage of my own, a mother, a wife, and an only boy. They were all in the enjoyment of good health, and happy; and, when we were under sail, and I saw from the mast-head how kindly they waved their handkerchiefs beside my door, I too was happy, even in my hour of grief. Since that time I have circumnavigated the globe, and every rare curiosity I could obtain was intended for my darling ones at home. Last Saturday our ship returned. I asked no questions of the pilot for he was a stranger, but I landed, flew to my dwelling, and found it locked. The flagging in my yard attracted my notice, and I thought it strange that the rank grass had been suffered to grow over it so thickly. The old minister passed by my gate, and running to him with extended hand, I inquired for my family. ‘Oh Mr. B.,’ said he, ‘you must bless the Lord, —he gave them to you, and he hath taken them away.’

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And as the thought stole into my brain, my suffering, sir, was intense, and I longed to die. And there they are, my wife and darling child, and, a step or two beyond, my dear old mother. Peace to their memories.”

Such was the simple story, and I have pondered much upon the world of woe which must be hidden in the breast of that old mariner.

After dinner, to-day, I got into company with some fishermen who were going after bass and bluefish, and in a short time I had captured, with my own hands, two big bass and some dozen bluefish,—which I packed in ice as a present to some New York friends.

At my present time of writing, which is near ten o'clock at night, we are weighing anchor, and the skipper tells me we shall be in New York by to-morrow's sunset. An hour before coming on board this evening, I lounged into a sailor boarding-house, and mingled as freely with a company of whalemens there, as if I had been a *bonâ fide* member of the craft. I heard a great deal that interested me, and was sorry that I could not remain longer.

There were some in that company lately arrived from every portion of the world, and yet they were engaged in the same business, and had journeyed on the same mighty highway of nations. One was descanting upon the coral islands of the Torrid zone, another upon the ice-mountains of the Arctic Sea, a third was describing the coast of California, and another the waters that lave the Eastern shore of Asia. The more I listened to these men, the more did the immensity of ocean expand before my mind, and in the same proportion was I led to wonder at the wisdom of the Creator.

I have just been on deck, and find that we are on the way to our desired haven, wafted by a steady and pleasant breeze. Our course is between Martha's Vineyard and Rhode Island, a route studded with islands and seaports, that now appear in the cool starlight like the pictures of fairy land.

Thursday Evening. Instead of coming through the Sound last night, we headed our vessel outside of Long Island, and after a delightful sail have realized our skipper's promise, for we are now floating beside the market in New York. The reason assigned for taking the outside course was, that the fish would keep better, on account of the greater coldness of the water. Nothing of peculiar interest has happened to us to-day, except the meeting with a wreck off Sandy Hook. It was the hull of a large ship, whose name we could not discern. It had a very old appearance, and from the moss and sea-weed that covered it, we supposed it must have been afloat for many months, the plaything of the waves. "Man marks the earth with ruin," but who is it that scatters such splendid ruins upon the ocean? And a thousand remorseless surges echo back the answer: "To us, belong the glory of those deeds." If that wreck had language, what a strange, eventful history would it reveal! Its themes would be,—home and all its treasures lost; the sea, and all its dangers; the soul, and all its agonies; the heart, and all its sufferings. But when we multiply all this as fast as time is multiplying it, we cannot but realize the idea, that human life is but a probationary state, and that sorrow and sighing are our earthly inheritance.

Friday Evening. After portioning out my fish this morning, and sending them to my friends, I put on my usual dress, and having obtained a six hours' furlough, set off towards Broadway,

where, between the reading rooms and the studios of a few artists, I managed to spend my time very pleasantly. At noon, we embarked for New London and had a delightful time, passing through the East River and that pleasing panorama from the city to the Sound, never before appeared more beautiful.

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It is now late, and I have been on deck all the evening alone. In a thoughtful mood I fixed my eyes upon the stars, and my spirits were saddened by the continual murmur of the sea. Of what avail, thought I, is all this excitement? Why was I created, and what is my destiny? Is it to sail for a few brief years longer upon the ocean of life, and, when the death-tempest overtakes me, to pass away unloved and unremembered by a single human heart? If not an honoured name, can I not leave behind me an humble memory, that will be cherished by a few, to whom I have laid bare my innermost soul, when I was younger than I am, and a hundred-fold more happy? What! O night! what is my destiny?

Saturday Evening. We anchored off New London to-day, in time for me to take the evening steamer for Norwich. When I parted with my “shipmates,” I shook each one affectionately by the hand, and thought that I might travel many years without finding a brotherhood of nobler men. I reached home as the eight o’clock bells were ringing, and was reminded that another week of precious time was gone. That the past must be remembered as an unprofitable week, I cannot believe, for I feel that my soul has been enlarged, and my heart humbled by listening to the teachings of the mighty deep.

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Footnotes

- [1] The word Schroon is bad English for the Indian word *Scaroon*, the meaning of which is—“*Child of the Mountains.*” It was originally named by an Algonquin Chief, after a favourite daughter.

THE END.

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[The end of *Adventures of an Angler in Canada, Nova Scotia and the United States* by Charles Lanman]