

For The Amaranth.

SKETCHES FROM NOVA-SCOTIA.

THE VALLEY OF ANNAPOLIS.

"Not rural sights alone, but rural sounds
Exhilarate the spirit; and restore
The tone of languid nature."

"Lovely indeed the mimic works of Art,
But Nature's works far lovelier."

READER! have you ever visited the fertile valley of the Annapolis?—if not, the advice of one well acquainted with it, is, to neglect no longer the pleasure which awaits you in so delightful and profitable a tour. In this bright season of the year, when the wild foliage is so luxuriant—and clad with more than vernal beauty—when the upspringing seed is fast covering the fruitful soil, and the various stages of vegetation are diversifying the landscape—nothing can be more pleasant and cheering, than to sail up the river—to follow its sinuous course, and to feast your eyes with the delicious scenery that is every where presented to them. The beholder of the vessel in which you might be a passenger, at a distance, would be impressed with the belief, that her fairy prow were, in fact, cleaving the wide marsh-ground that lay in all its summer richness before him, or, that her sails were the wings of some mighty inhabitant of the air, in search of its prey over the meadows.

The entrance from the Bay of Fundy to the waters formerly known as the "*Port Royal Basin*," is picturesque in the extreme. Here the North Mountain is separated, and a passage opened for the discharge of the accumulated waters of the river. On each side the hills rise now abruptly, now retreating gradually backward on the surrounding country, and are every where clothed with the finest verdure. If with a fair wind, and flood-tide, you are coming from the Bay inward, you will soon see the beautiful village of Digby. It is situated on the declivity of a well cultivated ridge of high-land, on the north west side of the above mentioned basin. Neat and cleanly in its appearance, it seldom fails to be a favourite of visitors of all grades and classes. Its streets are laid out at right angles and ornamented with a variety of trees and shrubbery, some of which are natives of the Province, with others from a foreign soil. It naturally enjoys a delightfully salubrious air, which, together with the exercise attendant upon a village life, renders it a most desirable retreat to the inde-

pendant and retired merchant, of the more populous city, whose encumbered air rather serves to unstring than to brace the nerves, and the constant din and turmoil of which, but too often destroys that calm and peace which are so necessary to the invalid.

From Digby, also, on a clear day you may see in the distance,—besides the highly cultivated fields of the farming population—the town of Annapolis;—the early capital and oldest settlement in the Province—Goat-Island which divides the river into two channels, at the distance of about nine miles from where you are stationed to behold it.—Bear Island at the mouth of Bear River, on the southern side, and at a much shorter distance—while the rippled surface of the water before you is covered with the boat of the fisherman—the schooner of the merchant—and the black dinky smoke of the fizzing steamer. On either hand as you move up the basin, may be seen the noble forests that clothe the sides of the distant mountains, the busy ship-yard more immediately upon the banks of the river, and the steeples of the country churches glittering in the laughing sunbeams, and apparently smiling with joy at your approach. Yes, gentle reader, such are the scenes which are destined to greet your eyes, till you arrive at the old and by circumstances connected with the earlier history of the Province—venerable town of "*Port Royale*," or as it is now called Annapolis.

This place was settled by the French, as early as the year 1604, and was the seat of Government until 1750, when Halifax, from supposed superior advantages, became the capital. It is situated on a point of land which divides the upper and lower basins, and compresses the waters of the river into so small a compass, that the stream is here emphatically known by the name of "the narrows." Annapolis is said to be the oldest settlement in North America, and the stranger may here find much to interest him, especially if he be acquainted with the historical notices of our country. The remains of the old "Government House," and the fast decaying military fortifications of other and more troublesome times, are objects which cannot fail to fill the mind with suitable emotions. It is also adorned by an English Church, a Roman Catholic Chapel, an Academy, and the finest Court House in the Province—the latter of which, deserves a more particular notice. It is situated at the junction of the Annapolis, and General's Bridge road—the ground story, or lower