

crossing the Monongahela, went up its southern banks, as high as Williamsport. I found the country people were in the habit of calling the city "Pitt" or "Fort Pitt," a term dating back doubtless to the time of the surrender, or rather taking possession of Fort Du Quesne, by Gen. Forbes. Mineral coal (bituminous) characterizes the entire region, as far as my excursion reached. By a happy coincidence in its geological structure, iron ores are contained in the series of the coal deposits. On returning from this trip, night set in, very dark: on the evening I approached the summit of the valley of the Monongahela, called Coal Hill. The long and winding road down this steep was one mass of moving mud, only varied in its consistence, by sloughs, sufficient to mire both man and horse. I was compelled to let the animal choose his own path, and could only give him aid, when the flashes of lightning lit up the scene with a momentary brilliance, which, however, had often no other effect but to remind me of my danger. He brought me, at length, safely to the brink of the river, and across the ferry.

To be at the head of the Ohio river, and in the great manufacturing city of the West, was an exciting thought, in itself. I had regarded Pittsburgh as the alpha, in my route, and after I had made myself familiar with its characteristics, and finding nothing to invite my further attention, I prepared to go onward. For this purpose, I went down to the banks of the Monongahela, one day, where the arks of that stream usually touch, to look for a passage. I met on the beach, a young man from Massachusetts, a Mr. Brigham,—who had come on the same errand, and being pleased with each other, we engaged a passage together, and getting our baggage aboard immediately, set off the same evening. To float in an ark, down one of the loveliest rivers in the world, was, at least, a novelty, and as all novelty gives pleasure, we went on charmingly. There were some ten or a dozen passengers, including two married couples. We promenaded the decks, and scanned the ever changing scenery, at every bend, with unalloyed delight. At night we lay down across the boat, with our feet towards the fire-place, in a line, with very little diminution of the wardrobe we carried by day,—the married folks, like light infantry in an army, occupying the flanks of our nocturnal array. The only objection I found to the night's rest, arose from the obligation, each one was tacitly under, to repair on deck, at the hollow night-cry of "oars!" from the steersman. This was a cry which was seldom uttered, however, except when we were in danger of being shoved, by the current, on the head of some island, or against some frowning "snag," so that we had a mutual interest in being punctual at this cry. By it, sleep was to be enjoyed only in sections, sometimes provokingly short, and our dreams of golden vallies, studded with pearls and gems, were oddly jumbled with the actual presence of plain matter of fact things, such as running across a tier of "old monongahela" or getting one's fingers