

And each with sympathizing face
 Hoped that her own true lover's place
 Would be the second in the race.
 Then forth advancing in his sleigh
 The stately form of old Beauvais
 Appeared among the shouting throng,
 And with a voice like Stentor's, strong,
 Taught by his daughter's shrewd device
 Who knew the mysteries of the ice,
 Announced the scrupulous rules to guide
 The contest for the peerless bride.
 In a straight run the course shall reach
 From where the trending of the beach
 Rounds into Pointe a Gulquolet,
 To Huron Point across the bay;
 Thence turning at the blasted elm,
 The limit of Maconse's realm,
 Back to the starting point again
 Across the white and slippery plain.
 And he whose steed's returning feet
 Shall first upon the margin beat,
 Shall take my mansion and my land,
 And, if she will, my daughter's hand.

The graybeards shrugged their shoulders wide
 At such a long and freezing ride;
 Eight miles across the raven's flight
 Must reach before his feet can light;
 And when upon the glassy floor
 That space must twice be traveled o'er,
 The horse that wins without a founder
 Must be as hard as an eighteen pounder.
 But the swift pacers cocked their ears
 In scorn at such unworthy fears;
 And, ranged in order on the shore,
 The friendly rivals reached a score,
 Waiting the signal to begin
 The race that only one could win.
 Each in such sliding carriage placed
 As suits his money or his taste,
 Jumper and cutter, train and pung
 Behind the nimble pony swung,
 While the trim cariole's graceful wedge,
 With its shafts hung low at the runner's edge
 Was decked in the spoils of the shaggy bear,
 Ready to cleave the frozen air.
 But what has troubled the Sieur Beauvais,
 And what the cause of the long delay?
 The course is long and the day is brief,
 The night comes on like a stealthy thief,
 And woe to the Knight who rides astray,
 Far from the land on the wintry bay.
 Alas, the old man's eyes are dim;
 For under his features hard and grim
 His soul is soft and his spirit mild,
 And his heart is melting for his child;
 He knew her love for young Beauclerc,
 And marvelled why he was not there.
 He was a youth of manly heart,
 Lithe as a panther, straight as a dart,
 And loved to share the hunter's toil
 More than he cared for his costly spoil.
 Changing their names with one another,
 The Swan creek chieftain called him brother
 And a sturdy man he saw who met
 The tawny or white Eshtonaquet.