

from the trail we are taking, stands a long granite cliff, about two or three miles in length. Green moss is trailing down its perpendicular sides until it reaches the tiny waves of the lake, whilst the summit, flat as a billiard table, is one white carpet of strawberries in bloom. On the surface of the lake, which is quivering and dancing in the fading light, rest or roam, according to their desire, thousands of waterfowl—coot, loon, teal, wild duck, and diver. This is a sweet spot, but succeeding scenes, other lakes, rolling prairie, sparkling creeks, quickly follow as we drive onward. It was ten at night when our horses plunged into the shallows of Shoal Lake—clear, pellucid water, rolling up to a beach of tiny stones. Here we find a log hut, where we rest for five hours, and then our party and wagon start on for Birtle, our destination. The other team is too much played out to proceed for some hours, so we lead the van. The half moon has just risen, and gives some light as we move onward. Frogs in full song fill the air with their strange chorus. Night or mosquito hawks shriek as they dash and circle after their prey. Save this, the night is still. Deceived by the moonlight, we lose our track, and are buried up to the axles in an alkaline mud pit. This is a more serious stoppage. Horses have to be taken out, all portmanteaus, food, and rugs have to be taken to the bank, the seats to be unscrewed and removed, and then, for more than an hour, we try, and try in vain to move the vehicle. As a last resort we procure stakes of wood, and whilst three lift at the wheels, the others place first one piece and then another under the rim, and so inch by inch, first at one wheel then at the other, groping in the mud one minute, shoulders to the wheel another, and lifting another, we gradually but slowly extricate our wagon. With seats screwed on again, all re-loaded, we proceed. Soon daylight is approaching. One minute the moon shines triumphant in the heaven, the next she seems but a piece of pale blue paper with all her glory gone,