

Glimpses of Places and Things.

(The notes from Black's Europe in Pictures.)

The Origin of Glaciers.

The snow which falls above the snow-line on mountains does not melt, but as it is continually being piled up, the pressure from above forces the snow underneath down into the valleys below. The compressed snow hardens into ice and forms a slowly moving glacier. Below the snow-line the glacier melts and thus forms the source of a river.

Set your pupils to pick out on a map of the world the rivers that probably rise from the ends of glaciers.

The Tundras.

For two-thirds of the year the Tundra is a snow-covered desert; but during the short summer the snow melts and brilliantly-coloured flowers and stunted berry-bearing bushes spring into life. At this time, too, the Tundra is the home of innumerable water-birds and thousands of mosquitoes.

Where are the Tundras?

The Black Forest.

The dark green of the pine trees gives the Black Forest of Germany its name. The scenery is, on the whole, solemn and gloomy, and this may be the reason why so many weird legends are told by the peasants who dwell in this region. Some of these stories are to be found in Grimm's *Fairy Tales*.

Can you quote passages from poetry and prose, telling of the sombre quality of pine woods?

Spanish Rivers and Plateaux.

Many Spanish rivers run through deep gorges with steep sides. If we were to climb to the top of the gorge we should find that it was trenched in a tableland, seamed here and there with mountain ridges. In ranging over these boundless wastes the eye catches sight here and there of a straggling herd of sheep or goats, attended by a lonely herdsman. The soil is, as a rule, too barren for agriculture.

It is the cutting down of the forests and consequent floods that accounts for the barrenness of many parts of Spain.

The White or Silver Birch.

The birch in Russia is used not only for tanning but for many other purposes as well. From its bark are made cups and baskets, and from its wood the bobbins employed in spinning flax into linen. Birch logs are said to give the best smoke for curing fish. The birch is a deciduous tree. It tends to grow farther north than the oak, the beech, etc.

What are the uses of the white birch in Eastern Canada?

Gibraltar.

The rock of Gibraltar has been tunnelled with passages and casemates; in them powerful guns have been placed

so as to command the Straits, which are only about ten miles wide here. The town has fine dockyards, and is valuable as a coaling and re-fitting station.

Tell something of the history of Gibraltar as a fortress since it fell into the hands of the British.

The First School in Canada.

Madame de la Peltrie's life in New France is inseparably associated with the school she founded, for it afterwards developed into the great Ursuline seminary of Quebec, still active and flourishing after more than two and a half centuries. She and her companions took up their residence in a little two-roomed house previously used as a warehouse, which they playfully called their palace. It was the Lower Town, near what is now known as the Champlain Market. The French inn now occupying this site is so old and quaint and foreign that the traveler stopping there finds little difficulty in carrying himself back over the long flight of years and conjuring up vivid pictures of the landing of these gentle French ladies.

The school began with six Indian and a few French girls. But soon reports of this wonderful institution, where girls, irrespective of race or condition, were taken in, clothed in beautiful garments, and given plenty of food, spread throughout the neighbouring country, and crowds of red-skinned maidens flocked thither. So many made their appearance that the miniature seminary could not accommodate them all, and soon a larger and more commodious building was erected in Upper Town, on the site which the school occupies today.

Madame de la Peltrie threw herself into the work of caring for these little savages with all the enthusiasm of her ardent French nature. She assumed the duty of teaching them the more polite accomplishments, while Mother Marie and the other two women instructed them in the principles of the catechism and the French language. It became her favourite diversion, after spending an hour or two in teaching them to sew, to dress them up like little French children, and take them to visit their parents or to the chapel not far distant; and grotesque looking objects they were, with tight Norman caps covering their black and glistening locks, and snowy kerchiefs pinned around their tawny throats. They regulated all their actions by hers, and frequently those about them by making an elaborate curtsy like a grand dame of France.—*Mary Sifton Pepper, in the Chautauquan.*