

press trees, which stood four or five yards asunder, shot up to the height of fifty feet, entirely free from branches, which then, however, spread out at right angles to the stem, making the trees appear like gigantic umbrellas, and covering the whole morass with an impenetrable roof, through which not even a sunbeam could find a passage. On looking behind us we saw the daylight at the entrance of the swamp, as at the mouth of a vast cavern. The further we went the thicker became the air, and at last the alluvia were so stifling and pestilential that the torches burnt pale and dim, and more than once threatened to go out.

"Yes, yes," muttered our guide to himself, "a night passed in this swamp would leave a man ague-struck for the rest of his days. A night, ay, an hour would do it, if your pores were ever so little open; but now there's no danger, the prairie fire's good for that, dries the sweat and closes up the pores."

He went on conversing thus with himself, but still strutting forward, throwing his torch light on each log, or tree-trunk, and trying its solidity before he trusted his weight upon it, doing all this with a dexterity and speed that proved his familiarity with these dangerous paths.

"Keep close to me," said he to us, "but make yourselves light, as light at least as Botishers can make themselves. Hold your breath, and—ha! what is that log? Hello, Nathan," continued he to himself, "what comes to you, man? Don't you know a sixteen foot alligator from a tree?"

He had stretched out his foot, but, fortunately, before setting it down, he poked what he took for a log with the butt of his gun. The supposed block of wood gave way a little, and the old squatter, throwing himself back, was within an ace of pushing me into the swamp.

"Ah, friend," said he, not in the least disconcerted, "you thought to circumvent honest folks with your devilry and cunning."

"What is the matter?" asked I.

"Not much the matter," he replied, pulling his knife from its sheath; "only an alligator. There it is again."

And in the place of the log which had disappeared, the jaws of a huge alligator gaped before us. I raised my gun to my shoulder. The Yankee seized my arm.

"Don't fire," whispered he; "don't fire so long as you can help it. We ain't alone here. This will do as well." He added, as he stooped down, and drove his long knife into the alligator's eye. The monster gave a frightful howl, and lashed violently with its tail, besprinkling us with the black, slimy mud of the swamp.

"Take that," said the squatter, with a grim smile, "and that, and that!" stabbing the brute repeatedly between the neck and the ribs, while it writhed and snapped furiously at him. Then wiping his knife, he stuck it in his belt, and looked keenly and cautiously around him.

"I've a notion there must be a tree trunk here away; it ain't the first time I've followed this track. There it is, but a good six foot off."

And so saying he gave a spring, and alighted safely on the stepping-place.

"Have a care, man," cried I. "There is water there; I see it glitter."

"Pho, water! what you call water is snakes. Come on."

I hesitated, and a shudder came over me. The leap, as regarded distance, was a trifling one, but it was over an almost bottomless chasm, full of the foulest mud, on which

the moccasins snakes, the deadliest of the American reptiles, were swarming. "Come on."

Necessity lent me strength, and, pressing my left foot firmly against the log on which I was standing, and which was each moment sinking with our weight deeper into the soft, slimy ground, I sprang across.—Carleton followed me.

"Well done!" cried the old man; "courage, and a couple more such leaps, and we shall be getting over the worst of it."

We pushed on steadily but slowly, never setting our foot on a log till we had ascertained its solidity with the butts of our guns.

"There seems to have been a sort of path made here," said I to our guide, "for?"

"Silence!" interrupted he in a low tone; "silence for your life till we are on firm ground again. Don't mind the snakes," added he, as the torchlight revealed some enormous ones lying coiled up on the moss and lianas close to us. "Follow me very closely."

But just as I stretched forward my foot, and was about to place it in the very print that his had left, the hideous jaw of an alligator was suddenly stretched over the tree trunk, not six inches from my leg, and the creature snapped at me so suddenly, that I had just time to fire my gun into his glittering lizard-like eye. The monster bounded back, uttered a sound between a bellow and a groan, and, striking wildly about him in the morass, disappeared.

The American looked round when I fired, and an approving smile played about his mouth as he said something to me which I did not hear, owing to the infernal uproar that now arose on all sides of us, and at first completely deafened me. Thousands, tens of thousands of birds and reptiles, alligators, enormous bull-frogs, night-owls, ahingas, herons, whose dwellings were in the mud of the swamp, or on its leafy roof, now lifted up their voices, bellowing, hooting, shrieking and groaning. Bursting forth from the obscure retreat in which they had hitherto lain hidden, the alligators raised their luteous snouts out of the green coating of the swamp, gnashing their teeth and straining towards us, while the owls and other birds circled round our heads, flapping and striking us with their wings as they passed. We drew our knives, and endeavoured to defend at least our heads and eyes; but all was in vain against the myriads of enemies that surrounded us; and the unequal combat could not possibly have lasted long, when suddenly a shot was fired, followed immediately by another. The effect they produced was magical. The growls and cries of rage and fury were exchanged for howls of fear and complaint, the alligators withdrew gradually into their native mud; the birds flew in wilder circles around us, the unequal multitudes were in full retreat. By degrees the various noises died away.—But our torches had gone out, and all around us was black as pitch.

"In God's name, are you there old man," asked I.

"What! still alive?" he replied, with a laugh that jarred unpleasantly upon my nerves, "and the other Britisher, too? I told ye we were not alone. These brutes defend themselves if you attack them upon their own ground, and a single shot is sufficient to bring them about one's ears. But when they see you're in earnest, they soon get tired of it, and a couple more shots sent among them generally drive them away again; for they are but senseless squealing creatures after all."

While the old man was speaking he struck fire, and lit one of the torches.

"Luckyly we have rather better footing here," continued he.

"And now, forward quickly; for the swamp is set, and we have still some way to go." And again he led the march, with a skill and confidence in himself which each moment increased our reliance on him. After proceeding in this manner for about half-an-hour, we saw a pale light glimmering in the distance.

"Five minutes more and your troubles are over; but now is the time to be cautious, for it is on the borders of these swamps the alligators best love to lie."

In my eagerness to find myself once more on dry land, I scarcely heard the Yankee's words; and as the stepping-places were now near together, I hastened on, and got a little in front of the party. Suddenly I felt a log on which I had just placed my foot, give way under me. I had scarcely time to call out "Halt!" when I was upon the armpits in the swamp, with every prospect of sinking still deeper.

"You will hurry on," said the old man, with a laugh; and at the same time, springing forward, he caught me by the hair.

"Take warning for the future," added he as he helped me out of the mud; "and look there!"

I did look, and saw half-a-dozen alligators writhing and crawling in the noxious slime within a few feet of us. I felt a sickening sensation, and for a moment I could not utter a word; the Yankee produced his whiskey flask.

"Take a swallow of this," said he, "but no, better wait till we are out of the swamp. Stop a little till your heart beats quieter.—So, you are better now. When you've made two or three such journeys with old Nathan you'll be quite another man. Now, forward again."

A few minutes later we were out of the swamp, and looking over a field of palmettos that waved & rustled in the moonbeam. The air was fresh, and once more we breathed freely.

**MONUMENT TO SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.**  
—A proposal for a monument to Sir William Wallace is about to be carried out. Funds have been realised, and the Hill of Barrow, near Craigie, between Kilmarnock and Ayr, is proposed as the site. The hill in question is supposed to be that on which the "Wallace Wicht" stood and took a last look at the blazing "barns of Ayr," to which he had set fire, after fastening the doors and windows to prevent the escape of the Englishmen feasting inside.—*Kilmarnock Journal*.

A number of pins were recently exhibited to the Pathological Society of London, removed from various parts of the body of a young woman, who was taking down clothes from the drying lines, and putting the pins in her mouth, while some one came behind her and seized her by the arms, startling her so much that she swallowed the whole mouthful; sickness and emaciation followed; a swelling showed itself under her left breast, which ulcerated and burst, giving passage to a pin, the head of which was gone. Sixteen others were removed from about the same spot, and others from the left knee, from over the sternum, and from the wrist—twenty-two in all. They had all lost their heads except two.

The New Government of New Brunswick is likely to meet with a fierce opposition. In the House a motion of want of confidence has already been introduced the most complaining among other things that no member of the Catholic Church had been selected in forming the new cabinet.