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## OUT OF TOWN.

I DARE say you have stood on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, and while looking at the panorama of Montreal, viewed from either Longueuil or St. Lambert's, have seen the misty canopy of smoke, dust, and goodness-knows what else—perhaps cholera—overhanging the city, as over all cities, in a heavy veil, which you can see was not spread by the "cloud-compeller Jupiter;" and have felt, as you have looked at the purer firmament above you, that you had been living under an illusion in town, when you thought, by simply looking upwards, you saw the sky. You feel now you've been imposed upon, hoodwinked—for I will no more allow that the sky is apparent from the town than that you see the face of a pretty child when it is bedaubed from its epicurean indulgence in bread and treacle.

Well, I had been over at Longueuil, and had seen "the cloud" unusually heavy, and it occurred to me that, though our sanitary association were doing wonders in expurgation, they couldn't possibly remove that cloud, as all the witches are dead who might ride up on brooms, and sweep it away; and ballooning hasn't been quite brought to perfection—though, in my opinion, in a few years we'll be dabbling in balloon stock, and paying a high price for shares. As I said before, I had seen "the cloud," and it made me think of getting from under it for awhile: so one fine morning, some weeks ago, I found myself *en route* for this country village, where I now enjoy the felicity of awakening with the lark, and finding I have nothing to do but just what I please—which is a bliss to a fellow who has been coffin'd and cabin'd within the four walls of a city office ever since his last unwilling creep to school. Away from the din and dust of the streets to the quiet coolness of green fields and country lanes. There is more truth than fiction in the saying that "one must swallow a peck of dust before he dies," though only applied to residents of cities and towns; and if we could only hear of some city whose streets and paving do not produce dust, we should dub it the veritable "Utopia," and consign Mr. McAdam's fame to a quiet oblivion. How that man's dust does rise, spoiling and choking everything, from sunsets to birds' throats, and making housemaids cross, and people generally dry.

So here I am, getting as sunbrowed as a gipsy, and fatter than my tailor anticipated, when between buttons and buckles he limited my circumference for corpulence. The village is very pleasant—not too small to be lonesome, or too large to smack of the town; its outskirts are fine for pedestrianism, and the people are sociable enough—the mosquitoes rather much so, thank you. There is neither mountain to climb, or very grand sights to see, but I've been over one of the battle fields of the last war with the States, when they tried to take Canada, and didn't. History arose from the sod and surroundings, and my Canadian blood leaped proudly, when—just home myself from frontier-service with the "Vics"—I was shown where Canadian volunteers drove the Yankee brigands from our beloved soil *pro aris et focis!* I snuff up the delicious and exhilarating country breeze—surpassing any of Lubin's essences—I feel my blood more highly animalized, and am in good condition to take lessons on scalping.

I never enjoyed being alive as much as I do out here, and every day I am literally and metaphorically "in clover;" and in the change of air and the freedom, there's something of the ethereal sensation of going up in a balloon, or getting an unexpected rise of salary. Get up pic-nics here, and you can live like the people of Shakspeare's comedies, as they did in Arden Forest; you can enjoy your various moods, from grave to gay, to perfection, whether you be melancholy as Jacques, jolly as Falstaff, or philosophical as Hamlet; and it is no labor to find "tongues in trees, books in brooks, sermons in stones." You may go down to the shore, and count the waves like Cicero, or talk to them like Demosthenes, or make ducks and drakes

with pebbles, like Scipio. If ye're too terribly wise and matter-of-fact to do the *dolce far niente*, or be sociable, you may play the anchorite here much better than in town, and you can tell your woes to the pigs and birds, if your own humanity isn't agreeable. If you're peevish—perhaps from hard labor—don't take blue pills, but "throw physic to the dogs," though not to mine, if you love me—and come out here, and live on country fare: bring gun and fishing rod, and you may fill game bag and basket with the choicest captures.

I am quartered in the village inn. The cool breeze blows over those hills down into the valley, capturing the perfume of the sweetest trees as it passes through them, and wafting its delightfulness into my windows; the birds twitter and whistle, and pipe and sing, on those trees in front of me, much prettier than they do it in town; and by this time I can imitate some of them so accurately, that, if you'd close your eyes, I could deceive you. I have cut a sun-dial on my window-sill, where the shadows slant, and part of the day I can tell the time without looking at my watch. I have cut my name on a pane of glass, which, I suppose, will remain as long as they say written-upon panes do. I have had botanical, geological, meteorological, and other logical turns of mind, and can boast of a bit of a herbarium, some geological specimens, and a correct weather table. I have done many other wise and unwise things, and have managed to make myself perfectly content. But for three days continuously it's been raining, and the sidewalk are worse than those in Hemmingford, on which several of our corps nearly broke their necks; and I've read all my own books, and there's such a literary destitution here, that a Walker's spelling book, and another on cookery, are the only others in the house. So I've been amusing myself, while in the inn, by listening to the conversation, and noting the manners of its visitors; and I don't think I can do better than give you a sketch of them.

The inn is quaint, and its guests queer. It is half wood and brick, and of an architecture very far from being classical, and is called the "Mermaid," no less. The bar-room seems the principal point of attraction, though as much for gossiping as imbibing. A lot of un-easy chairs are around the room; a large spittoon in the centre, which looks bad for the expectorating propensities of the villagers; the usual complement of barbarous pictures, and the array of bottles, tumblers, &c. in review order. One of the pictures is called "The Tyranny of Temperance," and represents a drunken woman on the floor, entreating her husband, who wears a temperance badge, to give her a glass of rum. He is seen tyrannically offering her a tumbler label'd "cold water." How very cruel of him? The other pictures are a most extraordinary group; but I rather think you'll see something better at our next art conversazione.

The prospect from the bar window is decidedly romantic. To my left is the highway, while immediately in front is the yard, where a shockingly ugly French boy is cutting wood. He splits two sticks honestly enough, then rests five minutes, and repeats this labor-saving process, until mine host appears upon the scene, when there is a splinter-flying wonderful to look at, and Baptiste is called a good boy. A rheumatic-looking hay and working pump, a very bilious-looking hay-cart, evidently on its last wheels, and an indiscriminate concourse of hens, chickens and baby-pigs, who squeak as high as *C. alto*. Over there is a pig-stye, and the frequent bursts of melody from that orchestra must be charmingly sympathetic to that young lady who lives not a marble-shot from here, and who talks and reads Tennyson from morning to night. I wonder if that would appease a hungry man's appetite, supposing he couldn't afford to hire a cook.

Dr. Southey cleverly made the pig give lessons on natural theology and transcendental philosophy, and Charles Lamb extols it roasted; but as for me, I hate them alive or dead, and I think the country of the Gergesenes was blessed, when the devils got into the herd of swine, and they perished in the sea. There are people with