

"Well, at all events it cured me of boating among the ice. Ugh! to be sucked in and smothered under a floe would be frightful."

Mr. Wynn wishing to say something that would prove he was not thinking of the little aside-scene between father and daughter, asked if the St. Lawrence was generally so full of ice in winter.

It was difficult to believe, now in the balmy atmosphere of the Indian summer, with a dreamy sunshine warming and gladdening all things—the very apotheosis of autumn—that wintry blasts would howl along this placid river, surging fierce ice-waves together, before two months should pass.

"There's rarely a bridge quite across," replied Captain Armytage; "except in the north channel, above the Isle of Orleans, where the tide has less force than in the southern, because it is narrower; but in the widest place the hummocks of ice are frequently crushed into heaps fifteen or twenty feet high, which makes navigation uncomfortably exciting."

"I should think so," rejoined Robert, drily.

"Ah, you have yet to feel what a Canadian winter is like, my young friend;" and Captain Armytage nodded in that mysterious manner which is intended to impress a "griffin" with the cheering conviction that unknown horrors are before him.

"I wonder what is that tall church, whose roof glitters so intensely?"

"The cathedral, under its tin dome and spires. The metal is said to hinder the lodging and help the thawing of the snow, which might otherwise lie so heavy as to endanger the roof."

"Oh, that is the reason!" ejaculated Robert, suddenly enlightened as to the needs-be of all the surface glitter.

"Rather a pretty effect, eh? and absolutely unique, except in Canadian cities. It suggests an infinitude of greenhouses reflecting sunbeams at a variety of angles of incidence."