

tenance, and general appearance of this handsome young Indian. I at once judged him to be an OTTOWEENIS; that is, one of the Ottowin family, whose members are easily distinguished from the rest of the tribe, by their greater stature, lofty bearing, and evident superiority of manner. They constitute the aristocracy of the Milicetes; for even among these sons of the forest there are different ranks and grades, some being always distinguished above their fellows, either by greater quickness and cleverness, by being more expert in hunting, or by displaying superior skill in the various contrivances and expedients which tend to the comfort and well-being of a roving people. The leader of the trappers confirmed the judgment which had been formed, by telling us that his name was Nicolah Ottowin, and that he was son of the chief who was then at the head of the family. He said that he, with his three companions, had made an excursion to the Baie des Chaleurs; and, while there, had been very successful in hunting, fishing, and fowling, on the coast. That becoming very tired of the sea-shore, and finding they had amassed sufficient means to procure an outfit, they had determined upon exploring the interior of the country in that quarter, in pursuit of beaver. The north-eastern portion of New Brunswick is yet in a perfect state of wilderness; and large tracts of country, containing some millions of acres, have hitherto been scarcely, if at all, visited or explored by the white man; and here the beaver is yet found, though not by any means in so great numbers as at the first settlement of the province, some eighty years since. The outfit of the party consisting chiefly of pork, flour, and lard, with blankets and ammunition, had been procured at Dalhousie, a flourishing settlement, with a good seaport, at the head of the bay, from whence they had ascended the river Restigouche, not without great labour and difficulty, from the numerous falls and rapids in that noble and extensive river. Having at length arrived at the headwaters of the Restigouche, they there deposited the heaviest portion of their stores, *en cache*, for future occasion; and then, lightly equipped, had by easy *portages* reached a chain of lakes, from which flows the Tobique, another extensive river, running in the opposite direction from the Restigouche, and falling into the St. John.—These lakes are connected by deep narrow creeks, which are distinguished, in New-Brunswick, by the general name of “thoroughfares.” By means of these, and by occasional *portages*, a great extent of wilderness country had been

traversed, and made available as hunting-ground; and here was the scene of their labours, which had been crowned with so great success.

The beaver, as affording by far the most valuable article in the fur-trade, was the principal object of their search; and in pursuit of these they had roamed from river to river, and lake to lake, generally destroying nearly the whole of those found in each place they visited. We were told that the situation of the beaver-houses was various; rivers and “thoroughfares” were generally selected when the depth of water and other circumstances were suitable; as the beaver thereby gained the advantage of the current to convey wood and other necessities to their habitations, which were also safer, affording greater protection to the animal than those built in standing water. In situations where the water is liable to be drained off, or the supplies dried up by frost, the wonderful instinct of the beavers teaches them to provide against so great an evil by erecting a dam across the stream, and thus securing a sufficient depth of water. These dams were described by Nicolah as being built in a manner precisely similar to the one already described in these sketches.—The houses, he said, were built of the same materials as the dams; but were, in general, much more rudely constructed. They seldom found more than one family, consisting of the old beavers and four or six young ones, in each house; but one large house was mentioned that had been met with on a small island in one of the artificial ponds, which had ten apartments under one roof. These apartments did not communicate with each other, a distinct family appearing to occupy each of them, and having a separate place of exit and entrance, under the water.

The first place where the hunting party halted was in the vicinity of a very extensive beaver-dam, which bore the appearance of being of long standing; from having been frequently repaired with aspen and willow, which had thrown up strong and vigorous shoots, it had become very solid and capable of sustaining great pressure. The roofs of the beaver-houses were visible above the waters of the pond, in which the beavers were seen, after nightfall, swimming about in very considerable numbers, appearing to be busily engaged in providing a store of provisions for the coming winter.—The ice not having then formed, the trappers were very cautious not to disturb or alarm them; and they therefore encamped at the distance of half a mile. They said that, had they