

by Aldrich, the story of the girl in blue in whom we become almost as much interested as did the hero of the story, and who turns out, almost as much to our disgust as to his, to have been no girl at all, but only a phantom creature of his friend's brain—mischievously improvised to try how far he could interest another in an illusion. We sympathise heartily with the youth who wakes from 'love's young dream' to find his affection—wasted on a non-existent ideal—thrown back on himself, and feel that he is at least as much to be pitied as the lovers of Greek fable who were liable to see the lady of their choice suddenly converted into a laurel or some equally unresponsive object. A fable which, perhaps, finds its real counterpart in many a marriage, entered upon with glowing anticipations, all the ideal qualities in the lover's mind being freely discounted to the credit of the particular Dulcinea in question, when lo! the wedding ring breaks the spell, and the lover wakes to find that the girl of his imagination was as non-existent as was the maiden in 'diaphanous blue' of Aldrich's story, and that the wife he has taken 'for better or for worse' is somebody very different indeed. But to return to our hammocks. Few hammocks, in this Canada of ours, could be more charmingly placed. Overhead, interlacing boughs of feathery pine and glossy oak make a hundred fans catching every fugitive breeze that comes their way. To the left almost under the hammock, a cliff, some eighty feet high shelves down to the rushing blue St. Lawrence below. In front, the cliff curves round to the right, fringed here and there with pine and cedar, while beyond it the eye ranges on to one wooded point after another, curving greenly around sheltered bays; and to islet after islet, set like green feathery nests in the blue river. Whichever way you turn your head you can count islands till you have to stop, because your eye grows confused in the misty distance.

Every moment, too, the changing light varies the scene, brightens some distant point; brings out some distant island into bold relief, gives a deeper blue to some distant stretch of river, or reproduces with photographic accuracy, every tint and shade of the foliage on the bank in the calm water below. The river currents, too, are a perpetually shifting study. They are to the river what the fleecy clouds floating overhead are to the air. Every changing current makes its mark upon them, the ripples noiselessly travelling over the glassy river keep the record of every shifting breeze, until the breeze rises into a gale and then the snowy crests of the waves here and there show in bold relief against the blue. Animate nature around is interesting as well as inanimate. The rook, cawing his hoarse complaints from the top of some angular weather beaten pine; the robin piping his pathetic little refrain, the whip-poor-will going through his monotonous catch with a perseverance and determination worthy of a devotee telling his beads, are only a few of the many sounds that suggest the wide world of bird and beast life, interests, hopes and fears that lies outside our arrogant self-absorbed humanity, or a sharp *chirr-chirr* salutes your ear and you see a frisky 'chipmunk,' full of important business, scrambling up and down your pine, bustling about from branch to branch like an astute marketer, and finally tossing down a specially fine fir cone, to carry it off and eat it at leisure, or—who knows—store it up for winter use. While you are still watching the chipmunk, you hear a chorus, the splash of oars, and looking down, see far below you, a boat gliding through the azure waves beneath, making a deep green double of itself and its passengers; or you catch through the waving boughs, the gleam of a white sail, and presently a graceful little yacht sails by in quiet dignity—a contrast strong enough to the noisy, puffing steam-yachts and 'propellers' that are ever and anon