

So, finding myself in time for the steam-boat on Lake Champlain, at ten o'clock, instead of going to hear a historical oration from some patriotic burgher of Platt Deutch, descent, I took my seat in another stage-coach; lodged, I forget where; and reached White-hall about noon, an hour or two before the putting off of the steam-boat for St. John's, the first town, or rather village, in Canada.

By the way this White-hall is not a royal palace, nor even a gentleman's seat; but a small post-town at the mouth of Wood Creek. It is the same that was called Skeensborough (Query, why change the name?) when Weld wrote his ingenious comparisons between Canada and the United States, and fearlessly quoted General Washington as his authority, for the palpable falsehood that the mosquitoes of this place would bite through the thickest boot—The mosquitoes have since utterly vanished—stings and all; and they would have been quietly forgotten, together with the fire-flies, and bull-frogs, and supposed rattle-snakes of other transatlantic peregrinators, in American wilds, if it had not been for this contemptible story—preserved, like bugs in amber, by their unaccountable conjunction with the pellucid name of Washington.—Rattle-snakes are already so rare in America, that I, who have travelled thousands of miles in our back-country, never met with but one of them; and no doubt they will become, in another century, as scarce as snakes are said to be in Ireland, through the interference of St. Patrick; though the fact may very well have happened without a miracle, since Ireland has been peopled for thousands of years, and every peasant has a hog or two, to whom snakes are a favourite repast.

But before I take boat, let me recall the village of Schaghticoke, which was passed on the road, somewhere about midway—the never-enough celebrated berg or dorff from which the cervantic genius Knickerbocker, in his incomparable history of New-York, derives his pretended pedigree. The scattered houses of which it consists are built in nooks and crannies round the yawning gulf of a roaring cataract, which descends between jutting rocks and craggy pines, with as many twists and turns, and as much of spray and splutter, as the never to be forgotten work itself proceeds under its characteristic motto:

Die wahrheit die in dunster lag,
Da kommt mit klahrheit an den tag.

The truth which late in darkness lay
Now breaks with clearness into day.