

Minnie May's Department.

MY DEAR NIECES.—As many of you are anxious to know how my vacation was spent, I will endeavour to give you a brief sketch of a trip I took in company with some friends, to the grand old city of Boston, the Capital of the State of Massachusetts, or the "Hub of the Universe," as it has been called. Being desirous also of visiting friends in Toronto and near Montreal, we took the longest route, going by rail to Toronto, which is probably so well known, at least by hearsay, to most of my readers, that I need not encroach upon our valuable space by giving any description. Suffice it to say that after spending a few delightful days there, we continued our journey by rail as far as Kingston, where we took the steamer for a run down the St. Lawrence River to Montreal, wending our way through the mazes of the Thousand Islands, which are situated at the head of the St. Lawrence and extending a distance of thirty miles down the river. Nowhere does nature present such alluring charms as in this region; there are hundreds of places, rugged and solitary, where a boat can glide, while its occupant lies peacefully indolent, reveling in the solitude. These St. Lawrence Islands number about two thousand, usually varying in size from a few square yards of surface to several acres. Wolf Island, about fifteen miles in length, is the largest, while some seem mere dots rising out of the water; their appearance is most picturesque, the rocky foundations being studded with trees of rich foliage, generally of moderate or stunted growth. Many of the islands, both large and small, are rendered more attractive by the pretty cottages and imposing villas. Beyond the islands the river rolls steadily on until it reaches the rapids, seven in number, the principal of which are the Long Sault, nine miles in length; then the Cedar, and although the shortest, yet far the most dangerous, are the Lachine Rapids. The current rushes impetuously over and between the rocks which jut from its bottom, while the pilot, generally an Indian, with skill guides the boat safely through the treacherous channel. The passage causes a peculiar sensation to the tourist, the water, lashed into a white foam, presenting a grand appearance. At one point in the Lachine it is particularly exciting, one almost fancying that the boat must strike an immense rock which usually stands about three or four feet above the water, but gradually we found ourselves swerving around it as easily and gracefully as possible. Steamers have run these rapids since 1840, and never yet has there been a fatal accident. After passing the rapids we drew near to the famous Victoria Bridge, which spans the St. Lawrence, a distance of nearly two miles. It is the longest bridge in the world; the railway track runs through an iron tube twenty-two feet high and sixteen feet wide. Passing under this bridge we approached the City of Montreal, which is beautifully situated on an island thirty-two miles long and ten miles at its widest point. On one side of the city is Mount Royal, or Mount Real, seven hundred and fifty feet in height, from which the city takes its name. Having only a short time to remain, we visited a few points of interest, among which was the Cathedral of Notre Dame,

one of the largest churches on the continent. It is a massive structure built of stone, capable of seating over ten thousand persons; in one of the towers is a fine chime of bells, the largest of which weighs twenty-nine thousand four hundred pounds.

Montreal has been styled the "City of Churches," and the number of nunneries, hospitals, scientific institutions, libraries, schools and universities is remarkable. The public buildings are constructed of solid stone, and all are edifices of which to be proud. We must not dwell longer here, but move on to our next stopping place, which was near Sherbrooke, about a hundred and thirty miles from Montreal. There we thoroughly enjoyed the pure country air among the hills for a few days, rambling into the woods and fields, sometimes riding home from the latter on a load of hay or stopping by the wayside to gather berries for our evening repast. All this drew to a close only too soon, and we were compelled to continue our journey southward. The scenery through Vermont and New Hampshire was charming; in the latter State we had a glimpse of the White Mountains in the distance. After a ride of about seven hours we reached Portland, the eastern terminus of the Grand Trunk Railway. Here we left the cars and continued our journey by steamer to Boston, a distance of one hundred miles; the change was exceedingly agreeable, but the trip being made at night there was nothing to be seen; however we were amply repaid, for upon rising the next morning we witnessed the approach to the city. The soft gray mist of early morn was just giving way to the warm, red light of the rising sun, which was reflected on the water, rendering the scene indescribably beautiful.

"Boston sits like a queen at the head of her harbor on the Massachusetts coast, and wears her crown of past and present glory with an easy and self-satisfied grace." The city is built upon a peninsular about four miles in circumference; it was first called Shawmutt, the Indian word, signifying "peninsular;" then Tremont, which took its rise from the three peaks of Beacon Hill, but in 1630 the name was again changed to that of Boston, because many of the colonists were from old Boston, in Lincolnshire, England. The face of the country has been entirely changed and many of the old landmarks are now obliterated. "The three peaks of Beacon Hill which once lifted themselves to the height of a hundred and thirty feet above the sea, are now cut down to insignificant knolls." At the present time thousands of acres of made land, which once formed the bed of the harbor, are densely populated. The Common, which is the pride of Bostonians, and very justly so, was originally a fifty acre lot intended for a cow pasture and training ground, for which it was sold to the people of Boston in 1634 for the sum of thirty pounds. In 1830 the city authorities forbade the use of the common for that purpose and had it inclosed by a two rail fence, which has long since given way to a handsome iron one. For many years the principal object of interest upon the common was the Great Tree, or Old Elm, which was probably over one hundred years old in 1722, being full-grown at that time; in 1844 its height was said to be seventy-two and a half feet, and the circumference, a foot above the ground, twenty-

two and a half feet. The storms of many years marred its beauty, but tender nursing assisted greatly in its preservation.

During the Revolution the British Army were encamped around this grand old tree. "In 1812 the patriot army occupied the same place in protecting the town against the invasion of a foreign foe," and here in 1740, Rev. Geo. Whitfield preached his farewell sermon to an audience of thirty thousand people. On the highest point of the common stands the soldiers' monument, the extreme height of which is ninety feet. At each corner is a statue representing Peace, History, the Army, and the Navy. Surmounting the shaft is a colossal statue of "America" resting on a hemisphere, guarded by four figures of the American eagle, with out-spread wings. America holds in her left hand the national standard, and in her right she supports a sheathed sword and wreaths for the victors.

Among the places of interest in Boston is the old State House, built in 1748, King's Chapel, completed in 1754, its churchyard being Boston's first burial ground; some of the tombstones date back as far as 1658. The new State House whose "gilded dome is a conspicuous object far and near, and glitters in the sunlight like veritable gold."

The new post office, which is considered one of the finest public buildings in New England, occupies an entire square. Groups of statuary ornament the central projections of the building; the interior arrangement cannot be surpassed for beauty or convenience. The process of building occupied many years, and cost something like three millions of dollars. At the time of the great fire of 1872, the massive granite walls were cracked and split, but they effectually stopped the work of the fire fiend. The old South Church which stands in the heart of the city, is one of the most famous buildings in Boston; during the Revolution it was frequently used for public meeting, and here the celebrated "Tea Party" held their meetings and discussed the measures which resulted in consigning the British tea, together with the hated tax, to the bottom of Boston Harbor. In 1775 it was used by the British as a place of cavalry drill, and a grog shop was established in one of its galleries. It is now only used for business purposes.

It is impossible to properly describe Boston within so short a chapter, therefore hundreds of interesting places in this singular and crooked city must be left unnoticed. The suburbs also are very beautiful; one can drive through a number of towns without realizing that they were not all one, so evenly are they settled and beautifully kept. We visited Cambridge and Harvard University; the residence of the late poet, Longfellow; Mount Auburn Cemetery, the most picturesque I have ever seen; thence to Belmont to see the gardens, green houses and Deer Park, belonging to a private gentleman, who very generously opens his grounds to visitors during the week. I can only say it was the most beautiful sight of the kind I have ever beheld. It is impossible for me to close without giving you a peep at another of my pleasures, namely, my trip to the beach, where so many Bostonians have built summer cottages, which remind one more of pretty little bird cages than anything else; they are of the

Ears.

on gives a very for the winter, d, looks very of your room. ve, but because ised. All such more cheerful, gone.

Rings.

iving engraved sentiment has give below a most of which g the time of

Joy day and night Be our delight.

Divinely knit by Grace are we; Late two; now one pledge here see.

Endless my love As this shall prove.

Avoid all strife Next man and wife

Joyful love ring doth prove.

In thee, dear wife, find new life.

Of rapturous joy am the toy.

In thee I prove The joy of love.

In loving wife depend all thy life.

In love abide till death divide.

In unity Let's live and die.

Fappy in thee Ath God made me.

Silence ends strife With man and wife

None can prevent The Lord's intent.

God did decree our unity.

Kiss the rod from thee and God.

In love and joy our employ.

ive and love; love and live.

od above continue our love.

ue love will ne'er forget.

is ring doth bind body and mind.

Endless as this shall be our bliss.

ice by choice.

use I choose.

the life to wife.

ny love shall prove.

'Arry! Yer

ne, case missus

my darlin'!

nd mornster