

George's Bay on the west coast as that most likely to secure the object he had in view. He met with little sympathy or encouragement in his undertaking, which was looked upon as Quixotic. The Government of the day refused him any assistance. Nothing daunted, Cormack went forward single-handed in his perilous adventure. He succeeded in securing the services of a Micmac Indian, a noted hunter of the south-west coast. With this single companion, he proceeded to the most inland part of Random Sound, in Trinity Bay, and with as much provisions as they could carry in their knapsacks, a supply of ammunition and a couple of guns, the travellers plunged into the untrodden wilderness and set their faces towards the west. Three months of fearful hardships, trials and privations were spent on the journey, although they preserved as nearly as possible a direct westward course; and, at the end of that time, they emerged, worn and weary, on the shore of St. George's Bay. Cormack published a very interesting narrative of his journey in the Transactions of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh; with which his friend Professor Jameson was connected. This narrative was subsequently re-published in a pamphlet containing 63 pages. It is now very scarce; I know of but one copy—that in the Athenæum Library, St. John's. I propose to furnish a brief abstract of this narrative, which has an interest far beyond that of fiction.

EQUIPMENT.

Cormack wisely fixed on the fall of the year as the best time for his expedition. Having to depend on his gun chiefly for subsistence, he calculated that the season in which the berries are ripe was that in which the wild birds and beasts would be roaming at large, and most likely to fall in the traveller's way. The equipment of the travellers was of the simplest description. In addition to their fowling-pieces, powder and shot, they carried twenty pounds of biscuit, eight pounds of pork, some portable soup, tea and sugar, a blanket each, a telescope, pocket-compass and fishing-tackle. The unknown dangers that lay before them were enough to appal stout hearts—the Red Indians, then supposed to

be numerous in the interior, might destroy them—packs of wolves might devour them—sickness or accident might disable one or both where no help could reach them—or, above all, subsistence might fail, and they might perish miserably of hunger. Without waiting to calculate these dangers, they at once struck into the forest, towards the centre of the island, starting on September 5th, 1822.

WESTWARD HO!—THE START.

During the first six days they found themselves advancing through a dense, unbroken pine forest—firs, the black and red spruce predominating, with a few birches and larch in favored spots, but no maple, beech, oak or ash. The close underwood, the wind-fallen trees, the brooks that lay in their way, and the suffocating heat of the woods, with the myriads of mosquitoes and black and sand flies, so impeded their progress that they could with difficulty advance seven or eight miles a day. Scrambling with great toil through this dense forest, they occasionally reached a bold granitic pap projecting above the dark green surface. On ascending one of these, the prospect was grand and impressive—an ocean of undulating forest for twenty miles to the westward—the high lands of Trinity and Bonavista Bays and glimpses of the broad Atlantic to the northward. These round-backed, granite hills rose among the forest growths as monuments of a world that had passed away—the records of a primitive creation—grim and solitary among the perishable productions of the present. At the bottom of each of these hills was almost invariably a small lake, and by the lake a marsh. These marshes consist of peat formed chiefly of mosses and covered with grasses, rushes and wild flowers, the grasses sometimes rising to the height of five or six feet. When the moisture is less the *Kalmia Augustifolia* covers whole acres of the marshes and gives them a most brilliant appearance, and the *Rhododendron* puts forth its delicate lilac blossoms. The lakes were covered with white and yellow water lilies. Cormack describes the dead silence of the woods, during the day, as almost oppressive, only the occasional chattering of the titmouse, the tap-