

tumn, when the waving reeds have changed their green dress for one of deep russet brown, when vast flocks of blackbirds go forth from it at morning in search of food, and return at evening to their nests. See! there are a few of them there now, flitting about and perching on the tallest stalks they can find. They build their nests and hatch their young down in the solitude of this wild marsh, and leave it for a warmer climate when the cold weather approaches.

In the fall of the year this place is a favorite resort for ducks, too. Then you may hear the guns of the hunters in every nook and corner of it, and see men popping in and out among the tall reeds in their little tiny skiffs, which look as if a puff of wind would blow them over. You should come here then, and in winter also, when in the severer spells it is one great field of ice and snow, with brown tufts of withered grasses and flags dotting it here and there. I think that it is more truly picturesque than at any other season.

A few weeks earlier than now in June would have seen the sturgeon fleet on the lower river just below the bridge—a sight worth seeing. To behold the fishermen in their rude punts, bobbing up and down on the stream of foaming water which leaps over the dam, and throwing out their baited hooks to entice the big fish, is an experience worth having. It becomes fairly exciting when they catch hold of one of these monsters of the deep, and, after a fierce struggle, drag him, puffing and blowing, into the boat.

Sometimes they remain out hours after sunset; then the long streak of white foam resting on the dark and gloomy river, and the almost ghostly appearance of the fisher-boats, as they dance on it for an instant and then vanish into the shadows, form a phantom-like scene such as Rembrandt or Salvator Rosa would have loved to paint.

Now turn round and look away up

stream! What a noble piece of water it is—a small lake, in fact, over half a mile in width as far as we can see it, and that is over three miles. The river, in its natural state, was not half as wide, but the building of the dam and embankment had the effect of overflowing the flats for some miles up, and thousands of acres, which were formerly covered with tall, spreading trees, have been for many years under water. At some points the dead trunks and branches of these trees still remain standing. They remind us of those weird pictures of barren and blasted forests, which we meet with in the writings of some of the old romancers and poets. But, for the most part, wind and storm and decay have done their work with these giants of the wood, and nothing but the stumps can now be seen.

It is good to rest here for awhile, taking no heed of the flight of time. Calm, clear and bright the beautiful river lies before us, not a wave, not a ripple, to break the repose of its surface. Like some vast mirror, it reflects every object on its banks—the green trees, the white mills and storehouses, the dwellings, the barns, the bridges—we see them all down in those mystic depths, plain and distinct both in form and color.

Ruskin somewhere says that, under certain conditions, there is as much to be seen in the water as above it. We have only to look on that scene before us to feel the truth of his remark.

“How came that long double row of broken piles there?” you ask,—“there on the further side of the stream, which seems to run up past that inlet?”

This is all that remains of the old original tow-path. Long before steam-boats or locomotives were known in these parts, great teams of horses used to toil along it, dragging scows and barges and schooners behind them. For many years the Grand River was the principal outlet for the whole surrounding country. Immense rafts of