

The Cruise of the *Bixie* from Montreal to Labrador,

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BY X. X. X.

A preliminary Dinner.—Benedictus benedicat, benedicatur, benidicatur.—The *personnel* of the Crew—Christening of the Yacht—Day of Departure decided on.

ON the 1st of May, 1861, cosily seated round a substantial dinner, in the cabin of a smart looking craft, anchored at the "head of the salt water navigation," to wit: in the port of Montreal, you might have seen four persons of aspect very different. The afternoon was bright, the river calm, and the Quebec steamers had just left their moorings, on their downward trip, as the last rays of the setting sun gilded the green slopes of the *Royal Mount*, from which the thriving city takes her name. Our sporting friends had decided to inaugurate, by an ample repast, their departure for a three months cruise, in a pleasure yacht, owned by one of them, to the distant shores of Labrador. It was to be a shooting, fishing, and sea-bathing frolic, combining amusement with health. But who were the members of this jolly crew? We shall say nothing of Pierre and Antoine, two French Canadian sailors engaged to navigate the craft. The culinary department was under the charge of an intelligent descendent of Ham, fresh from the shores of Alabama, Ebony by name.

Of course the most important personage on the quarter deck, or below, was the owner; accordingly his brawny form graced the head of the table: a French Canadian by birth, and of great muscular strength. After travelling considerably, he had settled down and become an enterprising merchant; his was a kind of instinctive admiration for the sturdy self-reliance which distinguishes the anglo-saxon race, naturalized in the new world, and just as strong his contempt for the helplessness and arrogance of those who land fresh from the shores of England or France. His ideas were liberal, his conversation and conduct marked by good sense, firmness and forbearance; he was, withal, on excellent terms with himself, admired the great neighboring Republic, without underrating the manliness of the then budding Southern Confederacy. In politics, he was what we generally call a Rouge; no lover of colonial dependence, he moderately valued British connection. A serious, intelligent,