

its political articles, all of which were from my own pen, were written in a tone which, if I am to believe my fellow laborers in the same vineyard, rendered them as unexceptionable in spirit, as they were of use to the government.

It occupying me merely an hour or two each day to prepare my leaders and other matter necessary for the "New Era," which, like most papers in the smaller towns of Canada, was published weekly, I amused myself principally with fishing and shooting. But the latter sport was not to be had in the abundance in which it is offered in the beautiful West. Partridges are very scarce, woodcock almost unknown, and the snipe to be found only during a few days in the spring and "fall," as the autumn is invariably and figuratively called in Canada. My great amusement therefore was in my boat, which offered the advantage of anchoring at some distance from the shore, and making use of the rod and line, or of trolling for the fishes (chiefly the pike) which bury themselves in the dense weeds with which this part of the St. Lawrence abounds. Often too, during the season most devoted to trolling, a third means of amusement was afforded in the occasional surprise of a flock of wild ducks, when it was only necessary to drop the oars, and take up the loaded double-barrelled Manton, which reposed against the bow of the boat, to secure my game.

The mode of trolling in Canada is worthy of a passing description. A strong line, about ten fathoms in length, is fastened to the leg of the rower (for one person only usually occupies the boat), and to the opposite end of the line is attached a hook, affixed to a piece of brass, resembling as much as possible in form, the bowl of a large spoon. This being always brightly polished, and revolving on a piece of stiff and strong wire, securing it to the line, presents a brilliant appearance which seldom fails to attract the attention of the black bass or pike that may be secreted in the weeds over which he passes. The proper motion is given to the boat by a quick jerk of the oars, and if the bait is taken, that fact is soon known by the strong pull upon the leg made by the captured fish. The oars are immediately dropped, the line pulled in, hand over hand, and occasionally the eye of the fisherman is delighted at seeing the flash of a tail upon the surface of the water, indicating the approach, as a prisoner, of a voracious pike of more than ordinary size, and his vain struggles to free himself from the strong and unyielding hook. Then what a dash he gives as he is raised from the water into the boat. Indignant at the treachery which has decoyed him to his ruin, he throws every obstacle in the way to prevent his captor from releasing the hook from his jaws, and practising the same deceptive art upon other unsuspecting fishes. Even when this is effected he flounders about from stem to stern, occasionally striking the leg with his sharp, strong back fins, or splashing the whole person with the mingled slime and water with which he, and those of his companions who may have preceded him, have carried into the boat. The pike is a fierce fish, and extremely tenacious of life.

Such were my trolling excursions in the "Fanny Elsler," a light row boat, prettily built, and wholly adapted for oars, although there was a place for setting the tiny mast I had procured with her, whenever a light and favorable wind might render it desirable to hoist one. My trolling ground generally extended to three miles above my own place, and nothing in the world can be more beautiful or picturesque than this route, threading as it does the bottom of the group of the Thousand Islands. The channel through which I passed, was moreover an inner one—not the usual and practicable course of navigation, but one marked by swift and seemingly boiling currents, amid which it was not without exertion I forced my boat.

The intrusion of fishermen into my own waters—that is to say, into the bay designed for a fish-pond—I found to be a great nuisance; but annoying as this was, there was still a greater bore. Immediately beyond the line of demarcation of my grounds, and not twenty yards from the point where a small arm of the St. Lawrence, entering between high and jutting masses of rock, contributed to form the natural fish-pond, there is a point frequented by all the fishermen of the *locale*, young and old, and known as the "Devil's Rock," which significant name has been given to it from the fact of his Satanic Majesty's foot-print having been left there, on taking his flight from it, after a bath in the deep waters beneath. Had fishing from this been the only occupation of those who frequented it, there could have been little cause for complaint; even notwithstanding the incessant hooting and yelling that proceeded from the fellows of all descriptions who were in the habit of assembling there. But unfortunately there were too many of them who were close imitators of his Satanic Majesty, and as prone to nothing from the rock. Whether the Devil himself had been in the habit of shouting and whooping, whenever he indulged in his ablutions, the imperfect tradition of the Brockvillians does not inform us; but it cannot be denied that, if such had been his practice, they were not behind him in the vigorous exercise of their lungs. At all hours of the day did these scoundrels, heedless of the delicacy which the brute creation would scarcely have lost sight of, throw off every covering, and shrieking to attract the attention of my female servants, exhibit themselves in all the hideousness of their vulgar nakedness, even going so far as to call them (the servants) by name, and to offend their ears with the most disgusting language. Never could the patience of man have been put to a greater trial than mine was on these occasions, and it was often

with difficulty that, when my servants came to me with complaints of the insolence of the wretches, I could restrain myself from discharging my double-barrelled Manton, loaded with shot, into the midst of them. But the fate of poor Captain Moir of the 37th Regiment always occurred to, and deterred me. As it was, I often startled them by firing at some object near, yet sufficiently far not to touch them, and the rattling of the shot generally had the effect of making them gather up their clothes and retreat to some point where they could not be seen. To apply to the magistrates was vain, for they either could not, or would not interfere with effect, and I had already had other and sufficient evidence of the laxity of the morals of the people, not to feel assured that any failure on my part would only increase the abominable evil of which I had to complain.

The disgusting exhibition of these bathers was not confined to the "Devil's Rock," but to portions nearer to the town. On the left of my house, as it fronted the river—the "Devil's Rock" being on the right, and somewhat to the rear—was an elevated crag, forming the extreme end of my property in that direction, and this the shameless scoundrels would almost daily ascend, to plunge themselves headlong into the river, frequently coming opposite my own door, and calling out to attract the attention of those within. This display was ever more remarkable on Sunday than on any other occasion; and as several families, residing out of the town, were in the habit of going to church in their boats during the summer, their eyes were ever offended by several of these people thus infamously displaying themselves. There was, what was called, a corporation in the town, but of what use I never could learn.

As I shall not, possibly, recur to the subject of the immoral condition of the people of Upper Canada—a condition which is the result of the imperfectness of the system of education which prevails in it—this extremely modified description of the social state in Brockville, must be taken as applying, although in a less marked degree, to all the smaller towns in that section of the Province, where the stringent prohibitions of active and effective corporations do not extend. In Toronto and Kingston, vice, though sufficiently enough exercising her baneful influence on the easily corrupted of both sexes, has at least the modesty to avoid that publicity and exposure which are so openly exhibited and so seldom discountenanced in the small town of Brockville, where certain of the magistrates themselves have been slow in setting an example calculated to produce in the people over whom they preside a sense of decency and decorum.

While on this subject, I may as well remark that the troops stationed in the country do much to increase the evil complained of. In almost every town in which they are quartered, the utmost difficulty exists in the management of female servants, who caught, as well as their mistresses, by the glittering bait of a scarlet coat, fall victims to their seducers, and neglect their duties for the pleasures of criminal indulgence. I have heard it stated by several heads of families in Toronto, that while the 93rd Regiment were quartered there, the impression created by their sinewy and killed limbs, when in full dress, and the graceful bonnet surmounting their stalwart frames, was such that there was not a single servant maid or woman who had not been debauched by them. As far as my own experience and observation enabled me to judge, this systematic ruin of servants is one of the most abominable nuisances in Canada.

In the course of the summer I planted an orchard, consisting of various kinds of fruit trees—the best apple, with plum and cherry—and furthermore inserted, in the rich shallow surface of soil which covered a large flat sloping rock much exposed to the rays of the sun, some grape vines, which I was informed produced the most delicious fruit. On the same description of ground I moreover planted water-melons which, nourished by the sun's heat, also promised fruit of a superior quality. Nor were my grounds wanting in other productions, the seeds of which had been planted there by the hand of nature alone. The wild strawberry, the gooseberry, the raspberry, and the huckleberry, grew in abundance, on those parts of the grounds which had never been broken by the plough, and in small copses adjoining the higher rocks in the rear, and overlooking the house and river, filberts or hazle nuts, and butter nuts, grew in uncultivated profusion. The place was susceptible of being made a little paradise, and yet to me it yielded neither pleasure, profit, nor satisfaction.

One beautiful and calm day, in the early part of the same summer (1841), the vacant place of my faithful Hector was supplied by a new introduction into my family. I had returned from church, and while lounging carelessly on the wild lawn that sloped gradually to the water, my attention was attracted by the appearance of a dark object moving through the water, and evidently making for my own rocks. At first I took it for a large loon skimming the surface of the river, and went for my Manton, which, as the wild-ducks came in the early morning to the very shore, and almost within pistol-shot of the house, I always kept loaded. But when I returned I distinctly saw two projections from the head, that satisfied me the swimming stranger was a young deer, which seemingly near exhausted with the long trajet across the St. Lawrence, was, reckless of consequences, intent only on gaining the nearest land. At once determining to seize and make him captive, the moment he should touch the bank, I made my arrangements, summoning