

reached, and the guests are being welcomed at the door by his Excellency. A *déjeuner à la fourchette* is waiting for them, which despatched, with ample justice, they safly forth to see the grounds, then perhaps the finest about Quebec, and to view the falls from above and below, as taste or their guides directed. A couple of hours thus passed pleasantly away. Miss Dambourgès acted as chaperone to her friend Lucy Hurst, and Mr. Black, who were both enchanted with the beauty of the cataract, with its wild and enchanting scenery.

It were useless for me to attempt to describe these beautiful falls; for to those who have seen them it would be an annoying work of super-erogation; while to those who have not, in a simple word-painting I could not hope to convey any idea of their grandeur or loveliness. Higher than Niagara, with more picturesque environs; almost as beautiful as those of Tivoli, with the advantage of being natural, and much more imposing. The waters, blue as sapphire at the top, in an instant roll over, and are shattered into an ever-falling avalanche, white and wild as a driven snow-storm; while the presiding nymph of the river, wrapped in an everlasting robe of Iris' own spinning, ever dances about their feet in and out of her dark grotto, situated behind their mighty roar. The stranger is always delighted with these splendid falls, while their familiars love them daily more and more.

About three o'clock a horn sounded, the signal of departure for the natural steps. Some of his Excellency's servants had been engaged, during the morning, in constructing a path thither which might be possible for the ladies, and had brought on before the necessary hampers, for a thorough enjoyment of the evening.

The party was not long assembling, and in valiant encounter with stock and stone, and worrying mosquitoes, were soon merrily making their way through the woodland path, which led to the spot selected for the pic-nic. When arrived there most of the servants were sent back, as the ladies wished to do all that was necessary, in preparation, themselves, with the awkward assistance of those of the gentlemen who did not indulge in the fragrant weed—then—oh! ye vanished days!—a majority of those present. So the cloth was speedily laid, the viands spread, while the wine was set to cool by the mossy spring. Then as each was best able, they set themselves to work upon the inviting array, in as comfortable positions as were possible under the circumstances. Miss Dambourgès and Miss Hurst secured easy seats upon a natural step all overgrown with moss, while the one above served as a table; there, under the shade of a spur of the wood which ran down close to the river, waited upon by Rollo, they had a right merry time of it.

Of the others the greater number seemed to be also enjoying themselves amazingly. His Excellency was in the best of humours, and his smiles were reflected upon every face. Eye and eye a song was proposed, and, at the request of their host, Malvina Dambourgès sang the national chansonette of "La Claire Fontaine," while the others joined in the chorus. Other songs followed; but Malvina, as soon as she had got through hers, escaping from the rest of the company, proposed to Lucy Hurst and Rollo a hunt for wild flowers, which grew about in abundance, and for some time they wandered contentedly along by the edge of the woods, gathering such as they found there; but getting tired of this Miss Dambourgès saw, what she imagined to be, a much finer bunch of red-deaths, *frilium fatidum*, a crimson vase-shaped flower, common in our woods in May and June, than any she had yet seen, just on the lowest ledge of the steps and immediately overhanging the precipice. Turning to Rollo she said, "Will you be my knight DeLorge, and fetch me that bouquet of flowers you see down there? but be careful, it might be dangerous."

Lucy Hurst just heard the last words, and looking up from her arrangement of a wreath of violets and winter-green, with its scarlet berries, beheld Malvina pointing towards the edge of the cliff, but could scarcely believe her eyes when she saw Rollo leaving them,

evidently with the intention of getting the flowers. "Mr. Black," she almost screamed, "where are you going? Malvina, call him back. How could you be so silly? he will surely fall over." But it was too late, he was already within a few feet of the fatal coveted treasures, when—oh, my God! for the giddy thoughtlessness of a woman!—he slipped upon the smooth rock, wet with the spray from the rapids, and the waters of the little spring, which trickled over just near the spot, and having nothing wherewith to save himself, not a branch or projection of rock within reach, he slid over the brink; there, turning, for a moment, he wildly clutched the little bunch of flowers and earth, his face, white and drawn, was turned towards the paralysed and awe-struck girls; then with a shriek of agony he slid out of sight, down into the turmoil of rocks and water beneath.

Those two poor girls!

Malvina rushed towards the brink, to save or to follow him, then stopped, screamed, and lost consciousness, while Lucy instantly gave the alarm. That, however, there was little need to do; for the rash attempt and its sad termination had been witnessed by more than half the party. Some one or two ran cautiously to the brink, but all traces had disappeared. A terrible scene ensued among the ladies—some fainted, others screamed, while a few retained their self-possession, and aided the gentlemen to look after the rest. Nothing could be done for Rollo, except send off messengers to set watches for his body—to recover it, if possible, above the falls; for if once it went over them, the chances were that it would never be seen again. The rest of the party, carrying with difficulty Malvina Dambourgès, who was falling from one hysterical fit into another, sadly followed them to the mansion-house, by the same path they had come so joyously along a few hours before. Arrived there, three or four of the ladies volunteered to attend to Malvina, while of the rest some, persuading their gentlemen friends to leave, started at once for town, others gathered in gloomy groups about the house, waiting for news and speaking in hushed voices, while most of the gentlemen went down to aid the watchers.

Thus an hour or so dragged slowly by. Malvina it was pitiable to behold. At every returning dawn of consciousness she would exclaim in an agony of remorse "Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu! quelle folle! quelle sottise!" and immediately go off in another paroxysm.

At length news was brought that the body had been recovered, and was being brought to the house, and it was thought best to communicate this to Malvina, who thereupon insisted upon seeing it; in spite of the endeavours of those around her she made her way to the hall and met it as it was entering the door. But the cold, white face, marked in horrid contrast with a deep crimson gash, the thick masses of dishevelled hair, dank and dripping, and the staring eyes, were too much for the already over-excited girl. She fell on her knees beside the corpse with a passionate scream for pardon. But the balance of her mind was gone—she became again insensible, and awoke delirious.

For many days the fever raged, while kind watchers relieved each other by her bed. Her ravings were terrible to listen to. Her sufferings frightful to behold. For hours together she would talk, and mutter, and scream of falling precipices and snaky flowers living and growing round her, entwining and choking her—of friends slowly slipping over cliffs in their sleep, and falling—ever falling—on jagged rocks—and she watching them and unable to help; of ocean caves full of dead, white bodies, chattering and gibbering, or coldly upbraiding, and she all alone with them; then of cool green woods and the soothing murmur of waters, and the song of summer birds. At length the fever passed, and she awoke towards the close of a long afternoon in the early harvest, very, very weak, but calm and quiet, and with no distinct recollection of anything. But with the first dawn of memory the agony of remorse again seized upon her. In her then depressed state it was too much. Praying for pardon, with bitter weeping, she sobbed her life away.

Since then, the old French burying-ground itself has disappeared, where for many a year the turf grew green over the graves where Rollo Black, with all his fair young hopes, and Malvina Dambourgès' broken heart lay at rest, side by side, the victims of thoughtlessness and remorse.

WYVANT.

Quebec. 9th July, 1866.

## A GREAT BORE MADE USEFUL.

ABOUT fifty years ago, a sharp-eyed, quick-witted man, ready to draw wisdom from any and every fount, was one day looking at a piece of old ship-timber, which had been ruined by the attacks of the marine animal known as the *Teredo navalis*; and he bethought him of watching the manner in which this worm manages its destructive work. He found that the animal is armed with a pair of strong shelly valves, which envelop its anterior integuments; that, with its foot as a fulcrum, a rotatory motion is given by powerful muscles to the valves, which, acting on the wood like an auger, penetrate gradually but surely; and that the particles of wood, as they are loosened, pass through a longitudinal fissure in the foot, and so upward to the mouth, where they are expelled.

This sharp-eyed man was Mark Isambard Brunel; and the use which he made of his observation, some few years later, was to derive from it the principle of constructing his wonderful shield, with which he excavated the Thames Tunnel. A great work was that. Many ingenious men had tried their skill, long before Brunel took up the matter, in carrying a roadway under the Thames. So long ago as 1798, Mr. Ralph Dodd, the civil engineer, made public a plan for forming a tunnel, more than half a mile long, from Gravesend to Tilbury, which he thought he could effect for the wonderfully small sum of sixteen thousand pounds. He had been led to the idea while thinking of the useful services which might be rendered by a similar tunnel under the Tye from North Shields to South Shields. Indeed, there had really been a tunnel made, by miners if not by road-engineers, under the last-named river; seeing that the workings of the Wylam Colliery had been carried beneath it from the Northumberland to the Durham side. Nothing definite, however, resulted from Mr. Dodd's suggestion. Next, we hear of a Mr. Vazie, who, in 1802, succeeded in forming a Company (the Thames Archway Company) for the construction of a tunnel from Rotherhithe to Limehouse, not far from the locality of the present Thames Tunnel. He sank a shaft, to explore the ground on the Surrey side, and from the bottom of this shaft, seventy-six feet below high-water level, difficulties accumulated in such number that Mr. Rennie, Mr. Chapman, and Mr. Trevethick were called in to report and advise. Engineers differed, directors quarrelled, and the works were suspended till 1807. The workmen then proceeded to dig away, until they had got twelve hundred feet across the breadth of the river. The river broke in; bags of sand and clay were used to stop up the gap; another irruption and another stop-gap; and so over and over again—until, at length, the Company had lost all their money. They made one more move, however: they offered a premium of five hundred pounds for the best plan of continuing and finishing the work. Plans flowed in upon them by scores; and they submitted forty-nine of them to the careful examination of Dr. Hutton and Mr. Jessop. The report was a discouraging one. The examiners said: "Though we cannot presume to set limits to the ingenuity of other men, we must confess that, under the circumstances which have been so clearly represented to us, we consider that an underground tunnel, which would be useful to the public, and beneficial to the adventurers, is impracticable." This decision settled the whole affair; so there was an end of the first great bore. A few years afterwards, in 1816, Mr. Hankin obtained a patent for a new mode of making a tunnel under the Thames, by sinking two brick shafts into the river at certain dis-