

that the people of that Dominion were a thirsty race, and that the sole occupation in life of every man, woman and child was the manufacture of "mint juleps," or the brewing of "John Collins."

Captain Butler, with fair pretence to literary excellence, and with a faithful description of the lands through which he passes, almost convinces his reader that he, too, was of that gallant band; that he was with them, enduring their hardships and sharing their pleasures, and that marched that dreary march at the author's side, with Cerf-Vola, the untiring, in advance.

To give a *résumé* of his travels, Captain Butler, with men and dogs, leaves Red River in the autumn of 1872, travels thence on foot to Lake Athabasca, which body of water is reached in the first week of March, in the following year. Thence along the Peace River to the Rocky Mountains, and down to the northern part of British Columbia. At Quesnelle, a frontier post on the Fraser River, some 460 miles north of Victoria, he bids us adieu. Of this immense journey, by far the greater part was accomplished on foot, the dogs merely serving to drag the baggage train; of the manner in which these remarkable animals work we have an excellent account.

The exterior of the volume, an excellent illustration, as well as the author's eulogy, introduces us to Cerf-Vola, the untiring—*an Esquimaux* dog, in whom, next to the author himself, the most inveterate dog-hater is compelled *volens volens* to take the deepest interest. Cerf-Vola is an old friend of the author's. Through many a long march had he proved his strength, as well as his loyalty, and we can easily understand the feeling which prompts Captain Butler to prefer the unswerving affection of the dog to the mercenary allegiance of his human companions. How the other dogs, at the end of a long day's pull, must have wished that their leader was of a disposition more prone to ease and repose!

The hardships endured by that little band are, even to us, the inhabitants of a country the severity of whose climate throws such an obstacle in the way of immigration, most marvellous; these hardships seem to have been of such opposite natures. For example, here is the author's account of a wet night:

"To camp, what a mockery it seemed, without blankets or covering, save our rain-soaked clothes; without food, save a few biscuits. The cold rain poured down through leafless aspens, and shelter there was none. It was no easy matter to find a dry match, but at length a fire was made, and from the surrounding wood we dragged dead trees to feed the flames. There is no necessity to dwell upon the miserable hours which ensued! All night long the rain hissed down, and the fire was powerless against its drenching torrents. Towards morning we sank into a deep sleep, lying stretched upon the soaking ground."

Here again is an admirable picture of an occurrence familiar to us, even in the streets of Montreal:

"We have all heard of hard hearts, and stony eyes, and marble foreheads, alabaster shoulders, snowy necks, and firm-set lips, and all the long array of similitudes used to express the various qualities of the human form itself; but firmer, and colder, and whiter, and harder than all, stands forth prominently a frozen nose."

"A study of frozen noses would be interesting; one could work out from it an essay on the admirable fitness of things, and even history, read by the light of frozen noses, might teach us new theories. The Roman nose could not have stood an Arctic winter, hence the limits of the Roman Empire. The Esquimaux nose is admirably fitted for the climate in which it breathes, hence the limited nature it assumes."

The Indian finds in Captain Butler a true friend, and protector from the numberless calumnies levied at his defenceless character by the so-called philanthropists of the day. His honesty, even unsullied by education and soap, spoken of by Mark Twain, is well illustrated by the following anecdote:—

"The Moose that Walks" arrived at Hudson's Hope early in the spring. He was sorely in want of gunpowder and shot, for it was the season when the beaver leave their winter houses, and when it is easy to shoot them. So he carried his thirty marten skins to the fort, to barter them for shot, powder, and tobacco.

There was no person at the Hope. The dwelling-house was closed, the store shut up, the man in charge had not yet

come up from St. John's; now, what was to be done? Inside that wooden house lay piles and piles of all that the Walking Moose most needed. There was a whole keg of powder, there were bags of shot and tobacco, there was as much as the Moose could smoke in his whole life. Through a rent in the parchment window the Moose looked at all these wonderful things, and at the red flannel shirts, and at the four flint guns, and the spotted cotton handkerchiefs, each worth a sable skin at one end of the fur trade, half a sixpence at the other. There was tea, too—tea, that magic medicine before which life's cares vanished like snow in spring sunshine. The Moose sat down to think of all these things, but thinking only made matters worse. He was short of ammunition, therefore he had no food, and to think of food when one is very hungry is an unsatisfactory business. It is true that the "Moose that Walks" had only to walk in through that parchment window and help himself till he was tired. But no, that would not do.

"Ah! my Christian friend will exclaim, 'Ah! yes, the poor Indian had known the good missionary, and had learned the lesson of honesty and respect for his neighbour's property.'

"Yes; he had learned the lesson of honesty, but his teacher, my friend, had been other than human. The good missionary had never reached the Hope of the Hudson, nor improved the morals of the 'Moose that Walks.'

"But let us go on.

"After waiting two days he determined to set off for St. John, two full days travel. He set out, but his heart failed him, and he turned back again. At last, on the fourth day, he entered the parchment window, leaving outside his comrade, to whom he jealously denied admittance. Then he took from the cask of powder three skins worth, from the tobacco four skins worth, from the shot the same; and sticking the requisite number of martens in the powder-barrel, and the shot-bag, and the tobacco-case, he hung up his remaining skins on a nail to the credit of his account, and departed from the El Dorado, this Bank of England of the red man in the wilderness, this Hunt and Roskel of Peace River.

"And when it was all over he went his way, thinking he had done a very reprehensible act, and one by no means to be proud of. Poor 'Moose that Walks'! in this trade for skins you are but a small item. Society muffles itself in your toil-won sables in distant cities, while you starve and die out in the wilderness."

"The credit of your twenty skins hung to the rafters of Hudson's Hope, is not a large one; but surely there is a Hope somewhere else, where your account is kept in golden letters, even though nothing but the clouds had baptized you, and no missionary had cast water on your head, and God only knows who taught you to be honest."

The scenery through which Captain Butler's line of march passes must have been truly magnificent. No less beautiful is his description of it. Were our enlightened citizens to make a tour along the valley of the Peace River, or catch a glimpse of the canons of the Rocky Mountains, we are afraid the beauties of the Saguenay or of the Upper St. Lawrence would sink to comparative insignificance.

The absence of that tedious and eternal *ego*, which forms such a prominent part in the majority of modern books of travel, is in this volume not unworthy of remark. Notwithstanding the solitary character of his journey, Capt. Butler does not tire his reader with a lengthened account of his own thoughts, words and actions, but makes it his object more to describe the country through which he passes, and the people with whom he meets, than his own personal experiences or exploits. Many amusing incidents are recorded; for example, his meeting with Pete the miner, the doings of Cerf-Vola, and the "ways that are dark" of his *compagnons de voyage*.

As one of the many amusing stories he gives us we may cite the following:—

"An enthusiastic American, from the steamer's deck, points out to the British loungee that glory of American Independence, Bunker's Hill."

"There, sir, is Bunker's Hill!"

"Ah! indeed," drawled a genuine British loungee, with that superb ignorance only attained after generations of study, as he quietly scanned the ridge through his lazily arranged eye-glass. 'Bunker—who was Bunker, and what did he do on his hill?'"

Captain Butler left the wild North Land to join the Ashantee expedition. It will be by no means unreasonable for us to surmise that from his pen it shall be our pleasure to read an account of that glorious instance of British prowess. Like Oliver Twist, we "want more."