

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

## HIPPOCAMPUS, OR SEA HORSE.

This "strange fish," for a fish he truly is, though belonging to a very odd family—the pipo-fishes—is not an entire stranger to our northern waters, being found along the New Jersey coasts, and quite far up the Hudson River. Some very fine specimens constitute one of the points of special attraction in the New York Aquarium.

The picture gives a striking portraiture of the creature; and what a jumble of oddities—the head of a horse, fins of a fish, tail compounded of a crocodile's and a ring-tailed monkey's, and the ribbed body of a Chinese lantern! In general, he is found clinging on to some seaweed or fragment of shell, swaying backward and forward, with oft repeated and very rapid vibrations of the pectoral fins. If it is his pleasure to release his hold and change his location, he moves in the upright form seen in the engraving, using the large back fin for propulsion. In voyaging, however, he is very sort: as he generally adheres to the first object that lies in his way.

The Hippocampus is very docile, and easily tamed, and one who is so fortunate as to obtain a specimen, he will receive for many an hour of deeply interested study and observation.

## THE HERO OF QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

At the annual picnic of the Metropolitan Sunday-school at Queenston Heights, in July, the Rev. Dr. Withrow recounted the principal incidents which had made that spot historic, and read the following extracts from his story of the year of 1812:

The morning of the thirteenth of October, 1812, a day ever memorable in the annals of Canada, broke cold and dreary. Low-hung clouds rattled the sky and made the dawn later still. They cast still darker shadows on the sombre clumps of spruce and pine that clothed the sides of the gorge, and on the sullen waters that flowed between. A couple of fishermen in the neighbourhood who were serving in the militia had been permitted by the officer in command to attend to their scenes with the injunction to keep a sharp look-out at the same time, and to be ready at an instant's summons to join the ranks.

The elder of the two men was a sturdy fisherman—Jonas Evans by name—a Methodist of the Lady Huntingdon Connexion. The other, Jim Larkins, was Canadian born, the son of a neighbourly farmer. About six o'clock in the morning they emerged from their spruce booth and began hauling their rude windlass upon the seine, heavily laden with fish. "Bark!" exclaimed Jonas to his companion; "what noise is that? I thought I heard the splash of oars."

"It is only the wash of the waves upon the shore or the sigh of the winds among the pines. You're likely to hear nothing else this time o' day, or o' night rather."

"There it is again," said the old man, peering into the darkness. "And I am sure I heard the sound o' voices on the river. See there!" he exclaimed, as a long dark object was descried amid the gloom. "There is a boat, and there behind it another; and I doubt not there are still others behind. Run, Jim, call out the guard. The Lord has placed us here to confound the devices of the enemy."

Snatching from the booth his trusty Brown Bess musket, without waiting to challenge, for he well knew that this was

and another emerged rapidly from the darkness, and their prows grated upon the shingle as they were forced upon the beach. The invading troops leaped lightly out with a clash of arms, and at the quick, sharp word of command formed upon the beach.

Meanwhile, on the cliff above, the sharp challenge and reply of the guard, the shrill rattle of the bugle, and the quick throbbing of the drums calling to arms are heard. The men turn out with alacrity, and are soon seen, in the grey dawn, running from their several billets to headquarters, buckling their belts and adjusting their accoutrements as they run. Soon is heard the measured tramp of armed men forming in

Queenston Heights, the whole slope of the hill was swept by a heavy artillery and musketry fire from the American shore. Nevertheless, with his aides, he rode full speed up to the 18-pounder battery, midway to the summit. Dismounting, he surveyed the disposition of the opposed forces and personally directed the fire of the gun. At this moment firing was heard on the crest of the hill commanding the battery. A detachment of American troops had climbed like catamounts the steep cliff by an unguarded fisherman's path. Sir Isaac Brock and his aides had not even time to remount, but were compelled to retire with the twelve gunners who manned the battery. This was promptly occupied by the Americans, who raised the stars and stripes.

Placing himself at the head of a company of the 49th, he charged up the hill under a heavy fire. The enemy gave way, and Brock, by the tones of his voice and the reckless exposure of his person, inspired the pursuit of his followers. His tall figure—he was six feet two inches in height—his conspicuous valour, and his general's epaulettes and cockade attracted the fire of the American sharpshooters, and he fell, pierced through the breast by a mortal bullet. As he fell upon his face, a devoted follower rushed to his assistance. "Don't mind me," he said. "Push on the York volunteers," and with his dying breath sending a message to his sister in the far-off Isle of Guernsey, the brave soul passed away.

As they approached the village of Queenston, Neville and Zenas found that a temporary lull in the hostilities had taken place. The Americans had possession of the heights, and were strongly reinforced from the Lowiston side of the river.

The redcoats from Fort George—about four hundred men of the 41st regiment, together with part of the 49th, which had already been mentioned—were about to make a by-road apparently away from the scene of action.

"Halloa!" said Zenas to young Ensign Norton of the 41st regiment, who was a frequent visitor at his father's house. "I don't understand this, you are not running away from those fellows, are you? Why don't you drive the Yankees from that battery?"

"We intend to, young Hotspur, but it would be madness to charge up that hill in face of those guns. We are to take them in flank, I suppose, and drive them over the cliff."

"Where's Brock?" asked the boy, jealous of the fame of his hero, which he seemed to think compromised by this prudent counsel.

"Have you not heard?" said Norton, with something between a sigh and a sob. "He'll never lead us again. He lies in yonder house," pointing to a long, low, poor looking dwelling house on the left side of the road.



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the vanguard of the threatened invasion, he fired at the boat, more for the purpose of giving the alarm than in the expectation of inflicting any damage on the moving object in the uncertain light.

The sound of the musket shot echoed and re-echoed between the rocky cliffs, and repeated in loud reverberations its thrilling sound of warning.

"Curse him! we are discovered," exclaimed the steersman of the foremost boat, with a brutal oath. "Spring to your oars, lads! We must gain a footing before the guard turns out, or it's all up with us. Pull for your lives!"

No longer rowing cautiously with muffled oars, but with loud shouts and fairly churning the surface of the water into foam, they made the boat—a large flat-bottomed barge—bound through the waves. Another

The first detachment of invaders were driven with some loss behind a steep bank close to the water's edge, but they were soon reinforced by fresh arrivals, and being now in overwhelming strength, steadily fought their way up the bank.

Meanwhile, where was Brock? Such, we venture to think, was the most eager thought of every mind on either side. He was speeding as fast as his good steed could carry him to his glorious fate. The previous night, at headquarters at Fort George, he had called his staff together and, in anticipation of the invasion, had given to each officer his instructions. In the morning, agreeably to his custom, he rose before day. While dressing, the sound of the distant cannonade caught his attentive ear.

With his two aides, he galloped eagerly to the scene of action. As he approached