

season, and it chanced that, on the preceding night, the river had broken up, so that the roar and fracas of crashing ice might have been likened, during forty-eight hours afterwards, to some terrible disorganization of nature. Nothing daunted, however, by the circumstance, many of the Canadian ladies made the usual preparations, and among others the Miss D'Egville's.

Here Villiers paused a moment, and with a significant "hem," sought to arouse the attention of the grenadier; but Cranstoun, insensible to the appeal, and perhaps unwilling to listen to a story that occasioned so much mirth whenever it was repeated, continued with his back immovably turned towards the speaker.

"All very well," pursued Villiers; "but we know the adage—'none so deaf as those who will not hear.' I have said," again turning to De Courcy, while those who were near listened not without interest to the story, familiar even as it was to them all, "that the Miss D'Egville's were of the party. At that time our friend was doing the amiable to the lively Julia, although we never could persuade him to confess his penchant; and, on this occasion, he had attached himself to their immediate sleigh. Provided, like the Canadians, with poles terminated by an iron hook at one end and a spike at the other, we made our way after their fashion, but in quicker time than they possibly could, harnessed as they were in the sledges. With the aid of these poles, we cleared, with facility, chasms of from ten to twelve feet, and alighting on our moccasined feet, seldom incurred much risk of losing our hold. Our ball dresses were taken in charge by the ladies, so that our chief care was the safe passage of our own persons. We all arrived without accident, and passed a delightful evening, the American officers exerting themselves to give the *coup d'état* to the last ball of the season."

"Yes," interrupted the incorrigible Middlemore, as he cracked a peccan nut, "and the balls reserved for us this season will also carry with them the *coup de grass*."

"The night," pursued Villiers, no one noticing the interruption save by an impatient 'pish,' "gave every indication of a speedy break up. The ice yet floated along in disjointed masses, but with even greater rapidity than on the preceding day. Two alternatives remained—either to attempt the crossing before further obstacle should be interposed, or to remain in Detroit until the river had been so far cleared of the ice as to admit of a passage in canoes. With our leaping poles, we were not so much at a loss, but the fear entertained was principally for the safety of the sleighs. Nothing dismayed, however, by the dangerous appearance of the river, the ladies, after due deliberation, courageously resolved on returning without delay, and we accordingly set out on our somewhat hazardous expedition."

"Notwithstanding it was, as I have already remarked, the close of winter, the cold was intense, and we were warmly clad. I do not know if you have ever seen Cranstoun's huge bear skin coat, (an affirmative nod was given by De Courcy), well: in this formidable covering had he encased himself, so that when he quitted the town, surmounted as his head was moreover with a fur cap, he presented more of the appearance of a dancing bear than of a human creature. In this guise he attached himself to the sleigh of the D'Egville's, which, in crossing, happened to be the furthest down the river, of the group."

"What a damn'd long time you are telling that stupid story, Villiers," at length noticed Cranstoun, wheeling round and regarding the narrator with a look of ill assumed indifference, "I could have told it myself in half the time."

"I am afraid you would not tell it so faithfully," replied Lieutenant Villiers, amid the loud laugh which was now raised at Cranstoun's expense. "You see it is so good a thing, I like to make the most of it."

Here Cranstoun again turned his back upon the party, and Villiers pursued. "The main body of the expedition had got nearly half way across the river, when suddenly our ears were assailed by moanings, resembling those of some