

The picturesque drives around the basin of Halifax Harbor; the "sleigh club" and the winter pastimes; the graphic description of a memorable sleigh drive--to the nine mile house in the early years of the last century.

Probably one of the regiments which, in its time, saw more active service than many of the other regiments of the imperial forces, was the gallant 52nd. Its record was from Hindoostan to Waterloo—including the famous battle of Badajoz. The 52nd formed a part of the garrison of Halifax in the late twenties.

An officer who was with the regiment in Halifax took occasion, a few years later, in the leisure of retirement, to give his friends in England an idea of the nature of the exhilarating pastimes in which, during the long winter and when "off duty," he had often engaged. The sudden visitation of snow, to which the people of the district in the old country; which he then resided, had, for years, been strangers, had had the effect of vividly recalling to his recollection some passages of those other days when pleasure to him was found under every shape, and happiness was deemed a secure and permanent reality. He thought he could elicit something even from a subject so cold and unpromising as snow. In the early period mentioned he was ordered to Halifax, glad to have escaped the *desagrement* of a winter's residence in Newfoundland

"where sailors go to fish for cod."

and gladder still to find himself safely housed in a gay and hospitable garrison.

There were few places, he remarked, so wretched as to be without some attractions of climate. In tropical countries the night was the sweet season; in colder climates the day, though not exclusively. Of all the varieties of temperature which he had seen, and of all the places where the air breathed health and life, commend him, he said, to the "Indian summer" of North America, and the picturesque drive around the basin of Halifax harbor. The Indian summer was the "latter

autumn" of Europe. The frosts set in sharp and keen in the morning and evening—a clear blue sky, without a cloud, pervaded all space, and overhead the resplendent sun tempered the atmosphere, which else would be too cold. The face of nature was then invested with supernatural beauty; the brilliant lines which dyed the bright foliage could be likened only to the high transparent color which tinted the cheek of those—the favorites of heaven—whom death prematurely claimed; it was also the precursor of the mortality of nature. Yet a few weeks she wore that gorgeous garb—and lo! the night winds came, the heavens descended, and the earth was wrapped in a shroud of snow!

But the death of nature in Nova Scotia was the life of man. During the glowing autumn his enjoyment was of a calm, contemplative kind; but when once the winter set in, his energies were exerted, and he led a life of activity. Of that the sleigh-driving, which was then called *sleighing*, was the principal external feature. Every one, however limited his means, contrived to establish some vehicle on runners, whether it was an ordinary truck for wood, to which dogs were yoked, casks sawn in two, the bodies of old gigs—indeed anything in which a man could sit, or to which an animal could be attached. But the fashionable sleighs were carriages of no ordinary pretensions, and rejoiced in all the splendor that arctic invention could bestow upon them.

The winter season of 1827 was remarkable for gaiety. In that year the sleighing of Halifax assumed a new character: in short, the "sleigh club" was established. Originating with the naval and military officers, the Academic Union Club included all the civilians who chose to become members, and there were few who kept aloof.