

and the watcher turned quick glances into the dark, lest, from those caverns of gloom, the lurking savage might leap upon his defenceless vigil. As he lay once more by the replenished fire, sounds stole upon his ear, faint, mysterious, startling to the awakened fancy,—the whispering fall of a leaf, the creaking of a bough, the stir of some night insect, the soft footfall of some prowling beast, from the far-off shore the mournful howl of a lonely wolf, or the leaping of a fish where, athwart the pines, the weird moon gleamed on the midnight river.

Day dawned. The east glowed with tranquil fire, that pierced, with eyes of flame, the fir-trees whose jagged tops stood drawn in black against the burning heaven. Beneath, the glossy river slept in shadow, or spread far and wide in sheets of burnished bronze; and, in the western sky, the white moon hung like a disk of silver. Now, a fervid light touched the dead top of the hemlock, and now, creeping downward, it bathed the mossy beard of the patriarchal cedar, unstirred in the breathless air. Now, a fiercer spark beamed from the east; and, now, half risen on the sight, a dome of crimson fire, the sun blazed with floods of radiance across the awakened wilderness.

The paddles flashed; the voyagers held their course. And soon the still surface was flecked with spots of foam; islets of froth floated by, tokens of some great convulsion. Then, on their left, the falling curtain of the Rideau shone like silver betwixt its bordering woods, and in front, white as a snow-drift, the cataracts of the Chaudière barred their way. They saw the dark cliffs, gloomy with impending firs, and the darker torrent, rolling its mad surges along the gulf between. They saw the unbridled river careering down its sheeted rocks, foaming in unfathomed chasms, wearing the solitude with the hoarse outcry of its agony and rage.

On the brink of the rocky basin where the plunging torrent boiled like a caldron, and puffs of spray sprang out from its concussion like smoke from the throat of a canon,—here Champlain's two Indians took their stand, and, with a loud invocation, threw tobacco in the foam, an offering to the local spirit, the Manitou of the cataract. (1)

Over the rocks, through the woods; then they launched their canoes again, and, with toil and struggle, made their amphibious way, now pushing, now dragging, now lifting, now paddling, now showing with poles. When the evening sun poured its level rays across the quiet Lake of the Chaudière, they landed, and made their peaceful camp on the verge of a woody island.

Day by day brought a renewal of their toils. Hour by hour, they moved prosperously up the long winding of the solitary stream; then, in quick succession, rapid followed rapid, till the bed of the Ottawa seemed a slope of foam. Now, like a wall bristling at the top with woody islets, the Falls of the Chats faced them with the sheer plunge of their sixteen cataracts. Now they glided beneath overhanging cliffs, where, seeing but unseen, the crouched wild-cat eyed them from the thicket; now through the maze of water-girded rocks, which the white cedar and spruce clasped with serpent-like roots, or among islands where old hemlocks, dead at the top, darkened the water with deep green shadow. Here, too, the rock-maple reared its verdant masses, the beech its glistening leaves and clean, smooth stem, and behind, stiff and sombre, rose the balsam-fir. Here, in the tortuous channels, the muskrat swam and plunged, and the splashing wild duck dived beneath the alders or among the red and matted roots of thirsty water-willows. Aloft, the white pine towered "proudly eminent" above a sea of verdure. Old fir-trees, hoary and grim, shaggy with pendent mosses, leaned above the stream, and beneath, dead and submerged, some fallen oak thrust from the current its bare, bleached limbs, like the skeleton of a drowned giant. In the weedy cove stood the moose, neck-deep in water

to escape the flies, wading shoreward, with glistening sides, as the canoes drew near, shaking his broad antlers and writhing his hideous nostril, as with clumsy trot he vanished in the woods.

In these ancient wilds, to whose ever verdant antiquity the pyramids are young and Nineveh a mushroom of yesterday; where the sage wanderer of the Odyssey, could he have urged his pilgrimage so far, would have surveyed the same grand and stern monotony, the same dark sweep of melancholy woods; and where, as of yore, the bear and the wolf still lurk in the thicket, and the lynx glares from the leafy bough;—here, while New England was a solitude, and the settlers of Virginia scarcely dared venture inland beyond the sound of cannon-shot, Champlain was planting on shores and islands the emblems of his Faith. (1) Of the pioneers of the North American forest, his name stands foremost on the list. It was he who struck the deepest and boldest strokes into the heart of their pristine barbarism. At Chantilly, at Fontainebleau, at Paris, in the cabinets of princes and of royalty itself, mingling with the proud vanities of the court; then lost from sight in the depths of Canada, the companion of savages, sharer of their toils, privations, and battles, more hardy, patient, and bold than they;—such, for successive years, were the alternations of this man's life.

To follow on his trail once more. His Indians said that the rapids of the river above were impassable. Nicholas de Vignau affirmed the contrary; but from the first, Vignau had been found always in the wrong. His aim seems to have been to involve his leader in difficulties, and disgust him with a journey which must soon result in exposing the imposture which had occasioned it. Champlain took the counsel of the Indians. The party left the river, and entered the forest.

Each Indian shouldered a canoe. The Frenchmen carried the baggage, paddles, arms, and fishing-nets. Champlain's share was three paddles, three arquebuses, his capote, and various "*baguettes*." Thus they struggled on, till, at night, tired and half starved, they built their fire on the border of a lake, doubtless an expansion of the river. Here, clouds of mosquitoes gave them no peace, and piling decayed wood on the flame, they sat to leeward in the smoke. Their march, in the morning, was through a pine forest. A whirlwind had swept it, and in the track of the tornado the trees lay upturned, inverted, prostrate, and flung in disordered heaps, boughs, roots, and trunks mixed in wild confusion. Over, under, and through these masses the travellers made their painful way; then through the pitfalls and impediments of the living forest, till a sunny transparency in the screen of young foliage before them gladdened their eyes with the assurance that they had reached again the banks of the open stream.

At the point where they issued it could no longer be called a stream, for it was that broad expansion now known as Lake Coulonge. Below, were the dangerous rapids of the Calumet; above, the river was split into two arms, folding in their watery embrace the large island called Isle des Allumettes. This neighborhood was the seat of the principal Indian population of the river, ancestors of the modern Ottawas; (2) and, as the canoes

(1) They were large crosses of white cedar, placed at various points along the river.

(2) Usually called Algonquians, or Algonquins, by Champlain and other early writers,—a name now always used in a generic sense to designate a large family of cognate tribes, speaking languages radically similar, and covering a vast extent of country. The Ottawas, however, soon became known by their tribal name, written in various forms by French and English writers, as *Outouais*, *Outaouaks*, *Tawaas*, *Oudawauas*, *Outavie*, *Outaouas*, *Uluwas*, *Ottawacicug*, *Outozets*, *Oultawaats*, *Attawacas*. The French nicknamed them "*Cheveux Revers*," from their mode of wearing their hair. Champlain gives the same name to a tribe near Lake Huron.

The Ottawas or Algonquins of the Isle des Allumettes and its neighborhood are most frequently mentioned by the early writers as *la Nation de l'Isle*. Lalemant (*Relation des Hurons*, 1639) calls them *Ehonkeronons*. Vimont (*Relation*, 1640) calls them *Kichesipirini*. The name *Algonquin* was used generally as early as the time of Sagard, whose *Histoire du Canada* appeared in 1636. Champlain always limits it to the tribes of the Ottawa.

(1) An invariable custom with the upper Indians on passing this place. When many were present, it was attended with solemn dances and speeches, a contribution of tobacco being first taken on a dish. It was thought to insure a safe voyage; but was often an occasion of disaster, since hostile war-parties, lying in ambush at the spot, would surprise and kill the votaries of the Manitou in the very presence of their guardian.