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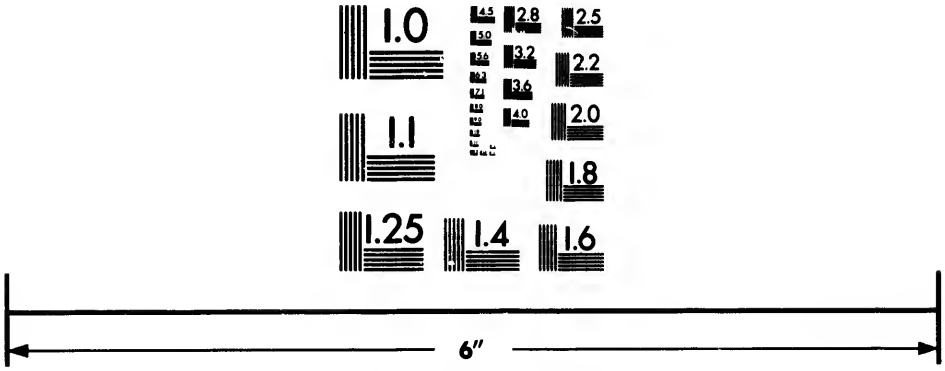

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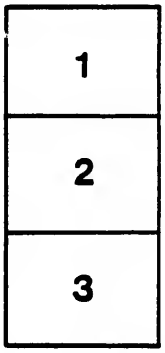

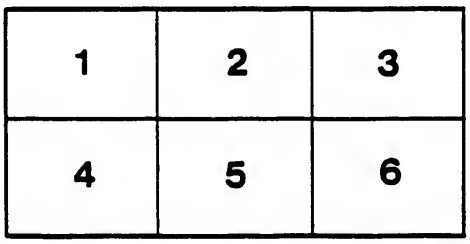

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A TRIP TO GASPE AND BACK

5

IN THE

YACHT "ORIOLE,"

JULY, 1873.

By R. E. X.

MONTREAL:
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1873.

A

TRIP TO GASPÉ AND BACK

IN THE

YACHT "ORIOLE,"

JULY, 1873.

The thought of having a trip down the river St. Lawrence along the south shore to Gaspé, thence to Anticosti, and back by the north shore was too irresistible, therefore the writer readily accepted the kind invitation of one of the owners of the yacht "Oriole," of Toronto, to accompany him and his friends on the voyage, more especially as it had been the writer's lot to make the passage to England two years previously with the inviter in the good steamship "Caspian," the pleasant recollections of which are still mutual.

The sailing qualities of the "Oriole" the writer had been long familiar with, as she had won laurels on the stormy lakes of Ontario and Erie, more particularly on the latter, where she had proved herself thoroughly staunch and seaworthy, and rode out gales that might have appalled any yachtsman, unless he had been related to the commander of the "Flying Dutchman."

A classical friend, in speaking of her, used to quote from an animated little poem of Catullus, that the gay Roman had probably written upon some favourite vessel, which, after long service, he had thus consecrated to the twin stars Castor and Pollux, and laid up near his beloved house on the peninsula of Sirmio. The poem thus commences :—

Phaselus ille, quem videtis, hospites,
Ait fuisse navium celerrimus
Neque ullius natantis impetum trabis, &c.,

Which may be translated as follows and applied to the "Oriole"—

> The bark, my friends, which you see here,
> Will tell you that it had no peer;
> And that no skiff that swam the main,
> Could get before it, strain for strain,
> Whether it flew with sail or oar.
> And this it says, not Adria's shore,
> With all its bluster can deny,
> Nor that Ægæan company,
> Nor glorious Rhodes, nor savage Thrace,
> Nor Hellespont with either face,
> Nor the tremendous Pontic bay,—
> Where, till it took its watery way,
> It was a thing of sylvan locks,
> And used, on the Cytorian rocks
> To hiss and talk, with windy hair.
> &c., &c., &c.

The party, twelve in number, consisted chiefly of Torontonians, whom, upon the first introduction, the writer admired for their enjoying temper, what the Italians call Brio—a certain sparkling of the animal spirits—their blood seemed to run quick through their veins, their tempers were decidedly cheerful, and he found them from the first weighing anchor to the last dropping of the same, all jovial, courteous, hospitable; in one word, jolly; or, as an old nautical friend used to express himself, "happy as a mast-maker's dog among curled shavings;" and he desires at the outset to record his grateful expression of their uniform kindness, and to state that he is not about to write a description of the lower St. Lawrence, and the places visited, nor only the incidents of the voyage—the one has been already done *ad nauseam* in the "all round guides" and the "tourist's guides," and the other would have nothing of marked interest to the general reader.

THE START FROM QUEBEC.

On the 15th day of July, in the year of grace 1873, at the hour of "post meridian half-past twelve," we began to weigh anchor, and in half an hour afterwards we were fairly under sail, and, blest with a favouring wind, we soon passed the island of Orleans. The day was deliciously clear, the burning sun tempered by the breeze, and large masses of the ever-changing cumulus clouds. The tin roofs of the houses, convents and churches which line the banks of the island and the south shore of the river shone and glittered in the sunbeams like burnished silver, and reflected their rays with intense brightness. We were all in buoyant spirits, the ladies—for we had two on board—keenly enjoyed the beautiful scenery,

and at 4 p. m. as keenly enjoyed their dinner, which was as well served and as well cooked as on board one of the gulf steamers. Some who had never before visited the lower St. Lawrence were enchanted with the mountain defiles and the lofty banks of the river, whose slopes afford soil for a great variety of umbrageous forest trees. As we approached Kamouraska, a pretty village about ninety miles from Quebec, a stiff breeze or puff came down the gorge of the Malbaie river making a lively time in the cabin, and greatly alarming one of our lady passengers, and to such an extent that she rushed on deck pale with fright, her missal in one hand and a bottle of hartshorn in the other, and implored the pilot to land her at the first convenient spot. To stop at Murray Bay or Kamouraska was impossible, the sun had gone to rest, the wind had freshened, and there was every appearance of an approaching squall. The "Oriole," unmindful of her living freight, exulting felt the auspicious wind, and heeded not the curling waves, but bounded on like a proud horse spurning the ground as he rushes on to the war-cry, or to the cry of tally-ho! The Pilgrim's Light was soon passed, and the lighted windows of the houses at Rivière du Loup were shortly after seen twinkling in the darkness. Yet no landing could be effected—nothing for it but to run to the Brandy Pots, where we anchored in smooth water for the night, sincerely regretting not only the fright of our fair passenger, but the loss of the breeze, which would in all probability have carried us by the morrow's noon as far as Matane. The little bay in which we anchored, near the light-house, we christened "Persuasion Bay," out of compliment to the lady for whose comfort we laid over, as she said it was only by the greatest persuasion that she was induced to risk her life on board the yacht, and that no persuasion, not even that of the Bishop of Rimouski, would ever induce her to put her foot on board the "Oriole," unless she was snugly moored in harbour.

After breakfast we crossed to Rivière du Loup, landed our fair friend and her husband, whom we were sorry to lose, as he was proving himself not only a good sailor but "a jolly good fellow," one who had no sympathy with the sickly fellow who wrote some verses, off the Mingan, in 1853, against the art of navigation, as follows:

> "Ah, sure the greedy wretch is pent
> In endless chains of deep damnation,
> Who first to plague us did invent
> The cursed art of navigation!

* * * * * * *

Of all the heavy judgments passed
On Egypt for her sins renowned,
Salt water was reserved the last,
And Pharaoh and his host were drowned.

* * * * * *

All you who on the land abide,
Our element to mourn us borrow;
Let fall of tears, a briny tide,
Salt water is the sign of sorrow.

Our fair friend evidently considered that a breeze on the "briny" was a heavy judgment, and that "salt water is the sign of sorrow," when with force the tempests blow, "and watery hills in dread succession flow." Upon saying Adieu she was loud in her protestations of gratitude to our pilot, Thomas Simard, of Quebec, than whom a more capable and cautious one does not exist. She rewarded him with a gratuity, and promised to offer up her prayers for all persons travelling by land or by water, &c., &c., more particularly for all those on board the "Oriole," and there was a faint murmuring upon her part about founding a chapel at Bic, to be dedicated to our Blessed Lady for the benefit of wind-bound pilots, where they could chant every day—

A-ve Mari-a! Car voi-ci l'heure sainte
La cloche tin-te, A-ve Mari-a!
Tous les petits anges au front radi-eux,
Chantent vos louanges, O Reine des cieux!

Our other lady passenger, although suffering from seasickness, showed more courage, and continued with us during the passage to Gaspé, doubtless thinking that if there was any danger she had better share it with her husband.

About 10 a.m. Wednesday we left Rivière du Loup, but unfortunately the fair breeze of the previous evening had died out, and it was nightfall ere we passed the light-house at Bic. The night was clear, the sunset was a veritable feast for our eyes; it was followed by a brilliant aurora, which seemed to invade the entire celestial vault, and was at once a delight and astonishment for our minds.

On Thursday and Friday we had strong head winds, occasionally under double reef mainsail and foresail. During this time we were beating about between Metis and Cap Chatte, the monotony was only relieved by the number of porpoises and whales which came up to look at us.

EXCHANGE OF PORK FOR FISH.

Saturday we made but little headway, and various were the speculations when we should see Cape Rosier. Pools were

made for midnight, but we did not arrive there for thirty-six hours after; it seemed that we should never get out of sight of the high mountains of Ste. Anne. During the morning we got close into shore somewhere about the river Pierre, and exchanged some freshly-salted pork with a fisherman for some halibut and codfish. We were liberal in our barter, giving him about four times the amount of pork, and of infinitely better quality, that he could have got in exchange from the truck-shops or fishing schooners. He was an intelligent, good-looking fellow; there was a merry twinkle in his eye, and a frankness and joyousness in his manner which was not exhibited by other fishermen that we saw in the Gaspé district. This joyousness was not so much to be attributed to the exceedingly good bargain he had made, nor to the receipt of a plug of tobacco, but more to a light heart, youth, and a strong constitution; he was not troubled with *l'épouse, et les enfants, et la belle-mère.* As he pulled away to his fishing ground we could hear the refrain of—

En roulant, ma boule roulant,
En roulant, ma boule.
Derrièr' chez nous 'ya-t-un étang,
En roulant ma boule.

How we should have liked to have seen him sitting down to his meal *au lard frit*, he would doubtless enjoy it as much as the epicure would *canard sauvage en salmis* and *truffes au vin champagne*, and perhaps much more so. The halibut and codfish that we had for dinner upon this day we would not have exchanged for the richest *menu*, even if it contained *pâtés de foie gras, salades vénitiennes, saumon froid, sauce Ravigote*, and these washed down with Johannisberg, Lafitte, and Tokay. We all ate most heartily, and should have done so, like the Governor of Barataria, despite all the aphorisms of the doctor of Tirteafeura, believing with Sancho Panza that "the viscera upholds the heart, and the heart the belly," and that it is fit we should be well fed to keep ourselves in readiness for the hard work of a yacht voyage.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Saturday evening, the weather being fine and the yacht under easy sail, we indulged in songs, drank to the health of Her Most Gracious Majesty to this refrain:

"Drink to the Queen, my boys, drink!
Our hearts are as full as our glasses.
Who from the challenge will shrink?
'Tis a toast that all others surpasses.

Then drink to the Queen, my boys, drink,
Your hearts in your glasses caress her;
Drink to the Queen, my boys, drink,
Here's health and long life and God bless her."

The toast of "sweethearts and wives," was most enthusiastically received; a bachelor with a fine tenor voice led off, in response to the "sweethearts," with the following spirited song:

I love thee, I love thee!
My raven-ha'r'd girl.
Thy lips are the rubies,
Thy teeth each a pearl;
Thine eyes are the brilliants,
In ivory set,
Transcendently g'eaming
Thro' lashes of jet.

The married men, who formed the majority, in response to the "wives," sang in chorus "Home, Sweet Home!"

THE FIRST SUNDAY.

Sunday morning was ushered in with contrary winds and a rolling sea, consequently we could not conveniently have the morning service, as each man had to be at his post, more particularly the commodore, who throughout the passage evinced that cautiousness necessary for the well-being and comfort of all; therefore, as the duty of chaplain devolved upon him, we waited till 5 p.m. for the evening service, by which time the wind had abated and the sea gone down. There was no temple bell, but there was a spirit among all not to forget Him who holds the water in the hollow of His hand. There was a desire to assemble together in the little cabin "to set forth His most worthy praise, to hear His most holy Word." The commodore read in a plain and unaffected way the evening service of the church of England. The psalms of the day were not only appropriate, but they came with additional force after our three days beating against head winds.

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep."

After the service we saw many very large whales, huge monsters of the deep, which recalled to our minds the magnificent description of God's great power in the Leviathan, as recorded in the 41st chapter of Job, and made us fully realize the saying of Milton:—

"Here Leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land; and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea."

CAPE ROSIER.

On the Monday we sighted Cape Rosier; when nearly abreast we hailed a fishing-boat; the fisherman hoisted sail and soon came alongside the yacht and landed some of our party at a little fishing station about three miles west of the light-house, and adjacent to a farm-house, the residence of M. Trudeau, ex-light-house keeper at Cape Rosier. Here we were regaled with some delicious milk, home-made bread and fresh butter; while partaking of this frugal repast the rain descended heavily, much to our regret, as we were anxious to proceed on our journey. We remained for about half an hour chatting with our host, and had with him a social pipe. The old gentleman, though long past three score and ten, was very cheerful; he pressed us to remain to dinner, and his invitation was most cordially extended by his daughter and son-in-law, Mrs. and Mr. Joseph Labelle. Time would not permit us to avail ourselves of their further hospitality, knowing that the yacht would be awaiting our arrival at Grande Grève. A hay-cart was soon provided with a thick bed of straw laid on its floor, and some heavy great coats for coverlids. After hasty adieus we made ourselves as comfortable as possible, and tried to make ourselves jolly under the circumstances; but three miles over a rough concession road gave us a very uncomfortable jolting, shaking us to such an extent that had we been drinking rich cream it would have been churned into butter, and probably produced a nausea as bad as that our remaining lady passenger suffered from during all the passage; her sickness we deplored, chiefly on her account, as she was much prostrated; again, we regretted being robbed of her society. After half an hour's ride in the rain through a wretched farming country—the fields covered in some places with a little miserable grass, here and there patches of oats which may probably be in full ear by the time the harvest is ended in Ontario, the few sheep looked half starved, and, like their companion cattle, partook of that rugged meagre character so well portray l in the pictures of Paul Potter and Berghem, probably from the luxuriant crop of thistles everywhere present—we arrived at Cape Rosier light-house, which we inspected. Mr. Auguste Trudeau, the light-house keeper, kindly explained everything connected with its construction and internal economy.

The light-house is one of Professor Kingston's meteorological stations, and is fitted up with a barometer, thermometer, rain gauge, and an anemometer for getting the force and

direction of the wind, which can be fully and accurately determined, as the wind-gauge is placed on the point of a long, low, and flat promontory which juts out into the sea some considerable distance from the surrounding high mountains, thus possessing advantages over the wind instruments at the "Montreal Observatory," which are placed immediately under one of the steepest ledges of Mount Royal. Our inspection over, and having thanked the keeper for his courtesy, hospitality and kindness in forwarding telegrams of our safe arrival to our friends in Toronto and Montreal, whom we thought would be naturally anxious about us, as it had taken the "Oriole" six days to perform a passage which is done by the steamer "Secret" in thirty-six hours, we started on foot for Grande Grève, a small fishing settlement beautifully situated on Gaspe Bay, and separated from Cape Rosier Bay by a mountainous range.

THE ROAD FROM CAPE ROSIER TO GRANDE GRÈVE.

The first two miles was along the beach, by the margin of which we sauntered leisurely, picking up a few star fish, echinæ, and brachiopoda, stopping at intervals to watch the process of preparing and curing the codfish, which by next Lent may be seen under the shadow of the Dogana and Piazza di San Marco at Venice; or under the shadow of the Castle of St. Angelo, and the vast and wondrous dome of St. Peter's at Rome; or at the base of the marble statue of St. Januarius, the patron saint of Naples, giving a relish to the poor man's pumpkin seed and macaroni. In the preparing and curing the codfish the fishermen are assisted by their wives and daughters, whose labours are not accompanied with a merry song or cheery laugh, but rather with the sobs of weariness; instead of sunny cheeks and lightsome eyes there was to be seen only the pale and spirit-broken look of ceaseless toil and hopeless degradation—a degradation from which there will be little chance of redemption until the abominable and iniquitous truck system is abolished; there will be no kind hand ministered to them, nor cheerful voices making music in their homes, until this is consummated. The lives of the fishermen between Fox River and Percé being worse than that of the negro in the West Indies before emancipation, or the beggarly lazzaroni of Southern Italy; the labour of the negro being cheered by the luxurious vegetation of the cocoa-nut palm, the orange tree, the tamarind and the sugar cane; and that of the Italian by the olive groves, the sunny hills covered with

vines and flowers, the monuments of past and mightier ages—wonders of art no longer to be equalled—fragments of an older and greater world! the scenes where genius and valour carried their patriotic daring and achievements to the highest summits of human greatness and devotion; the glorious shrines, temples, palaces and churches.

THE TRUCK SYSTEM.

The truck system is a system of bondage, a serfdom. The writer knows of no spot in Canada where human nature—manhood—is in a greater state of social degradation than on the shores of the codfishing grounds between Magdelaine and the Bay of Chaleurs, and he commends these wretched toilers of the seas to the notice of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, the Hon. Peter Mitchell, whose Christian name doubtless was given him by pious parents in remembrance of the Peter, from whose fettered limbs the Angel of God struck his chains and led him forth from the dungeon of the prison house to life and liberty,—the Peter who in his first general epistle says, "Above all things have fervent charity amongst yourselves—have compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful."

The petition of these fishermen is to *you*, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and it says: "Good sir, deliver us from the bondage of hard task-masters. This truck system is a hidden oppression which weighs heavily but silently upon our souls, sometimes upon our lives. It is an oppression which our tribunals do not punish, neither does philanthropy, which exercises itself in large cities for the prevention of cruelty to animals, attempt to mitigate, nor the Legislature to arrest. It is the indifference to our position we complain of. No song accompanies our labour; if we listen, we only hear a sound of dull and lagging footsteps, as of those that are weary in body and sick at heart. Have mercy upon us—let us have liberty."

It may truly be said that "night's daughter, Ignorance, have wrapt, and wraps" all round the district. At Cape Rosier and Grande Grève we cannot say of the poor fishermen—

——— with little blest
Patient of labour when the end was rest,
Indulged the day that housed their annual gain
With feasts and offerings, and a thankful strain,
The joys their wives, their sons, their daughters share,
Eased of their toil and partners of their care,
The laugh, the jest, attendants on the bowl,
Smoothed every brow and opened every soul.

No! they seem to be ground down by abject poverty.

DESCRIPTION OF A MOUNTAIN PASS AND MORALIZINGS THEREON.

Here is a long halt by the way, we must now proceed on our journey. After leaving the huts of the fishermen the rest of the road lies through a mountain pass or gorge hemmed in by bold rocks about 1200 feet high—the ascent from the beach is sudden and abrupt—these rocks are sometimes covered with the dark green foliage of the fir, anon they are naked and ragged, fitting altars for the sacrifice of the ignorance and poverty of the neighbourhood, where the children look melancholy, and the pigs are attenuated, half-starved looking animals, with sharp pointed snouts, their chief food being the refuse and entrails of the codfish. The look and habits of the pigs which are probably infested with trichinæ, made us realize more fully the extra-brightening up of the fisherman's countenance off River Pierre, when we gave him some of the best mess pork that could be procured. There are few spots in Lower Canada where the eye can rest on wilder and more romantic scenery—yet without the rugged grandeur of the Saguenay district—than is to be found in this mountain pass, the top of which is about 800 feet high, exceedingly narrow, and beetles perpendicularly over the sea. It made us dizzy to cast our eyes so low ; the sea-gulls that winged the midway air showed scarce as gross as sea-swallows, and the fishermen upon the beach appeared no larger than the inhabitants described in the interesting travels of Captain Lemuel Gulliver, more particularly the illustrious HOUYHNHNMS, who were cut off from all commerce with other people, and whose buildings were very rude and simple, and who had no occasion of bribery, or flattering, or pimping to procure the favour of any great man or of his minion ; nor where there amongst them bullies and drunkards (as no spirituous liquor can be obtained at Cape Rosier from the truck-shops, without a certificate from the priest that it is wanted for medicinal purposes), neither were there to be found physicians to destroy their bodies, nor lawyers to ruin their fortunes, nor scoundrels raised from the dust for the sake of their vices, nor fiddlers, judges, and dancing masters. Would we could add they wanted no fence against the fraud and oppression of the factors who are the upholders of the degrading truck-system to which we have alluded.

In an umbrageous valley of this mountain pass, which is eminently beautiful we revelled ; in it we collected a number of lichens, mosses, luxuriant ferns, and wild flora. At one turn a narrow path with crumbled rocks, then a deep glen

with its bright green trees, filled up at the mouth with the bright azure sheet of the bay below, it looked but a step out of the leafy covert into blank infinity. Every turn of the valley was replete with beauty; to describe it wants the word painting of Ruskin, or the brush of a Creswick, or the poetry of a Wordsworth. It was green and woody and refreshed the eye:

> "It was a spot which you might aptly call
> The valley of seclusion."

Its very stillness was almost oppressive, there was no sound of birds, no lark at heaven's gate singing, no rossignols, no warblers of the wood, no exquisite harmony from the shrill treble of a flock of birds; no flocks or herds, no bleating of sheep or lowing of cattle; nothing but the soft melancholy of the alto of the moaning trees commingled with the bass of the unseen surge below. It was solitude—a solitude which is sometimes the best society—a solitude where the mind unburthens itself with ease and freedom—a sort of Vaucluse wherein we could, in imagination, conjure up Petrarch retired from Love and Avignon, enduring the absence of his beloved Laura, and relieving himself from the false joys of a vicious and corrupted court—or the forest of Arden where the Duke with the melancholy Jacques and his co-mates and brothers in exile,

> "Exempt from public haunt
> Found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

The very stones preached to us, they seemed to say:—"Cry aloud, spare not the avarice and greed of those merchant-fishmongers—hard task-masters who permit in some instances the wives of the fishermen to salt down the flesh of the whale (whack) for winter food, and charge them exorbitant prices for the necessaries of life, so that the poor are always deeply in debt, and must either starve or fish." There is no escape—no competition for labour like that in the corn fields of Ontario; on the wharves of Montreal or Quebec; and in the wood-forests of Ottawa; no competition in open market where prices are regulated by supply and demand;—but they are doomed to live where the merchant buys the fish at his own valuation, and also barters out the goods sold at his truck-shop at his price, so that if fish is bought from the fisherman at half its value and the necessaries of life are sold to them at double their value, the merchant becomes rich and the fisherman becomes poor—miserably poor—there's no help

for it.—Dives and Lazarus—the parable may occasionally be read with profit. The truck system is fraught with most awful consequences to the independence and moral condition of the poor fisherman. There can be no doubt that the moral and social condition of the poor of the district of Gaspé has been for a long period becoming degraded and deteriorated, and the writer believes that if the truck system were abolished and the fishermen were paid a fair price for their fish, or proper money wages for their daily labour, they would soon become more respectable in station, independent in feelings, and comfortable in circumstances. How can these poor Gaspé fishermen ever better their condition if by unfair means they are compelled to expend the *whole of their earnings* at the merchant's shop? There is no doubt that much injustice is done to them, and that great misery results to their wives and families.

If the fishmonger-merchant kept his shop for the purpose of securing good articles, at fair prices, to the fishermen, and he afforded no inducement to purchase at his shop except the superior cheapness and quality of his articles, there would be no reason to complain; but the cruelty which is at present inflicted on the fishermen by the purchase of his fish in goods, is often very severe—and the severity is proven by the horrible condition of the people.

The subject is commended to those merchants and traders who signed a requisition for an indignation meeting in Montreal anent the "Pacific Scandal." It is further commended to the leaders of the Opposition,

> "Whose ardent minds
> Shape goodliest plans of happiness on earth,
> And peace, and liberty, and reform."

Assuredly men whose political eyes are too pure to behold an infringement of the liberties of the people's representatives, ought not to wink at the perpetuation of a system which depraves and degrades the poor fisherman. But let us now leave the topic, and let us most fervently hope that the attention of the Prime Minister may be called to it, for without descending to political abstractions it is the duty of a Prime Minister, more particularly if he adopts a conservative policy, to see that the voice of disaffection is not heard, and that the misery of depressive circumstances should be forgotten in the midst of physical enjoyment; and to consult the public interest, and to provide for the public good.

GRANDE GRÈVE.

It is now high time that we left this valley of seclusion and dropt sermonizing. Half an hour's sharp walking brought us in sight of Grande Grève, with the appearance of which we were much struck, and a few minutes more brought us to the beach, where we called at the residence of the worthy mayor, Mr. William Hyman, who was unfortunately from home. In his absence we were courteously received by the representative of the firm of William Fruing & Co., of Jersey, who kindly gave us any information we required. The next morning, Tuesday, boats were placed at our disposal, or rather at the disposal of those "Orioles" who felt inclined to "go a-fishing." At break of day eight of them started, and after about four hours' toiling, which were not spent fruitlessly, even though they did not succeed in hooking a multitude of fishes, yet they obtained abundantly more than were required for the yacht's consumption. The superflux was sold for about one half cent per pound in part payment for the hire of the boats, so that codfish is cheap at Grande Grève; it is a pity, we thought, that there's not some means of getting a plentiful supply on a Friday in Montreal or Toronto; even without oysters, fine fresh cod is not bad fasting—better than frogs, *fricassée de grenouilles*, which Sterne somewhere says is very good fish for a Good Friday.

GASPÉ BASIN.

In the afternoon we weighed anchor and arrived at Gaspé Basin about 6 p.m., firing our gun as we entered the inner harbour, the report of which brought a number of people upon the wharf, who, probably from our rig, rakish look, and the blue ensigh of the T. R. Y. C. flying at the main, took us for a government cutter. The first to welcome us was the harbour master, Mr. Jos. Eden; we then went to the Custom House and paid our respects to the collector, Mr. Belleau, by whom we were cordially welcomed and hospitably entertained, and whose genial society, heightened as it was by that of Madame and Mdlles. Belleau, made us forget that the shades of evening were closing darkly around us. Adieu! good night; it was like tearing ourselves from felicity. A long sigh, then to the yacht again—to sleep, perchance to dream. There being no night-watch, and everything quiet, we all slept soundly, and found when we woke the sun many degrees above the horizon and shining brightly. After breakfast the majority went lobster fishing—ignoble sport compared with angling

with a fly for trout in the Bergeronne or for salmon in the Marguerite. It could hardly be said to be as exciting as sniggling for eels, because the lobsters are very abundant, and can be distinctly seen among the sea-weed at the bottom of the basin, the water being exceedingly clear; so that it is merely drawing these crustaceous shell-fish out with a small boat-hook. The only thing that commended the sport was its novelty. Others went for a drive along the road skirting the banks of the river that empties itself into the basin. The river scenery is very beautiful, and the farms to the right of the road are well cultivated, and the cottages have small gardens in their fronts, delighting the eye, thus forming a striking contrast to the farms and cottages between Fox River and Cape Rosier. By the time we returned to the yacht we were honoured with the company of a large party which the commodore had invited to luncheon; the steward and purser were found equal to the occasion. The merry twinkling eyes of the ladies demanded something more sparkling than limpid water, and their vivacity something more palatable than ordinary ship's fare; we had an impromptu symposium. In the evening we accepted the kind invitation of the Harbour Master, and went to his house before sunset in order to enjoy the surpassingly beautiful view of the basin which presents itself from the verandah. As the stars made their appearance, troupes of the fair belles of Gaspé,—some with a blue tenderness of the eye, long fair hair, rosy cheeks, blooming with health—began to arrive, until eventually the house was filled. Then came music, song, and the dance, which were not ended until the iron tongue of midnight had told twelve One of the charms of the entertainment was its informality; there was no presiding genius, each vied with the other to make the night joyous. The town of Gaspé may be recommended for three things: the picturesqueness of its scenery, the hospitality of its people, and the beauty of its demoiselles, qualities which will ever be impressed upon the "Orioles." One thing is, however, requisite to render this delightful harbour nearly perfect, and that is a good, commodious, comfortable and well-conducted hotel. The present one is poor in accommodation, and has none of the attractions or necessaries requisite for a watering-place or a summer resort for those seeking health of mind and body, or to recruit worn thoughts and wearied spirits, or to throw off the long coil of busy care With a good hotel, there is no more desirable spot on the lower St. Lawrence than Gaspé Basin; it may be called the paradise of the Gulf.

STARTING FOR HOME.

We bade adieu to it on Thursday morning with a tolerably stiff breeze, but upon rounding the bay we found a head-wind; it was blowing very hard, and accompanied with a heavy sea, so that we had to put back to Little Gaspé, a small protestant district about a mile from Grande Grève, where we anchored, and were soon joined by three schooners who had put in for shelter, one of them containing a valuable cargo of the mysteries of the deep, and having on board a party of savans, chiefest among whom was Mr. Whiteaves, the well-known curator of the Montreal Natural History Society, a keen naturalist who is not content with picking up the wonders of the shore, but is actively engaged in the deep-sea dredging of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. At this little anchorage we remained wind-bound until Saturday. During the night of Friday we had a thunder storm, the reverberation of the thunder claps from the neighbouring mountains being something awfully grand. While wind-bound we were not spell-bound, the wonders of the shore being nothing but pebbles, with here and there dislocations of the limestone rocks, with dykes and with veins of calcareous spar, and lead. Close to our anchorage were what appeared to us some unproductive lead quarries, also a diminutive trout stream, which afforded the fishermen of our party a few hours' amusement. The trout were not much larger than smelts, but they were of good flavour and in sufficiency to make a good addition to our lunch. Others went raspberry picking, and thus provided us, with the aid of some cream obtained from a cottager, an after-dinner dessert. We added nothing to our collection of fauna, flora, fuci, or algæ; there was not much fertility on the shores of our little water-world—

> Here were no coral bowers,
> And grots of madrepores,
> And banks of sponge, as soft and fair to eye
> As e'er was mossy bed,
> Whereon the wood-nymphs lie
> With languid limbs in summer's sultry hours.

We were getting languid with two days comparative inaction, and were rejoiced to weigh anchor again on Saturday morning. Unfortunately there was scarcely any wind, and by the time we got again off Cape Rosier the wind had died away and there was a calm accompanied by a long rolling sea which made the night very uncomfortable.

OUR SECOND SUNDAY.

Sunday morning still calm. At 11 a.m. we had the morning service, the simplicity of which was enjoyable. We had no surpliced choirs; "no," as Ruskin calls it, "dramatic Christianity of the organ and aisle, no chanting hymns through traceried windows for back-ground effect and articulating the 'Dio' through variation on variation of mimicked prayer;" but, we trust we had our hearts and minds in accord with the beautiful liturgy of the Church of England, when we said, "The Lord's name be praised," "And His mercy is on them that fear Him throughout all generations."

During the afternoon, to relieve the monotony of the calm, many whales came up to look at us, monstrous fellows, "out of whose nostrils goeth smoke as out of a seething pot or caldron." They were not, like trout, to be drawn out with a hook, and we certainly felt no inclination "to play with them as birds," of which we saw but few, and these, for the most part, sea-gulls and sea-swallows, occasionally a few wild duck, and loons or northern divers (colymbis glacialis); the latter seem to have a sort of diving-bell apparatus enabling them to get a supply of air at great depths, and to remain under water for a considerable time. At 3 p.m. a gentle breeze and fair wind sprung up, and away went the "Oriole," "walking the waters like a thing of life;" the waves bounded beneath us as a stud that knows his rider, our course being for west point of Anticosti. The sun shone brightly, there was an intensely blue sky, with patches of light fleecy clouds (cirrus) in the zenith; we had, all of us, the sunshine of cheerfulness and hope in our hearts, which lightened the little clouds of disappointment we experienced from all the head-winds and calms on our voyage. The sunset was magnificent, gilding the whole western sky with rich alchemy. With the setting sun came also a calm, and looking northerly, the direction of our course, we were reminded of Byron's description of the ocean in Childe Harold's Pilgrimage:

> Boundless, endless, and sublime,
> The image of eternity, the throne
> Of the invisible; even from out thy slime
> The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
> Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dead, fathomless, alone.

Anon came out the stars of Orionis, Ursæ Majoris, Canis Minoris, Bootis, and the Pleiades, that have watched since first the world had birth; the twilight melted away as they appeared garnishing the heavens. Anon the brightness of

the stars melted away with the brilliancy of the aurora, looking like a long silver drapery floating in the atmosphere, folding and reopening in a thousand ways.

CALM AND FOG.

Early morning we found ourselves becalmed off Anticosti, nearly abreast of Ellis Bay, and in company with one of the Lake clipper ships, bound inwards, trading between Liverpool and Montreal, but about a mile astern of her. The wind was very light, and we did not part company with her until night, when it came on to rain and afterwards sprung up a dense fog, making the night-watch wretchedly disagreeable. Our classic friend to whom we alluded in the opening of our narrative would probably in imagination have been Thetis (Iliad, Book iv. p. 359) rising out of the sea to console Achilles, and, like the Argonauts, would have, had he been on board, prayed to Apollo for some guiding light to have taken us past the Manicouagan shoals, near to which we were fast approaching. The fog was as thick as the dark cloud which Jupiter threw over the valley of Tempé to conceal his amour with Io. Had we been fortunate enough to have had a copy of Ossian, the poet who is most conversant with mists, we might have whiled away the time more preciously than we did listening to the screeching fog horns answering one another, "piercing the night's dull ear," and only relieved by the screams of the fog whistle at the Manicouagan light-house. About half-past one p.m. the next day the fog cleared or lifted, and brought us a strong head-wind which soon enabled us to weather the "lake ship," and a schooner with whom we had been in close company all the night. When nearing Father Point we had some curious effects of mirage, bringing the coast line apparently nearer and giving us images of the sails of vessels which were below the horizon, and these images very much distorted. These constant atmospheric changes and phenomena were to the writer highly interesting, and helped to make up one of the greatest charms of the voyage. They enchained the attention of many of our company, and those who had an intelligence capable of their deep appreciation will doubtless in future feel a greater interest in the science of meteorology than they hitherto have done. All yachtsmen as well as sailors are, or ought to be, interested in that science, which enables the scientist to prognosticate coming storms. Many on board the "Oriole" contemplated, with no child-like feelings, the sublime scenery of the sky, with its ever-changing clouds, its glorious sun-rises and sun-sets, its thunders and

lightnings, its auroral displays, its rainbows, with which the great architect has clothed the orb of heaven. They may have thought with Crashaw, one of the good old seventeenth century poets—

> The self-remembering soul sweetly recovers
> Her spirit with the stars: not basely hovers
> Below—but meditates th' immortal way,
> Home to the source of light and day.

At night-fall we passed Rimouski with a fair wind, and the "Oriole" saucily passed every vessel during the night and held on her way until we passed the Grand Bergeronne, a good trout stream well known to all the frequenters of the Saguenay. By this time the sun had risen, "gilding the top of the hills with gold" and with his rising he brought a dead calm; the tide was at the full flood so that there was nothing for it but to drift with the ebb backwards or tow the yacht into the anchorage ground about two miles east of the entrance to the Saguenay. All hands to the gig and make fast a tow rope. Two hours and a half hard pulling—half hourly reliefs—brought us to safe anchorage. Then a wash and a hearty luncheon, and after these refresheners we started for Tadoussac, putting on board the steamer "Union" one of our co-voyagers whom we were sorry to part with for he was such "a jolly good fellow, and so said all of us"; and should these rambling disjointed lines ever cross the optics of Captain Mountain, of the "Union," let him take this notice of his extreme courtesy as a hearty and unanimous vote of thanks from the "Orioles" for stopping his vessel when under way at the mouth of the Saguenay, thus enabling our friend to pursue his way to Toronto, whither especial business compelled him to be before the yacht could possibly have got to Quebec.

TADOUSSAC.

We were now fully in front of Tadoussac Bay, in shape like a deep crescent with lofty shores of rock on either side, and at its concave a beautiful sandy beach with a lofty shore studded with houses, right and left of the little Roman Catholic church —one of the oldest in Canada. Conspicuous among these houses are two—the new marine residence of His Excellency the Governor General, Lord Dufferin, and the hotel, under the able management of Mr. James Fennel, to whom we take this opportunity of tendering our hearty thanks for his attention to our wants while we remained at Tadoussac. At the hotel about 6 p. m., we all of us sat down to a good dinner washed down with some excellent Bass' bitter beer and claret which we

most thoroughly enjoyed, the more so from our having had nothing for four days but salt pork and "hard-tack." After dinner we sauntered down to the Indian quarters and learnt from the squaws the mysteries of basket making in which they are great adepts; thence we walked across the tongue of land which separates the bay from the little harbour of L'Anse a l'Eau to secure staterooms in the steamer St. Lawrence for Ha! Ha! Bay, whence five of our party purposed going—four of them for the first time.

THE SAGUENAY.

It need hardly be said that the four were startled with the wild and picturesque scenery of this most remarkable river, with its almost fathomless depths, its bold granitic hills of stupendous grandeur culminating in those two famed promontories capes Eternity and Trinity standing out at the entrance of a small bay like two mighty portals, or sentinels to guard the banks of the river which falls into the bay, inhabited originally, perhaps by the Titans or the Gods; the place seems too awful for the residence of ordinary mortals. Language cannot describe the emotions of awe and wonder and almost fear which affect the beholder as he gazes upon this display of the Almighty Creator's power. One is reminded of a rhapsody of Samuel Taylor Coleridge when after gazing upon the view presented to him from the top of Windcliff, says:—"It seemed like Omnipotence! God methought had built him there a temple! Blest hour—a luxury to be." Beautiful, grand, majestic, and sublime as the river Saguenay is, some people are not affected by its granitic hills, towering like Alps upon Alps; some never experience that sense of littleness which made a person once exclaim when looking over the vast expanse of the Mediterranean from Mount Carmel, "I never before felt my utter insignificance. I am only like a tiny dew-drop in a bucket of water, then what must I be in the presence of such infinity." Some we say are not affected when gazing up at the triple peak of Cape Trinity, the highest of which is 1600 feet above the water level of the river and beetles over at as great an angle as the leaning tower of Pisa. The writer remembers a few years since pointing out Cape Trinity to a couple of couples of genuine "down-easters" whom he thinks must have been doing the "Honeysuckle Tour," as they lolled about the sofas of the cabin on board the steamer "Magnet" reading "Aurora Floyd" or "Romola" and the Woman's Kingdom," and he never will forget the elder of the two spoony bridegrooms saying, as he strained his neck

to look up at the summit of the Cape—"Wal! I guess stranger it's pritty tall." The writer collapsed and secretly vowed that he would never again disturb connubial bliss even if he saw Eve herself revisiting the glimpses of the moon, making night beautiful and causing all the stars of heaven to hide their diminished heads at her approach.

A SECOND FOG.

But to return to the "Oriole." Our Saguenay party crossed over to Rivière du Loup by the steamer, and those left at Tadoussac, after rambling through every nook and corner of it, started for the yacht which was still at anchor in the plaee we left her the previous day. The night was very foggy, and in the morning we found we had a barque for a companion anchored about a quarter mile from us; the fog was then much too thick off the land to start for Rivière du Loup, and again there was no wind and the tide was ebbing. What can we do? Visit the barque, suggested the pilot, "I think I know her by her rig, and if I am not mistaken it is a French barque that I piloted last year; if so you will find the "Capitaine" a very genial person." All right, pilot, launch the gig and let us go—we did, and found the predictions of the pilot verified. The name of the barque was the St. Louis of Toulon, the Captain's name was Dion, and a finer specimen of a French sailor, perhaps, has not been seen on the St. Lawrence since Jacques Cartier landed at the mouth of the Saguenay. Welcome scarcely realizes the salutation. We were ushered into the cabin, the only ornament in it being a picture of the sainted King going barefooted to the cathedral of Notre Dame to implore the help of heaven on his mission to the last crusade he shared in. Out came from a private locker some fragrant Bordeaux and some choice Havanas, which we enjoyed; and by way of a parting glass a bottle of champagne was opened of as good a quality, perhaps, as was drank by the courtiers of Louis XIV. at his nuptials with Maria Theresa. The Captain returned with us to the yacht and lunched, before the meal was finished a light breeze sprung up, and the fog lifted a little, the anchor was again weighed and after a hasty adieu to the Captain the "Oriole" was, before he reached his ship, a mile on her way to Rivière du Loup, where we arrived about 7 p. m. Upon enquiry we found our Saguenay party at Cacouna. We telegraphed for advice—reply, Stop till tomorrow morning, when expect a party on board to luncheon.

CACOUNA.

Knowing that Cacouna is a favourite resort with young widows, the most interesting portion of the fair sex, if she does not happen to be *your own*, the party on board were left in surmise whether the ladies who would form the morrow's party would be in delicate half mourning—lavender slightly trimmed with black, or black heavily trimmed with lavender. About noon arrived upon the wharf two omnibus loads, containing some of the prettiest girls ever seen in the lower St. Lawrence. There was not the weeds of mourning upon one of them, they were all decked in colours as bright as those to be seen on a summer's afternoon in the Champs Elysées at Paris. The gig was soon lowered and after about six trips to and fro all were on board the "Oriole," where they were most heartily welcomed and hospitably entertained. The cabin was never more joyous—it was a "felix hora;" our classical friend would have quoted from Catullus, and said:—"Quis datur a divis felici optatius horâ"? What indeed can the Gods give more than a happy hour spent in charming society unless they give a second, which in this instance they did—happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again. All our guests safe on shore, we one and all accompanied them to the hotel where we spent the evening, leaving early in the morning for the yacht which two days after arrived safely in Quebec, and thus ended one of the most pleasurable trips it had ever been the lot of the writer to make. Had any one of the readers of this rambling narrative been on board during the round trip from Quebec to Gaspé via Rivière du Loup, and back via Anticosti and the Saguenay, they would have given three cheers for the "Oriole," three more for the pilot, Thomas Simard, and three times three for the Commodore, who, with his crew, may God bless. R. E. X.