

6 THE THERMOMETER CLOSELY WATCHED—GETTING COLD.

little higher the clouds completely shut out the earth, and the cold white masses below us had precisely the same look that a mountainous snow-covered country does, as you look down upon it from a higher mountain. Those who have crossed the Alps—or have stood upon one of the lofty summits of the Sierra Nevada, and gazed down upon the eternal snows below and around them, will be able to catch the idea I am trying to convey. In six minutes we were far above all the clouds, and the sun and we were face to face. We saw the time after that when his face looked very fair to us. In eight minutes after leaving the earth, the thermometer showed a fall of 24 degrees. It stood at 84 when we left. The balloon rotated a good deal, proving that we were ascending with great rapidity. At 5:48 thermometer stood at 42, and falling very fast. At 5:50 we were at least two miles high—thermometer 34. At this point a suggestion made by a friend just before starting, was found to be a very good one. He had advised the taking along of some cotton, with which to fill the ears when at great heights, and my father had procured me some. The unpleasant ringing sensation had now become painful, and I filled both ears with cotton. This made my head feel a good deal as a very large hollow pumpkin may be supposed to, with a humming bird buzzing upon its surface—a comparison with which, doubtless, many who read this account will hardly quarrel. At 5:52 we put on our gloves and shawls—thermometer 32. The wet sand bags now became stiff with cold—they were frozen. Ascending very rapidly. At 5:54 thermometer 28, and falling. Here we caught our last sight of the earth by daylight. I recognized the St. Lawrence to the south-west of us, which showed we were drifting nearly north. At 6 o'clock we thought we were descending a little, and LaMountain directed me to throw out about 20 pounds of ballast. This shot us up again—thermometer 26, and falling very slowly. At 6:05 thermometer 22—my feet were very cold. The Atlantic was now full, and presented a most splendid sight. The gas began to discharge itself at the mouth, and its abominable smell, as it came down upon us, made me sick. A moment's vomiting made me feel all right again. LaMountain was suffering a good deal with cold. I passed my thick shawl around his shoulders, and put the blanket over our knees and feet. At 6:10 thermometer 18. We drifted along until the sun left us, and in a short time thereafter the balloon began to descend. At 6:30 thermometer 22, rising. Threw over about 5 lbs. ballast. We must have been, before we began to descend from this height, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles high. At 6:32 thermometer 23, rising. We were now about stationary, and thought we were sailing north of east. We could, we thought, distinguish water below us, but were unable to recognize it. At 6:38 we threw over a bag of sand, making 80 pounds of ballast discharged, and leaving about 120 pounds on hand. We distinctly heard a dog bark. Thermometer 28—and rising rapidly. At 6:45 the thermometer stood at 33.

At 6:50 it was dark, and I could make no more memoranda. I put up my note book, pencil and watch, and settled down into the basket, feeling quite contented. From this point until next morning I give my experiences from memory only. The figures given were made at the times indicated, and the thermometric variations can be depended upon as quite accurate.

We heard, soon after dark, a locomotive whistle, and occasionally could hear wagons rambling over the ground or a bridge, while the farmers' dogs kept up a continued baying, as if conscious there was something monstrous and unusual in the sky. We sailed along, contented and chatty, until about half-past 8 o'clock, when we distinctly saw lights below us, and heard the roaring of a mighty water-fall. We descended into a valley near a very high mountain, but as the place appeared rather forbidding, we concluded to