

other resting on the shore, it answered as a cable to keep the whole fabrick in its position; and this along with a few stakes drove into the bottom at unequal distances appeared to be the only precautionary means used to prevent the whole from floating off. The water was very still and the place well sheltered as I before mentioned; but should a rapid rise of the river take place, I would not be surprised to hear of this ark-like habitation with all its inmates paying an unwilling visit to Montreal, some night; or perhaps they might be roused from their slumber on the way, by the motion of their house in descending the rapids of St. Ann's or Lachine.

After taking a minute survey of the exterior, which was done in a shorter space of time than I have taken to describe it, I entered this watery domicile, and found it crowded to excess. All our crew and passengers had rushed in, and these along with the father, mother, and a parcel of children, (the inmates,) nearly occupied all the spare room in the place.—As a substitute for a fire place they had a stove which stood the most prominent and hot object in the middle of the floor, and which answered the double purpose of warming the inhabitants and cooking their victuals, which is I find no unusual thing in this country, where the cold of the winter is said to render stoves absolutely necessary, although I should imagine not the most peasant cooking apparatus for a small apartment during the summer months when the thermometer stands above 75 in the shade. The house was divided into two equal parts by a wooden partition running the whole length; and which formed it into two apartments. The one of these was dedicated as a cubiculum or bed chamber for the family, the other was used as kitchen, parlour, dining and drawing room, for the inmates, and grog-shop, for the visitors.

The family as I have already said was composed of the father, mother, and a parcel of children, whose rapid motions rendered it impossible to ascertain their numbers correctly. This I regretted for I had a desire to know what was the average number of a family in Canada, having from the large groups of children I noticed at the different doors we passed, formed an idea, that it was more than in England. In the latter place this is accurately known from the various census and enumeration of the families which have been taken, but here as far as I could learn there was no such thing, nor was it known if the number of persons to each family in Canada, was more or less than in other countries. In speaking on this subject to many persons who were considered men of intelligence: they (I found) had never bestowed a thought upon it nor could be convinced that to ascertain this fact was of any use, so much for the statistical knowledge of Canada.

The family I was now among, were dirty squalid looking creatures, with countenances indicative of bad health. This I attributed to their situation, and that by being continually resident on the water they must I conceived be exposed to damp and fogs. From the replies of the father to some queries I found it necessary here as in other cases *ne crede colori* for he assured me his family all enjoyed perfect health. But his assertion did not exactly satisfy me, and I was at a loss to account for the unhealthy appearance of his children