

The sail was lowered and the men readily "stretched to their oars" in order to get round the point which still lay a considerable distance ahead of us. It will be seen in the sequel their efforts however well intended were all in vain. What aggravated the distress of our situation, should the storm overtake us, was the place of the river where we were at the moment. The bank opposite presented no trace of cultivation, no hut or house to which we could fly for shelter on putting ashore; it seemed to be low and swampy, covered to the water's edge with the sombre native pines of the country, whose dark hue, added to the dreary prospect our situation presented. Philosophers have agreed that man is a gregarious animal; and certainly society if it heightens the enjoyment of good fortune, is no less valuable in enabling us to bear the reverse. To share our pleasures with others is a great means of augmenting the enjoyment of them; and in the same manner when we see those around us participating in our sufferings and distress; or involved in similar difficulties, it will remove a part of the load, and make it easier born. Even our sympathy for them, if near and dear to us, supplants that self-distress which would be otherwise so severe. But under the pressure of ills when struggling to overcome them; it is then that society becomes truly valuable.—It is then that the gregarious principle in the nature of man becomes most serviceable to him. When his efforts are witnessed by others who will duly appreciate their value; his pride is excited and he doubles his exertions, that they may meet their due share of applause. When lost in a boundless forest.—Man from his natural desire to preserve life will make every effort to extricate himself—but his courage will soon fail and he sinks at length in despondency. How different the feeling which prompts to exertion "in the battle's broil." There are then "eyes upon him," he has not only to use his best endeavours to preserve life but he has a prospect that his actions will be related by some eye witness, and his merit or disgrace stamped, accordingly as he has well or ill demeaned himself. This latter feeling prompted our boatmen to strain every nerve to get round the point before the coming storm should overtake us. The captain cheered them on by precept and example. Some of the passengers lent their assistance by double manning the oars.—Others held forth promises of reward in case of success, and judiciously praised them for their exertions.—But all was in vain.

After a few seconds of a dead calm, a sheet of blue lightning flashed across the surface of the water apparently so near the boat that all on board were sensibly affected by it. Each, as if by one sudden impulse clap'd his hand to his eyes as if to protect them from the sulphureous meteor.—The females uttered a sudden, faint shriek, hardly audible to the rest, and of which they were themselves unconscious.—All was calm for the moment and "the boldest held his breath for a time," when the surcharged clouds seemed at once to be relieved from their terrific burden by a tremendous crash of thunder; followed instantly by a torrent of rain, not exceeded in violence by any of those tropical Tornadoes with accounts of which travellers astonish the weakness of our domesticated minds. To seek shelter from the "pelting of the pitiless storm," was out of the question,