ST. ANNE *of the* MOUNTAINS

EFFIE BIGNELL

NOW IT NARROWS

SAINT ANNE OF THE MOUNTAINS

The Story of a Summer in a Canadian Pilgrimage Village

EFFIE BIGNELL

Author of
Mr. Chupes and Miss Jenny, My Woodland Intimates, A Quintette of Graycoats, Le Chardronet, and other Habitant Stories

"O Canada, O mes Amours"

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DEDICATION

To the revered memory of
two noble Canadians

SIR JAMES McPHERSON LE MOINE
and
DR. LOUIS FRECHETTE

this little record of the North Country
is lovingly and gratefully dedicated

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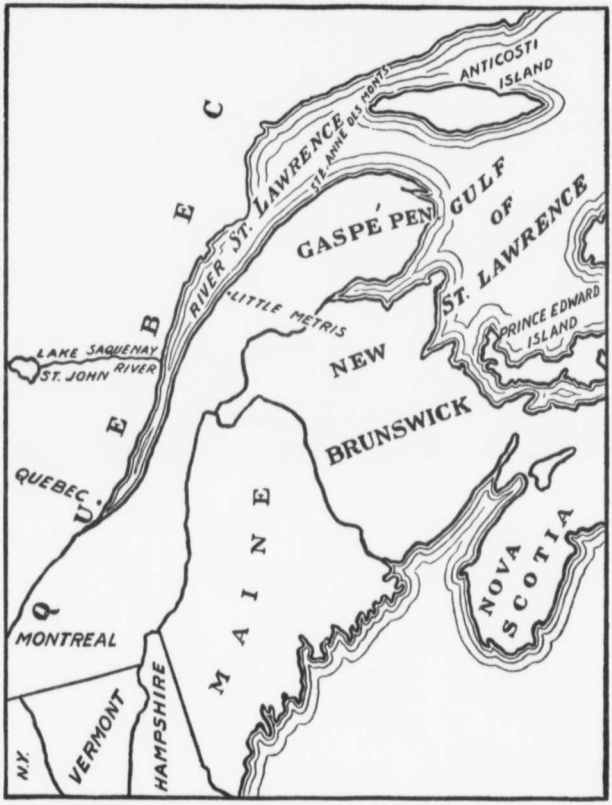
ANTICOSTI ISLAND
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ST. JOHN RIVER
NEW BRUNSWICK
QUEBEC
MONTREAL
MAINE
NOVA SCOTIA
N.Y.
VERMONT
HAMPSHIRE

PREFATORY NOTE

IT was a beautiful clear moonlit evening in early June. A friendly little company, having in mind an interchange of information regarding summer plans, had assembled on the veranda of a quiet suburban house.

A tender breeze whispered through the trees of the neighboring grove, and the delicate shadow-vines cast athwart our bungalow by the moonlight's outlining, swayed softly; while the subtle fragrance of moon flowers, evening primroses, four o'clocks, nicotiana affinis and other glare-eluding blossoms, blended with the luscious, spicy breath of the honeysuckle.

A song sparrow's voice rang out sweet, clear and spiritual; while, like a pulse of the night, rose and fell the soft chorus of joyous insects.

And into this earthly paradise ventured neither mosquito nor any other baleful reminder of the serpent's trail.

"Provided you do not ask me to accompany you," said the owner of the veranda,

"you may all roam where you will. New Jersey meets my requirements and I bide at home."

"I am bound for the Orient," declared one.

"And I for the Occident," said another.

"A Swiss walking tour is my ambition," said a third.

"The forests of Maine represent my goal," remarked a fourth.

"The Catskills, mine."

"The Adirondacks mine."

"The seashore mine."

"Quaint Quebec mine," and so on until came the turn of my travelling companion and myself.

"We are to summer at a village on the coast of Gaspé."

"And where may Gaspé be?" inquired one and another of our much-travelled companions.

And such is the charm of the unknown that we, lesser lights, soon found ourselves exalted to a pinnacle of importance in comparison with which our fellow-voyagers' schemes were but as mole hills to a mountain.

We produced a map, and for a moment the profane glare of an artificial light was

allowed to fall upon the paper. But in that single moment of illumination the mysterious Gaspé peninsula was located.

"You are going no farther than the southern coast of the lower St. Lawrence," exclaims one, in the injured tone of a person who discovers himself to be the victim of a fraud.

"No farther than the southern coast of the lower St. Lawrence," we meekly acknowledge.

"But you will be ninety miles from a railroad," hopefully remarks another, as if presenting what might be considered an extenuating circumstance.

"Yes, ninety miles from a railroad," we echo, taking heart again.

"Your long drive will lead you through a most interesting country and will no doubt furnish you with many quaint experiences."

"We trust it will."

"And you will take photographs all along the route, as well as in your pilgrimage village and its neighborhood."

"Such is our intention."

"And you will write your experiences and will give us an opportunity of passing judg-

ment on the result of your summer experiment?"

The promise is given, and, with the sensation of having passed an examination for admission to church membership, we subside.

Lest any of my readers should share the perplexity of the veranda group, a map of our route is here subjoined; and in the hope of imparting a faint idea of the settings of the subjects under discussion, a number of photographs are presented. No doubt many blemishes will be brought to light through a critical inspection of these pictures; nevertheless, wherever the illustrations represent unusual detail or distance, I counsel the use of a magnifying glass.

Since writing the following pages I have taken a second journey to the village of the shrine. On the later occasion, in place of my companion of the experimental trip, there accompanied me one weary of the stress and hurry of the age. One eager for the quiet that can be found in no localities save those where are unknown all electric or steam-propelled vehicles, other than such as pass upon the waters.

But when about half of the ninety mile

drive had been accomplished, and my companion was exulting in the serenity and remoteness of our surroundings, a familiar toot of warning cleft the air; and lo,—halting on the summit of the high hill whose base we had reached,—poised like a bird of ill-omen preparing to swoop down upon us and to destroy us—was a motor car!

The tourists courteously waited until we had made the ascent and gone our way. But not until the auto had whizzed itself out of sight and hearing did I venture to look toward my travelling companion: the trusting friend, who, through my representation of the automobileless state of this particular stretch of country, had been induced to accompany me!

Every trace of serenity and satisfaction had vanished from her countenance; and in their stead was that frozen look of disapproval and determination which characterizes the so-called "bicycle face."

"I suppose," she remarked icily to her driver, (the philosophical farmer whose acquaintance will be made in the course of this sketch) "I suppose that *thing* will eventually make its way to Ste. Anne des Monts."

"I do not think it likely, Madame."

"And what is to hinder, I should like to know? Here we meet it at the summit of one of your highest hills."

"That statement may not be contradicted, Madame, nevertheless I do not think that automobiles will reach our village—not this season at least. Voyez-vous, Madame, there is a hindrance. Before one arrives at Ste. Anne des Monts* one must cross a river, and this river has no bridge, and" . . .

Farther reassurance was unnecessary, and on the strength of this comforting statement I was restored to favor.

But several changes have taken place along the route since my earlier visit to this region.

At Cape Chatte all vestiges of the demolished bridge have been removed, and a fine new structure now spans the Cape Chatte river.

From the whilom peaceful heart of the Happy Valley a smoke stack now rises, and the buzz of a saw mill may there be heard during all hours of the operatives' day.

*Saint Anne of the Mountains.

PREFATORY NOTE

One of the most romantic heights of the Grande Rivière of Ste. Anne des Monts (a height overlooking the solitary camp where we halted at the close of our trout-quest) is now crowned by a beautiful lodge; the property of the present owner of the tributary's fishing rights.

In the village itself our attention is triumphantly directed toward several new and thoroughly modern dwellings.

But no other evidence of progress is quite so exultingly adduced as is the announcement that Monsieur T——'s apple tree has produced apples enough to make two pies!

Among the philosophical farmer's books we find a gentle story,* the scene of which is laid in the peaceful valley of Andorra. In bidding farewell to his readers the author ventures upon a friendly caution; a caution which may, with propriety, be here reproduced.

"Should any traveller whom this little recital may have interested, think of visiting the valley of Andorra, hoping to find there still the simple, patriarchal manners which

*Le Val d'Andorre, by Elie Berthot.

we have attempted to portray, he might experience a cruel disillusionment. In the Pyrenean republic, as elsewhere, thirty years have changed many things, and it would perhaps be better to rest content with the reading of this simple recital, rather than to dispel an agreeable dream by contact with a sad reality."

New Brunswick, N. J., July 27, 1912.

St. Anne of the Mountains

I

A FAIRY DRIVE

IT was a quarter past one in the morning of one of the longest days in the year. The maritime express, after having deposited two passengers at Little Metis Station, had sped along its short cut through the Gaspé peninsula towards the Baie des Chaleurs. The friendly lights of the train had disappeared in the darkness, and the engine's hoarse voice was no longer heard; but the crescent moon looked benevolently down on us, and our young host's cheery greeting made any feeling of loneliness an impossibility.

Following in his wake we groped our way over the long dark platform to the point of light represented by the telegraph operator's lamp; and, after a few brief words with the solitary official, we passed on to a quaint little hotel at a short distance from the station. A feast of the best things which the inn afforded was soon placed before us, and after having fortified the inner man, we unrolled

our bundle of warm wraps and equipped ourselves for the journey proper; for the long railroad stretch with its far-off New Jersey starting point, represented the least important part of the expedition on which we had embarked. We had reached the northern limit of the iron steed's domain in this region, and a drive of ninety miles lay before us. A buggy and a buckboard were the vehicles awaiting us; our host and his aide-de-camp were our charioteers, and at a quarter past two, encouraged by a faint foreshadowing of dawn, we set out on our wonderful drive.

At first no sound other than the rumble of our carriage wheels and the clatter of our horses' hoofs fell upon the keen still air; but even before the beautiful scenery had begun to emerge from the land of shadows, a sweet clear voice floated out to us from the distant bush. It was Canada's own little herald—the white throated sparrow—summoning his fellow minstrels to a service of song. Up hill and down hill, now to the right and now to the left, sometimes in the open, again where deepening shadows told of wooded stretches, on we went, until at a distance of six miles from the station we

came upon the beautiful summer resort known also as Little Metis. Hotels, cottages, and those humbler dwellings which represent the homes of the *habitants* and the Scotch settlers, all faintly outlined in the steadily growing light, and all enveloped in the mysterious atmosphere of slumber. Not a sign, not a sound of human life anywhere. It was as if we alone had escaped from some marvellous spell which held all the rest of the world in enchantment.

Yet something living, moving, ever wakeful, came to light as we halted at the top of the hill below which lay the sleeping settlement. It was the great river, the majestic St. Lawrence, thirty-three miles in width at this point, and—except for the faint blue streak that outlines its bleak north shores—boundless as the sea in appearance.

Next a wonderful light spread over the east and mirrored itself in the waters, and as we gazed

"The crimson streak on ocean's cheek
Grew into the great sun,"

and day had come; day startlingly bright and clear at a little after three in the morning.

But even the full measure of daylight

brought no scattering of the impressions of enchantment. Indeed the fanciful delusions were strengthened rather than dispelled, as we flew by one sleeping settlement after another. One could easily fancy one's self passing through a succession of enchanted villages in which the inhabitants were either about to awaken to the solitary day of consciousness vouchsafed to them at the close of every hundred years, or else as if—having gazed upon the upper world and enjoyed for a few brief hours the sight of the sun—they had again entered upon their century's sleep and were soon to disappear in the heart of the earth.

The very cattle scattered over the fields or dispersed along the road were either asleep or grazing drowsily. Now and then a startled horse or cow bestowed a wondering glance in the direction of the flying vehicles, or a timid sheep gave an apprehensive bleat at our approach; or perhaps from a wayside cluster of recumbent pigs a sleepy grunt would issue, and a pair of small, closely set eyes would blink inquiringly at us.

One still heard an occasional single outburst of song, but the birds' concert closed at sun-

rise, and the workaday world of feathered folk opened long before the dwellers in human houses were astir.

Now one of our own dear redbreasts would be seen in the familiar attitude of struggling with an unfortunate denizen of the turf. Again from the top of a rude fence post or from the heart of a patch of bunch berry blossoms, or perhaps from the moister regions where the blue flag lifts its head, a song sparrow would send a cheery greeting. Among the few diminutive balsam firs and other evergreens that have sprung up here and there along the coast since the woodman's last devastating raid, warblers and vireos would dart, or the snow bird's natty gray and white coat would appear. Once a huge hawk sailed serenely along with an ill-fated fish in his secure grasp. Again a solitary wild goose sped on his way far above us. Now and then one saw the motionless figure of a belted kingfisher as he gazed steadfastly down from some rocky eminence into the little pools which the tide had deposited in the stony basins below his outlook point. Here and there gulls hovered around the shore while whole colonies of crows explored the furrows of the newly

ploughed fields or stalked the beach in search of fishy treasure.

On the bosom of the great waters appeared now a brig, a schooner or a fishing smack; or again a gulf or an ocean steamer passed tranquilly on its way, distance robbing it of all suggestion of noise or effort. Nearer shore a train of dark dots on the surface of the waters, or the outline of what suggested a zigzag fence top, occasionally marked the regions where nets and traps were laid for the unsuspecting fish with which these waters teem.

Finally the world represented by the straggling settlements began to awaken. First solitary faces, then groups of watchers appeared at doors and windows: young and old surveying us in silence and with an interest in which sleep still struggled for the mastery. But at sight of our four-footed travelling companion—a little Mexican dog whose tiny head peeped wonderingly out from a nest of warm wraps—every vestige of somnolence vanished. Tongues were suddenly loosened, hands and fingers were set gesticulating, heads bobbed and nodded, and from house to house as if following the course of a lighted fuse, passed such exclamations as: *"Garde moi*

donc ce beau petit chien! Baptême c'est-i-fin! Bonté, quelle belle petite tête. Et ces beaux yeux! Mon doux, quelle fine petite bête!"

But enthusiasm and approval reached white heat whenever—in indignant response to the yelping curs which sprang out at us from every door way—the small voice of the valiant Mexican was raised, and angry lunges were made by her in the direction of the aggressive canines of the coast.

Before this general awakening there had been various amusing and animated demonstrations among certain other members of the four-footed tribe. Numbers of those long-legged, semi-wild porcines whose sharply outlined dorsal ridges have procured for them the suggestive appellation of *razor backs,* fell in with us now and then and sociably accompanied us for short distances; while frolicsome calves, with stiffened legs and tails erect and wildly waving, challenged our flying steeds and scampered madly along beside us—or even in advance of us—as if in keen enjoyment of the spirited race. The swiftest horses find these playful creatures no mean competitors in short runs.

But whether we watched the antics of

these sportive roadside companions or noted the demeanor of the more sedate and distant cattle, whether we looked at the villagers and their simple dwellings; or allowed our eyes to rest on the hills and meadows, to roam along the coast line, to wander out over the great river or to explore the depths of the cloudless sky, one strange, almost thrilling sensation accompanied every glance. To our host this sensation appealed less powerfully than to us. In his case many months of matter-of-fact consideration of the business possibilities of this region had routed much poetic appreciation; and as for Narcisse, our second charioteer, his eyes had first opened on these scenes; his world did not extend beyond them, and whatever they had to offer appeared to awaken in him neither surprise nor any other emotion.

But to my sister and myself, dwellers in regions not characterized by the marvellous atmospheric clearness of far northern lands, it was as if we had hitherto seen the world through a glass, darkly, or as if scales had suddenly fallen from our eyes, revealing earth, sea and sky with startling distinctness. Nor has this sensation lost its intensity

THE ROAD TO THE HAPPY VALLEY

though weeks have elapsed since we took our fairy drive; though the wild phlox now rears its stately head far above the meadow grasses, though the purple vetch twines its arms around tall daisies and immortelles, though the bunch berries are reddening and we stand on the threshold of the feast of *la bonne Sainte Anne*.

Now it is a Calvary that claims our attention as we speed on our way, for large black crosses are stationed here and there all along the coast, and receive many a tribute in the form of salutations from devout passers. Again a spire rises far above the village houses; churches at intervals of ten miles marking the centres of the various parishes and representing the points around which cluster the greatest interests of these small communities. And always in the shadow of the church is to be seen the God's acre, with its forest of wooden crosses, and its very few monuments of more durable material.

Here and there are wayside ovens; quaint, Dutch-like stone and mortar constructions, some among them elevated, perhaps with a considerate thought of the convenience of

the baker—and roofed with a view to protection from inclement weather, others shelterless, and built directly on the ground as if some gigantic bird had deposited on the shore a mammoth egg, leaving to the elements the entire responsibility of its hatching.

Now through the wide open iron doors of one of these great ovens, we see the leaping flames and we hear the fire's mad roaring and crackling, and we know that baking preparations are under way. Again we come upon an oven, the heavy doors of which are closed; but heated vapors playing about it tell the story of glowing embers recently raked out from the heart of the mortar mound, while an appetizing fragrance of fresh bread denotes that huge loaves are immured in the heated receptacle. Without farther care or fuel they reach the perfection of baking.

Not every family is fortunate enough to own an outdoor oven, but under no circumstances does one of these primitive contrivances represent a household's sole dependence as a cooking apparatus, the stand-by in nearly every coast house being the large, two-storied

box stove, (fire-place below, oven above), which is so invaluable in its capacity as a heater and so well adapted to the requirements of simple cooking. Standing, as it usually does between two rooms—sometimes placed in such a position that one end projects even into a third apartment, while its pipe passes through the upper part of the house—it diffuses warmth through the entire dwelling and is said to enable those in whose houses it is placed, to bid defiance to the coldest weather.

The road over which our route lay, even in its entire length, departs from the coast but in three or four instances, and then for a comparatively short distance. These rare deviations generally represent the avoidance of points where the coast is either too steep or too rocky to afford a passageway even for pedestrians.

But it was only in the third section of our drive that we came upon entire departures from the coast, or hills of any importance. Apart from two or three rather stony exceptions, we had to do with none but boulevard-like roads on the occasion of this early drive.

From point to point of the great curves by which the coast is outlined, stretches of

from ten to thirty miles are represented, and all along these magnificent sweeps following ever the course of the widening river, runs the road lined with the homes of the Gaspé folk.

Between the abodes of the comparatively well-to-do and the humble homes consisting of one lower room and a loft—the latter dwellings as a rule the habitations of fisher folk—various stages of comfort are represented; but among these people cases of actual destitution are so rare as to be almost unknown.

"To find what may be termed genuine poverty," says a philosophical *habitant,* whose acquaintance we made shortly after arriving at Ste. Anne des Monts, "one must look to the great cities, for in those centres one meets with the truly destitute, the utterly impoverished, the desperate. Among us Gaspesians there may indeed be found families in distress, but such cases are rare and always speedily relieved; for each one, according to his ability, is ever ready to contribute from his stores to the need of his poorer brethren. We have our hard times, it is true, and among us are few of what you term life's luxuries, but unless a Gaspesian loses his way in the bush, or in some

other manner becomes separated from his fellows, he stands in no danger of either starving or freezing."

Whenever our thoughts reverted to the people and the scenes we had left so far behind, the sensations we experienced were not unlike those with which one is apt to invest supposed recent arrivals in strange planets; the former conditions so soon appearing remote and misty, the new and actual experiences so startling and unreal. Even a matter of fact question concerning the time of day brought to light such whimsicalities of reckoning as we had never before encountered except in the emancipated kingdom of dream land. Regarding this important matter unanimity of opinion does not always prevail even among those who dwell within sound of the angelus bell.

But to cite the most amusing illustration which has come to our notice anent this subject, I must anticipate a little.

A fortnight or so after our long drive had come to an end—at which period we began to look upon ourselves almost in the light of naturalized Gaspesians—we were spending the day in a little settlement hidden from the

St. Lawrence by a short line of coast hills, and distant from our seaside abode some three miles. It is not without reason that our affectionate fancy persists in designating this back-country nook by the name of the Happy Valley. One man and his wife with their numerous olive branches are the sole inhabitants of this lovely lowland, though on the heights which dominate the valley at the point farthest removed from the coast, are perched the old homestead and two or three other dwellings, all inhabited by relatives of the valley clan.

On the day of the visit to which I allude, the weather was as genial as the hearts that bade us welcome, and the happy hours sped by all unheeded until one of our party—awakening suddenly to a realization of the fact that night must follow the bright day and that we were due at our seaside home before dark—set on foot inquiries regarding the hour. We had brought no watches, and though this Happy Valley home is well provided with clocks, our cause was not benefited thereby, as all save one were out of order; and this sole active timepiece, had been carried to the fields by the laborers.

"But after all what signifies it?" exclaimed the head of the house, turning suddenly from the earnest though futile contemplation of a clock that had long served none but decorative purposes. "What need have we to know the time? When we are hungry we will eat, when thirsty, drink, and when tired, rest. Such hospitality as our simple home offers we place *de grand coeur* at the ladies' service, and will be happy indeed if they think it worthy of acceptance. So let the darkness come if it will, I say. It need disturb no one here."

A moment after the uttering of this reassurance, chance brought to light the amusing and significant fact that among us all there was not found one who could tell the day of the month. To such blissful ignorance and restful forgetfulness had we so soon attained.

"To know the day of the month, neither does that signify," the Happy Valley host remarked as if by way of general consolation. "Sunday is but two days distant. If one keeps that date in mind what matters it about all others?"

Original and refreshing as this method of reckoning may be in itself, we could not help acknowledging that the happy-go-lucky spirit

which prompted it might sorely try the soul of any business man whose interests it touches. But, to those among us who have no concern beyond reaping the full benefits and privileges of a summer holiday, this leisurely state of affairs does not in the least "signify."

Matane—a prosperous town of about three thousand inhabitants, represented our first halting place and the accomplishment of one-third of our coast journey; and with a sudden turning of a corner, we wheeled away from the St. Lawrence and immediately found ourselves bowling over the planked streets of this prosperous settlement.

The river Matane, with its path through a rich lumber district and its terminus in the St. Lawrence, is of course the *raison d'être* of the town. On account of possessing similar advantages—though in a lesser degree—many a smaller river or stream of this region has its corresponding coast settlement and its mill. But reckoning from the point where the railroad departs from the coast, no town or village approaches Matane in prosperity or importance, as no river equals its river either in size or lumbering advantages, until the peninsula has been rounded,

A WAYSIDE OVEN

and the important settlements on its other side have been reached.

Matane has its poorer quarter and its distinctly Gaspesian characteristics, but it boasts of handsome modern residences, of public buildings, of well-equipped stores, of a fine convent, a beautiful presbytery and an imposing church, and its appointments in general are so similar to those of any other small, modern, well-to-do community that, although we found the town interesting enough when we were awake, it possessed no qualities startling or salient enough to cope with the drowsiness that had suddenly overtaken us. So while awaiting a fitting hour in which to present ourselves to the kind host and hostess with whom we were to breakfast, we betook ourselves to a little hotel, and were soon fast asleep.

II

AGAIN EN ROUTE

EARLY in the afternoon of the following day we resumed our journey, and towards evening we reached the region where hills begin to be steep and numerous, and where houses—even in the open—are few; where roads, though in fair condition in the main, are rough and stony in sections; where forests creep coastward and brooks rush noisily over boulders or force their way through accumulated "bush" refuse, and at last through an opening in the trees we caught a glimpse of the house on the cliff-side, the dwelling where food and shelter and rest awaited us.

Ruisseau à Sem, our second halting place had been reached, and our second thirty-mile-stretch was accomplished.

It is hardly necessary to state that our appetites had become well sharpened by the long drive and the tonic air and we responded with alacrity to the summons to dine. After having done full justice to an excellent repast, we

strolled out among the trees where we expected to find bed-time arrangements well under way with the little people of the wood. But many a parent bird was still occupied with the distribution of nursery supplies; and the friendliness of one little snow-bird mother made it possible for us to watch closely the progress of a meal among the branches, from the time when four wide-opened beaks thrust themselves above the nest's rim, until the moment when their owners sank back, drowsy and satisfied and twittered themselves off into slumber-land.

A fond if foolish fancy suggested to me that this little mother might be one of the very pensioners who, during the recent winter's stress, had partaken of the bounty of my window-sill restaurant in the far off New Jersey home.

But everything connected with our new surroundings was of a nature to inspire fanciful conjecture. With the magic of the quaintness, the solitude and the vastness, was blended the forest's mystic charm. One pine-clad height after another lifted its head against a sky where sunset reflections still lingered, though the tardy twilight-influence was begin-

ning to make itself felt.

Into the mysterious recesses where trees pressed hard upon each other, heavy shadows were fast creeping. Sweet Canada, Canada, Canada, sang the white-throat at longer and longer intervals; but at last even his brave little voice was hushed and no sound reached us save the murmurs of the wind-swept trees and the voices of the waves as they broke at the base of our cliff.

Dews were falling, night's coolness was increasing and a certain sense of loneliness mingled with the solemn influences of the hour. Through the uncurtained windows of the house among the trees (our Matane host's summer resort) we caught glimpses of open fire-places where dancing flames spoke eloquently of the comfort and friendliness of home and home shelter, and yielding at length to the cheery summons from within, we left the forest with its ever deepening shadows, its ever growing mysteries, and joined the groups assembled round the genial firesides.

It seemed but an hour from the time when sleep claimed us all for her own till the night's shadows were dispelled by the brightness of the early morning, and the

wooded peaks stood out against the crimson glory of the rising sun, and all bird-land was engrossed in daytime duties and delights. But the little settlement at Ruisseau à Sem still slept, and the mill in the cove at the cliff's base was still idle, for the long days are utilized to their utmost by none but the children of the field and of the forest.

Noontide of this bright, warm day saw us again *en route,* entering upon the third, the final section of our journey. Beyond the wooded peaks that bounded our eastern horizon at Ruisseau à Sem, new beauties, new mysteries and new revelations awaited us. Now the St. Lawrence is hidden for a moment; now it comes to sight through a forest opening, or again the removal of all barriers reveals beautiful long coast curves with far off limiting points suggesting still other wonderful sweeps. Here we come upon a solitary dwelling planted in the midst of a great lonely open expanse, while another isolated home nestles among scrub pines or rises from boulder wastes. Again the road assumes the character of a village street and a church crowns a hill top or lifts

its spire in a valley's heart. Here we have an instance—one of many—where a parent village and its offspring are distinguished by the contradistinctive appellations of *grand* and *petit*. Grand Mechin, picturesque and peopled, (speaking from the standpoint of small, one-streeted villages) Petit Mechin, a sort of *dépendence,* a straggling inferior continuation of the larger settlement.

Now we reach Capucin, so called from a monk-like resemblance which once distinguished one of the rocks of this promontory —a resemblance which wind and frosty agencies have long since obliterated, however.

Capucin represents the wildest, the most rugged and the most varied scenery of our route, and the road here takes its longest and most important departure from the coast. We hear our guides canvassing tide conditions and discussing the feasibility of crossing the bay or the advisability of taking the longer route which the deep coast indentation suggests. But the tide is low and favors the short cut, so in and out, where the water is most shallow and the rocky bed offers the best thoroughfare, the horses pick their way

across the bay. As we advance we meet others who, like ourselves, are taking advantage of the low tide to avoid the longer route. A little band of children returning from school, with shoes, stockings and school bags swung over their shoulders, are wading and splashing their way homeward and salute us politely as we meet among the shallows.

The rocky bed once passed we resume our usual speed, and on we go until another point, some miles distant, comes to view. It is Cape Chat, (or Cape Chatte,) and indicates the site of an important signal station. As we near the promontory we notice, facing seaward at its base, a rugged stony offshoot, remotely suggestive of a lion rampant, but invariably designated as the Cat. Perhaps no object along this entire south shore attracts more notice from passing tourists, than does this fantastic figure which nature must have spent ages in fashioning and detaching from its promontory.

The village of Cape Chatte, which we enter a mile or so after passing the cape proper, reaches an almost fortress-like elevation before making its sudden descent to the shores of the bay which represents the meeting-place

of the Cape Chatte river and the St. Lawrence. The prosperous looking house of the owner of a large mill and the representative of important lumber interests in this region, crowns the cliff and terminates the upper village, while at the foot of the hill and along the narrow strip of land which indicates the bay's outer boundary, we see an occasional dwelling, a store or two and various large buildings connected with the mill. A skiff is in sight and a few boats at anchor sway gently in response to the outgoing tide. But, though the sea is ebbing, the bay boasts of volume and current sufficient to interfere with the progress of our journey, while of the long, covered bridge which once spanned the stream and furnished an independent highway for foot or wagon travel, nothing remains but two dilapidated ends. The enormous blocks of ice which charged against the structure at the time of winter's recent breaking-up are responsible for these no-thoroughfare conditions.

On the brink of the bay at the foot of the steep hill, however, a ferryman awaits us; and, without alighting from our vehicles, we embark in a scow operated on the groove and

ON ONE LONELY HEIGHT A CALVARY RISES

cable system, and if the crossing is slow, it has at least the merit of being accomplished by an unusual sense of security, for our bark is, in a measure, moored to both shores.

Now at our right, far above the nearby hills, we see the beautiful outlines of the distant Schickshock mountains. Bleak, grim and wild in reality—though with suggestions of great wealth in their stony hearts—but soft, blue and mystical at the point from which we view them. Little time is allowed us for their contemplation, however, for our horses are advancing with the added zest which the last stage of the journey inspires, and their flying feet meet with no resistance in the beautiful, firm beach-road over which we are travelling. New curves and sweeps continue to unfold before us, until at last we reach *la pointe Ste. Anne.* Now we pass it, and to our admiring eyes is revealed the entire beautiful ten mile curve, the wide, graceful bay along whose shores extends the village of Ste. Anne des Monts; *our* village. Near the center of the curve, hence still distant some four or five miles, is our cottage: a remote white speck, one link in a long line of similar dwellings. Even at this distance, however, a certain sense

of being at home takes possession of us, and in the respectful salutations of the villagers whom we meet or overtake, we fancy we detect more than average friendliness and interest. We are keen to be at the journey's end and to look into the faces of those who are watching for us, but within less than half a mile of our destination our course is again interrupted, and we halt at another intercepting river's brink, the Ste. Anne des Monts or *Grande Rivière,* as it is called in contradistinction to the smaller stream which meets the St. Lawrence a mile farther down the coast.

On this occasion, also, we find the waiting ferryman and are taken over in a scow. Once on the other side of the stream the remaining stretch is a matter of a very few minutes, and at last the ninety mile drive is over and, hungry and stiff, but happy, we alight before the comfortable little *habitant* house which is home to us for the present. Here we are met by respectful greetings and words of genuine welcome, and even from across the road where a company of barefooted children are exploring the beach—*our* beach—we receive such salutations as royalty itself might call forth.

But suddenly one of the explorers, pointing impressively in the direction from which we

have just come, exclaims: "'Garde donc! 'Garde donc le mirage!"*

Our gaze follows the indicating finger, and behold, a miracle has taken place. At the distant Pointe Ste. Anne where, but a short time ago, we passed a row of lowly dwellings, stately mansions now rise, their many windows all ablaze with the reflected light of the setting sun. Out at sea a coal steamer has exchanged its cranes and masts for a line of tall trees, a passenger steamer has lost its prosaic smoke stack and doubled the dimensions of its hull, a full-rigged barque replaces a modest sloop, and off towards the gulf, in regions where the water line has vanished, phantom ships sail majestically in space.

"What need have these little ones of fairy tales or of conjurors' displays," we exclaim. "They dwell in the very land of enchantment, and kindly indeed is the fate which permits us to rest for a time within these magic precincts."

*This phenomenon is due to some peculiar atmospheric effect and is frequently witnessed in this locality. Our villagers term it *le mirage*, yet it is not a reproduction of distant, unseen objects, but an enlarging, a multiplying, and sometimes even a reversing of objects visible along the distant shore or out at sea.

III

SOME PRACTICAL DETAILS OF THE ENCHANTED COUNTRY

THE sea was in a quiet mood and all its influences were soothing on the evening of our first day of enchantment, and it was to the music of the softly incoming tide, to the regular beating of gently breaking surf, that we fell asleep. But even with this wonderful lullaby sounding in our ears, it is probable that our minds would not have been so secure nor our slumbers so peaceful, had not another important feature of enchanted regions paved the way for the later experience.

What fairy tale of travel or adventure ever reaches a satisfactory culmination until the weary and half-famished wanderer is conducted to the banqueting hall, where unseen hands place before him a tangible repast of surpassing excellence, while ravishing music produced by invisible performers, delights his ear, banishing for the time all remembrance of past hardships and dispelling all fear of future peril.

As we sat in our cheery, homely little dining room, an outward glance procured for us a sight of the source of all the melodies that soothed and charmed us, while honest hands of flesh and blood—not of enchantment—served us. But no fairy orchestra could rival the harmony of the voices of the sea, and as for the repast spread before us, it seemed to us famished ones fit for the table of a monarch.

Much speculation with regard to the scope of our Northern *cuisine* had kept pace with our preparations for the journey, and the comfortable stay-at-homes who viewed with disfavor the entire expedition, predicted for us none but Arctic weather and a scarcity of any but the coarsest food. In issuing his invitation our host had generously promised the best which the land affords, but just how much this represented, delicacy forbade our asking. So while awaiting the revelations of experience, we did our best to banish all disloyal apprehension, as well as to recall every helpful expedient devised and employed by the clever author of "Twelve Miles from a Lemon." In our remote station, the several times multiplied perplexities

and limitations of this hostess of ante-trolley and automobile days would certainly be ours we reasoned in our ignorance. We had yet to become acquainted with the resources of the coast and the skill of our prospective landlady.

Not long after our arrival we had the pleasure of seeing our early surprise and satisfaction reproduced in guests who gathered with us around the hospitable board. Among them were those who had seen many phases of life in both continents, yet never, they averred, had they been so surprised by the resources of any region, as by the abundance which our table represented. Alas! that such wealth of material should find so few, who, like our landlady, know how to use it to advantage. In nearly every case except where she is concerned, our experiences in this locality give double emphasis to the assertion of the old adage regarding the origin of food supplies and cooks.

In our menu figure soups of unrivalled excellence; salmon as rich as butter; cod that fairly melts in one's mouth; haddock with all the freshness of the sea's finest flavor; delicious smelts, herrings, lobsters and all the

other fishy yields of the generous St. Lawrence, as well as those far-famed specialties of its tributaries, the highly-prized brook and salmon trout.

Of meats we have the usual market supplies, even to such delicacies as beef tongues and sweet breads. An unlimited supply of the best of butter is always at our disposal and a generous allowance of sweet cream figures daily in our menu. The milk and egg supplies appear to be inexhaustible and the bread—though solid in character—has an excellent flavor.

The potato yield of this region is a prosperous one, and with late summer come beets, turnips, carrots, cabbages, beans and peas; and radishes and lettuce thrive from early till late. Strawberries and raspberries from our own neighborhood, and blueberries from the north shore are to be had in abundance in their season, but in the fruit and vegetable lines we find the vulnerable points of our larder. Even hardy apples are here so much of a rarity that the sight of "an apple tree with fruit on it," was proposed to us as the worthy goal of a long expedition.

Tinned fruits and vegetables are to be ob-

tained at the village stores and often serve to extend our bill of fare. But we are not altogether dependent on such additions, for once a week we *may* have opportunities of obtaining supplies from either Montreal or Quebec, as two steamers from these points alternate in making tours around the peninsula. The Gaspesian going as far as Gaspé; the Campana* continuing till the remote Pictou is reached. It was to the care of one of these boats that we committed our baggage, and but for a slight uncertainty, a possible hitch connected with landing, we would probably have embarked with our trunks instead of following the land route. Under favorable circumstances Ste. Anne des Monts is but a twenty-four hour steamer journey from Quebec, but, as is the case with water craft in general, wind and weather may retard the steamer's progress, and in this particular instance, may interfere with the traveller's very natural desire to halt at his destination.

"We do not undertake to land passengers *at* Ste. Anne des Monts," was the word received from the steamer companies in answer to our

*Since this was written the Campana has suffered shipwreck. It is replaced by the Cascapedia.

BOULEVARD-LIKE ROADS

queries on the subject. *"Weather permitting* we stop *off* Ste. Anne des Monts to land passengers. They are taken ashore on boats which come out to the steamer."

Once a week we watch the outgoing, and once a week the incoming Gulf Steamers. For the latter we look toward the east and jubilant is the mortal who first sights the boat as it rounds the point of La Tourelle; a point where the waters of the St. Lawrence merge into the gulf and an ocean-like expanse spreads itself out before one's eyes.

It is in the direction of Cape Chatte that the first glimpse of the outward bound Steamer is obtained. But whether the boat be incoming or outgoing, equal excitement attends the event, unless indeed some unusual arrival or departure, or the shipping or receiving of some particular cargo, furnishes the ever interesting occasion with an added zest.

A rallying cry such as *"V'là le Campana,"* or *Le Gaspésien qui arrive,"* suffices to bring dozens of cottagers to their doors and on each of these occasions every available spy glass is brought into requisition, and comment is as eager and interest as keen as

though the occurrence were the sole one of the kind which the season affords.

If, even for us, the incident is fraught with such import, how much more does it mean to these coast dwellers who, during all the long desolate months of winter, look out on an ice-locked bay beyond which stretches an apparently boundless waste of angry ice-charged waters over which no vessels dare to venture.

One day I observed the philosopher-farmer (mention of whom has already been made in these pages), as through a very indifferent spyglass, he followed the course of a steamer. I gave him an opportunity of testing my marine glasses, and though he appeared duly impressed with their excellence he remarked as he returned them: "A great many thanks but *voyez-vous Madame,* for me there would be no economy in a double glass. I have the sight of but one eye, therefore a single glass serves my purpose perfectly."

"The misfortune came about in this way" he continued, in answer to our sympathetic inquiries. "When I was a very little lad I fell on a pitchfork and one of the prongs en-

tered my eye."

"But what agony you must have endured," we exclaimed, shuddering at the very thought of the catastrophe.

"As to that, I cannot say," he replied calmly, "I was such a little lad you see. But wait; I remember distinctly that on that day I ate no dinner. I think therefore I must have been much hurt."

As a rule it is from the immediate neighborhood of our cottage that we view the approaching and departing steamers, but now and then, in order to watch manœuvres from the outset, we stroll to the points of the shore from which passengers set out on their journey to the steamer, or at which they alight on their arrival at Ste. Anne des Monts. These points are represented by two comparatively sheltered portions of the bay.

At the upper station, if tide conditions be such that the rocks—when too exposed to afford a thoroughfare for row boats—still retain in their hollows, pools of sufficient importance to exclude foot travel, a horse and cart are called into requisition for the first stage of the steamerward journey, and through their medium the rocks are passed and the

row boats reached.

Under more favorable conditions, passengers step directly from the shore into the row boat which carries them out to a waiting transport. From this point a sail of a mile or so takes them to the passenger steamer.

At the second of the landing or embarking points, the coast is not a rocky one and the transport not infrequently comes so near the shore, that a wheeled vehicle can draw up beside it, and the passenger steps directly from cart or carriage into the lighter.

In the near neighborhood of this second port there is a small wharf, at which, under still other tide conditions, the transport draws up, and in this case the passenger can embark or debark without aid of either vehicle or row boat.

It would be interesting to ascertain how many pairs of eyes are fastened on the travellers during their transit from shore to steamer, or *vice versa*. Every disengaged villager is sure to be on the watch; and tourists, armed with long range glasses and cameras, line the steamer's railings. Rich indeed must be the harvest on occasions when the weather favors photographic enterprises.

Not once since our coming to Ste. Anne des Monts have the transports failed to meet the steamers, although to us timid inlanders the sea occasionally appears too rough for the safety of the undertaking. Especially is this the case when—as sometimes happens, —the steamer arrives after dark. Then dancing lights, which finally lose themselves in a great shaft of radiance emanating from the passenger boat, mark the outward course of the brave little transports. After the transfer of passengers and cargo has been effected, the brilliant lights of the steamer twinkle off in the direction of either La Tourelle or Cape Chatte, while a will o' the wisp trail of small boats points toward the signal lights of our shore.

It is in early spring and during late autumn, at the time of the opening and closing of navigation, that the transfer is attended with great difficulty, and sometimes rendered impossible. When the plan of disembarking at a transport station has been defeated, passengers must either resign themselves to being carried on till a friendly port is reached or must remain on the steamer and await the stopping-off chances of the return journey.

IV

WITH THE VILLAGERS

THE balmy weather that greeted our arrival at Ste. Anne des Monts was a misleading specimen of the average mid-June of this locality; nor can the cold weather which speedily followed be accepted as a fair indication of the usual temperature of the season. Gaspé's normal June is said to stand midway between these extremes.

After that first balmy week there were days when the breakers' crests sparkled with an almost frosty radiance and an autumn crispness filled the air though the sun shone brightly. There were other days when the sea became dark and clouds lowering and threatening, and in the accomplishment of these menaces, the rain dashed against our windows with such fury that the whole outer world was hidden by the sleety curtain. Nevertheless, well knew we what was taking place outside our peaceful precincts, for the wind told the story of the wild warfare of the elements, and the timbers of our little house groaned and creaked

as the gales pursued their frenzied sports.

Were we lonely during these hours of tempest? Did the ninety miles railroad remoteness assume terrifying proportions when the storm made the intervening journey an impossibility?

No; loneliness found no quarter among us, and some measure of the spirit of these fearless coast dwellers seemed to impart itself to us, and we learned to love the tempests' wild echoes.

One of our stormiest nights furnished us with as peaceful a contrast as it would be possible to imagine. No outgoing or incoming steamers summoned our bargemen from the shelter of their homes, and no fisher folk were abroad; therefore our minds were free from concern regarding the safety of our villagers. As for vessels which might be passing on the sea's highway, no especial danger seemed to threaten them. It was near the coast that peril lurked.

So on this evening while the surf pounded against the rocks just over the way from our little cottage, and the wind wailed and the rain fell in torrents, we sat secure in our brightly lighted little assembling room, occu-

pying ourselves with books, games, letter-writing, or quiet chat and the odds and ends of work which, during fair weather, had called in vain for attention. Our warm red curtains were drawn; the fires of our box stove crackeled merrily, and through a door leading out into the ell—the quarters of those who served us—another picture of peace and comfort presented itself. There also the curtains were drawn and the fires sent a sprightly challenge to the storm; and around other lamps a little group assembled, and gave itself to quiet evening pursuits.

Now and then, from this outer quarter, there floated to us softly sung snatches of lullabies or of plaintive folk-songs; or portions of cantiques which, blending and contrasting with the tempest's roars, intensified our peaceful sense of security.

An evening or so later when the Storm-King had gone his way and the graciousness of summer once more manifested itself, we found ourselves during the course of a moonlit stroll, in the neighborhood of the philosopher's home. He sat with his wife and children before their quiet dwelling, and the tranquil faces were turned seaward

toward the region where serene waters replaced the billows of the recent storm. In the utter quiet of the hour, the subdued voices of our humble friends reached us with perfect distinctness, and almost in spite of ourselves, we followed the course of their conversation.

The day's mail had brought word of the world's disquiet, and the philosopher who, even in this remote region keeps fully abreast of the times, was telling his family of wars and rumors of wars and of such terrible stress as could be known to these people only by hearsay.

"Sainte Mère! Bonne Sainte Anne! Est-ce croyable!" These and many other like ejaculations of wondering interest kept pace with the philosopher's calm but forcible recital, and at its close a hush fell upon the group. When the silence was broken it was a little lad who spoke.

"We are well in our own country. Let us remain here."

"Thou art right, my little son," answered the father. "We are indeed well in our own country. Our land is not rich enough to attract the multiude to our shores, nor

are our people important enough to draw upon themselves the attention of the great. True we have much of winter's severity, but summer gives us only its tempered heat. None of the luxuries of the rich are ours, and we must labor to provide for our daily needs; but our few wants are all met and we escape the *ennui* which I am told, is apt to be the portion of those who have too much leisure and comfort, too many possessions. There is for us no theatre, no opera, no concert-going, but we have life's simple amusements and happinesses, and, believe me, they are the best. As for music, thou wilt never hear grander than that of the sea, and in what gallery of the world's great masters, think'st thou, could one find such pictures as are ours simply for a look at the good God's beautiful earth and sky? Thou say'st right, my child, we are well in our own country. Let us remain here."

One day as I was returning from a field ramble taken in the company of a little girl from the village, I stopped to rest in a balsam fir retreat, a nook regarding which I shall have somewhat to say later. The child seated herself opposite me, and settling down as

if in anticipation of a rare treat, she said: "Will Madame please tell me what it is like in the streets of New York?"

For a moment I gazed in silence at the innocent, expectant, upturned face. Her fingers were stained with the juice of wild strawberries; at her feet lay a bunch of field flowers; the balsam fir branches met behind her and closed above her head, and on all sides echoed the songs of birds. A flock of sheep grazed in a nearby field, while from more remote meadows came the tinkle of a cow bell.

After the contemplation of this picture of peace and rural innocence, I proceeded to tell the child of the city's din and clamor; of steam cars thundering over head; of electric cars clanging through the streets, and of still other cars flying along through pathways hollowed out for them below the city's surface. I told her of a labyrinth of carriages and wagons and drays; of lightning-speed horseless vehicles; of a perpetual throng of hurrying, anxious-faced people, of congested corners where crowds awaited a policeman's guidance before daring to cross to the opposite side of the street, and of districts where buildings

rose to such heights as made one dizzy to contemplate, and of ships that were beginning to sail through the skies.

But I told her also of glittering store windows; of beautiful houses and churches; of wide streets where finely dressed people walked leisurely or drove in ease and safety. I told her of squares gay with flowers and merry with children at play, of Bronx and Central Park marvels, of great cages where were to be seen strange animals from all parts of the world, and birds of a plumage to rival the brightest blossoms of which even the Happy Valley garden could boast. I told her of beautiful archways and winding paths; of wide avenues shaded by trees of such dimensions as her northern forests never produced, and of placid lakes where floated friendly swans or glided fanciful boats freighted with children and grown-up merry makers.

Of these and many other pleasant things I spoke enticingly, and her eyes opened wider and wider as she listened. But at the close of the recital she shook her head. Then with a sigh of contentment she leaned back among the friendly branches and quietly made answer:

"I think, Madame, that one is better here."

The village of Ste. Anne des Monts boasts of several newer and more pretentious homes than our landlord's simple dwelling, as well as of older and more spacious and substantial houses; but genuine comfort has kept pace with our sojourn here, and the house seems to possess fairly elastic qualities when it is a question of stowing away guests.

Une maison en plâtre, as it is here designated, or a dwelling with plastered walls and ceilings, appears to be the height of ambition among property owners in this region. But often when winds wailed and storms raged we were thankful that risks from falling ceiling were not to be counted among the dangers that appeared to threaten our little dwelling.

As a rule the simplest styles of architecture prevail in this pilgrimage village, but I must mention one notable exception and my connection with the first stages of its incipiency.

This will entail a short account of my popularity as an amateur photographer. As soon as it was ascertained that I possessed a picture-taking equipment, my reputation

was made.

Most politely, insinuatingly and enticingly, my photographic services were bespoken by one and another denizen of this cameraless village; the patronage growing at compound interest rate when it was ascertained that no charge accompanied the performance.

The manner in which this satisfactory bit of information got abroad, is perhaps worthy of mention.

"How much would Madame charge to photograph the back of my house?" asked a woman whose appearance and dwelling ranked her among the least well-to-do of the village.

"A photographic charge, if one were made, would no doubt be the same for the front as for the back of your dwelling; but I do not take money for my services."

How simple was the secret of my popularity!

So by request I photographed homes, families, groups of friends and single individuals; I photographed the living, the dying and, in one pathetic instance where no portrait of the loved one had ever been made, I photographed the dead.

More than once I yielded to a touching plea for a picture of some dear one's last resting place.

However, there came a day when it seemed to me that nothing on land or sea or sky remained unattempted. But I was mistaken.

Even as I contemplated taking a vacation from this altruistic snapping, a fine-looking young man approached; a bridegroom elect I knew him to be.

I recognized at once symptoms of photographic hopes.

"If Madame would!" "Yes, what is it? A photograph of yourself or one of your friends?"

"Pardon, Madame, it is a photograph of my house that I would beg."

"But your house, I photographed it the other day", indicating at the same time his place of abode.

"Yes, Madame was kind enough, but that is my father's house, not mine".

"And yours is . . . ?"

"Mine is *going* to be there," he replied, designating a portion of his father's land where large beams were being laid for a build-

ing's foundation.

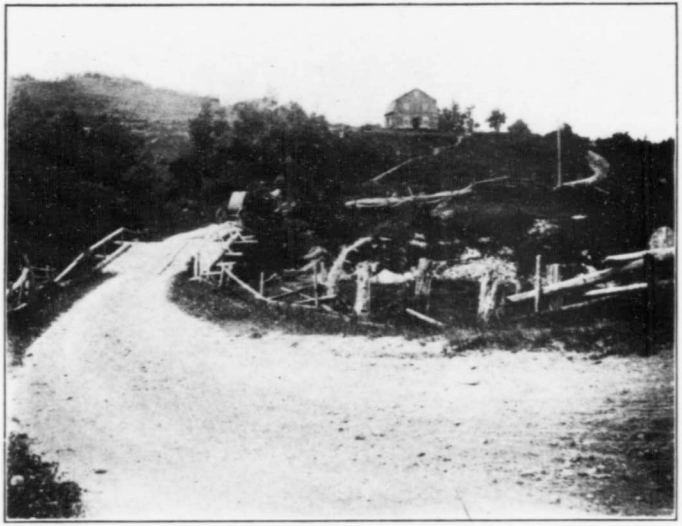
"And the house itself?" I continued.

"Is yet but a plan; a model. If Madame will kindly enter, I will show it to her."

A marvel of skillful workmanship was soon placed in my hands—a miniature dwelling about nine inches in length and of proportionate width; decidedly modern in type and complete even to the most trifling details of decoration. Each delicate touch suggestive of the innocent pride and ambition which actuated the young man as his deft fingers fashioned the model of the house to which he was one day to lead his bride.

Certainly I would photograph it, but how and where? Held in the hand, it assumed the appearance and proportions of a mere toy. Placed on the sea shore, it was swallowed up in immensity; standing among the field grasses it was hopelessly lost. But there was a way out of the difficulty.

I dismissed the young man and soon a little village maiden and I—she carrying the precious model, I armed with the camera—were proceeding toward the bush and meadow region. There, on a miniature rock at the base of tiny evergreen trees (gigantic they became



"WELL-TO-DO"

by contrast), I placed the little house.

On your next Lower St. Lawrence trip, note well the south shore when you reach the point where the river widens out into the Gulf. Both gulf and ocean steamers pass so near this coast, that, with the aid of a glass, the village homes are easily distinguishable. Among them you will detect the house of which this tiny model was the germ thought. Some two years ago my young patron led his bride to the completed home.

If your passing is in the summer, towards the close of a pleasant day, you may see Elzéar, seated on his front "gallerie" smoking his pipe; while beside him is his gentle helpmeet.

Their little one is folded in her arms, her glowing cheek rests on the baby's head, and as she rocks, she lulls him to sleep with softly sung story of Malbrouck or *la claire fontaine* or of the Holy Child in the crèche.

But it is in vain that you will seek for the softening sheltering tree-settings such as figure in the little photograph. "The man with the axe" as Sir Wilfred Laurier designates the Canadian settler, has passed this way, and the coast—beautiful as it is in natural outline—

becomes altogether unlovely through the absence of trees.

The preparation for an event which, with dwellers in these regions, ranks among the most important, the most eagerly anticipated and the most devoutly observed of church occasions, recently called forth sufficient energy to have transformed the entire coast into a forest bower. Indeed the transformation was temporarily effected for, on both sides of the road which skirts our shore, there suddenly appeared a long row of half grown birches and beeches, apparently in full vigor. But drooping boughs and curling leaves soon testified to the superficiality of the miracle! and the hopeless incline which the majority of the trees assumed at the first wind-buffetting, bore testimony to the fact that the poor things were not accompanied by their roots. Many of these mutilated "bush" children now lie prostrate by the roadside, while others have been tossed into the sea and claimed by the tide. Yet, with the expenditure of a little additional time and labor, permanent results could have been secured and living trees might, even now, be striking root on either side the road-

way. Thus the foundation of an almost limitless avenue of shade and shelter would have been laid, for the fleeting miracle was not performed on the shores of our village alone. All around the coast of the peninsula, from end to end of the railroadless stretch of shore, the transformation scene might have been witnessed, and every fourth year sees its reenactment.

This temporary avenue marks the route followed by the Bishop of Rimouski during his confirmation tour in these remote portions of his diocese; and the enthusiasm attending the event must be witnessed to be realized.

While a body of men in vehicles or on horse (and even on bicycles where the roads permit) is starting out to conduct the episcopal cohort towards the neighboring church or mission station, a like delegation from the expectant settlement or village is already on its way to claim the illustrious guest; and all along the tree-lined, flag-bedecked avenue may be seen the eager faces of those who watch for the first signal of the coming of *Monseigneur*. Among the crowds assembled around the churches, expectation—even

if disappointed for hours—remains at fever heat; and with the appearance of the first returning outrider enthusiasm reaches a point of rapture. Whether it be the case of a waiting host or a single watcher, every coast dweller drops on his knees to receive a benediction as *Monseigneur* passes on his way.

As I look around on the simple comforts by which we are surrounded in our village home, I am reminded of various misgivings entertained on our account by the anxious friends who so reluctantly saw us depart on this northern expedition.

Over the painted floors of our *habitant* cottage, extend strips of bright carpet woven by Madame's own deft fingers. Not the rag-carpet still so popular in many farmers' homes in New England districts—although the *catalonne* as it is termed by Canadians, has its share of patronage here also—but gay, Oriental-looking coverings, made of shearings from our landlord's own sheep. The blankets, table covers and other useful and ornamental equipments of this little home, as well as much of the warm clothing worn by its inmates, are also furnished by the sheep's cast off coats and woven by Madame herself.

Moreover she is her own dyer, and only in the matter of carding does she seek outside help. A neighboring mill performs this preliminary service for the spinners of Ste. Anne's.

One can picture the satisfaction with which, during long winter evenings, these good housewives watch the bright colors taking their places in patterns of the spinners' own designing; and one can understand that the cheerful hum of the spinning wheel suffices to exorcise the depressing influences of the surliest and most persistent storm demon.

"Each nation has its own peculiar virtues as well as its own faults," we say to our friend the village philosopher, "What, to your way of thinking, is the most important failing of your people?"

"Lack of union," he replies after a moment's earnest consideration.

"And what quality do you most admire among the people who dwell around you?"

"It is the Gaspesian's practical skillfulness that I most admire in him," he answers. "Place any one of our coast people in or near the bush, give him an axe, a saw, a hammer and some nails, and in a short time he will have constructed and furnished a house for

himself. All in the most primitive style, it is true, but a dwelling nevertheless; a *gîte* in which comfort will not be found wanting. There is an independence about this ability that appeals strongly to me."

Evidences of this homely skill are not lacking in our own village home, and we judge that there is indeed no simple emergency in the house-constructing or house-furnishing line, which even the averagely clever Gaspesian would not be able to meet.

During these bounteous days when both *le fleuve* (as the St. Lawrence is termed in contradistinction to its tributaries), and all the rivers of the neighborhood are bestowing on us far greater largesse than we can consume, Ste. Anne's provident housewives are salting down the surplus salmon, trout, cod, herring and other sea and river products, against the time of the Ice King's coming.

"The winter is our best season," we are told, in answer to our anxious inquiries regarding food supplies at that period. "In order to produce a dish almost the equal of any which summer streams can furnish, one has but to unsalt this fish and to boil or broil

it. Served with a little butter or a sauce of cream, ah, but it has a fine taste!"

"And winter's advent finds our provision house at its best so far as meats are concerned; for it is then stocked with whole sides of beef, entire sheep and pigs and barrels of fowls, all frozen solid and certain not to spoil. For no thaws of importance visit us until spring time, when, as the ladies can imagine, the winter's supplies are about exhausted.

"The products of our fields also come to our aid during the bleakest season," our informant continues. "For all winter long we have potatoes, onions, barley, beans and plenty of peas. One knows that the *habitant* can never have too much pea soup, eh? Then there is the store of eggs which we begin putting aside before the coldest weather sets in, and with all these provisions and our bread, butter, milk and preserves of raspberries, blueberries, wild cherries, rowan berries and pembina, (an Indian name for high bush cranberry) the ladies will see that we do not suffer. I only wish every one was as well off."

With a sympathetic thought, not so much of

the poorer dwellers on the Gaspé coast as of the far more-to-be-pitied needy ones of our own land, we heartily echo the good woman's wish.

Quickness of wit and appreciation of humor —characteristics belonging to Canadians in general—are not lacking among our villagers, and in the little côterie which represents the upper strata of society at Ste. Anne des Monts, are men and women of unusual keenness and brightness. In particular the men of this circle follow the world's fortunes and keep abreast of the times, as its echoes reach them through their country's press organs.

Three times a week the mail is brought to our village by courier service from Little Metis, and as may be supposed, these tri-weekly occasions are important events in coast communities; and the advent of the official horse and vehicle creates a stir in village centres.

Years ago when convents or municipal schools were not regular coast institutions, dwellers in these regions had an excuse for not knowing how to read or write; though, even at that comparatively remote period, such a state of ignorance was by no means

A BRIDGE'S REMNANT

general. Members of the present generation can claim no such excuse however, for schools are stationed at convenient intervals all along the coast, and an elementary education is now, not only within the reach of all, but is virtually compulsory. Among shanty (*chantier*) men and others of a like standing, one not infrequently finds a workman whose mark represents his signature.

The religion of the St. Lawrence side of the peninsula is Roman Catholic, (this may also be stated of much of the gulf region) and the language spoken is French; a French much superior in quality to that which one hears among people of this same station and nationality in the well-populated parts of the province of Quebec.

An occasional *réveillon,* or evening gathering of friends, represents the winter's greatest social gayety. The most important of these reunions takes place on New Year's Eve; when, to the accompaniment of singing, dancing and feasting, and the playing of games and practical jokes, the old year takes its leave and the new is ushered in.

Whether in skirting the Ste. Anne des Monts shore, in passing through the village,

or in looking seaward even from comparatively distant points in the surrounding back country region, one dwelling in particular is sure to attract the eye of the traveller and to awaken in his mind a sentiment of admiration. A sentiment with which, in the case of strangers, much speculative curiosity is sure to blend.

This dwelling, situated on a bluff at the terminus of one of the most graceful curves in the village's shore-line, represents the home of a gentleman who has been drawn hither by commercial interests. From the vantage point of the elevation where stands his dwelling, the view is so vast and varied as to be fairly inexhaustible; yet the privilege of having this magnificent panorama ever before one's eyes is not without its drawbacks, for this point represents the rallying place of all the winds of heaven. And though higher heights and more desolate stretches may be forest-clad, the isolation and peculiar situation and construction of this peak are such that trees refuse to strike root within its precincts; though they have frequently been invited to do so.

Formidable as winter may be in other parts of the village, its greatest rigors are reserved for this beautiful cliff-top.

V

FESTIVAL DAYS

ALMOST too well known to require mention are the facts that St. John the Baptist is Canada's patron, and the 24th of June the day set apart for the celebration of his *fête*. Our village put on a gala appearance for the important occasion, and, in addition to the usual feast-day observances, a procession was inaugurated and the settlement became gay with flags and banners bearing religious and national mottoes and emblems, as well as representations of the patron saint; the maple leaf and the beaver figuring conspicuously everywhere.

But, to our way of thinking, the most interesting feature of the pageant was the representation of the infant saint by a village child. A staff-like cross in the baby's hand and a live lamb beside him completed the picture, and both child and lamb seemed to enjoy to the utmost the distinction of heading the procession and of proceeding in a vehicle.

For several days following the celebration the lamb was tethered out in the grass near the sexton's house. The creature had evidently been a great pet and his loud bleating invited the friendly notice of every passer. One day while we were caressing the four-footed processionist, his associate the infant saint—somewhat *en négligé*—appeared upon the scene.

The little fellow again carried the cross, and as he proceeded carolled in his lisping way portions of the cantiques which had been sung on the occasion of the procession. He seemed to have no fear of us, but at the sight of the camera he uttered an exclamation of alarm. *"Ca va faire mal, ça va faire mal,"* he cried, instantly divining my purpose. Then, with the evident determination of frustrating it, he turned and toddled hurriedly homeward, and as long as the retreating figure was visible we heard his indignant *"suis fâché, fâché moi."*

The lamb disappeared not many days after this occurrence, and for the sake of our own peace of mind we forbore asking any questions regarding its fate. Perhaps the answer would have been identical with one

which I received not long since on inquiring for a fine looking bull which I missed from among the cattle of the upper fields.

"What has become of him?" I asked my companion of the stroll.

"Of the bull? But you have eaten him, Madame!"

An accusation of cannabalism could have been but a single degree more startling and humiliating.

Eclipsing even the St. Jean Baptiste *fête* in public interest and importance is the *curé's* annual visit, which takes place during the earlier half of the month of July. Through the back country, along the coast settlements from one end of the parish to the other, the reverend gentleman, accompanied by three of his wardens, visits each family and interviews each member of his congregation. Did the little company represent a Board of Health Committee on a rigid inspecting tour greater diligence could hardly be displayed than that which the parishioners manifest in their eagerness to prepare worthily for the pastoral visit. Such a reign of scrubbing and scouring, of sweeping and dusting, of raking of house yards and general cleaning

and assembling in order, as held sway over the entire village during the days that immediately preceded the important arrival! In some cases preparations extended even to the remotest portions of a landed proprietor's possessions. In our establishment, the usual thorough weekly housecleaning became a daily occurrence; and no gold digger ever sought more diligently for the precious metal than sought our good landlady, during all this period of expectation, for dust particles or other evidences of careless housekeeping.

As long as *Monsieur le curé* and his attendants were occupied with the remote portions of the parish, there was no slackening in the diligence of village preparations; but from the time that the visiting party reached our settlement a certain Sabbath quiet fell upon the place. The greatest interest centred around the dwelling into which the august guest had actually entered, and holiday attire was donned by all in its immediate neighborhood; and a furtive but constant watch, kept on the progress of the two vehicles which represented the clerical cohort.

"They have arrived at so and so's," some

excited sentinel would report. "They may be at our doors within an hour or less." And with each bulletin of this kind there took place a final hasty scrutiny of all objects or localities favorable to dust-collecting; and after a last frantic wave of the broom or dust-cloth, the attitude of quiet, tense waiting would be resumed.

If expectation was disappointed and the *curé* detained so long as to compel an overnight postponement of the visit, the following morning witnessed the same eager anticipation and preparation. And thus it continued until arrived the thrilling moment when the two buckboards drew up before the waiting house and the *curé* and his wardens crossed the immaculate threshold.

A few moments of prayer, a settling of church accounts, (we learn that one-tenth of the grain revenue represents our farmer's entire tithe,) some friendly inquiries concerning the welfare of each member of the family, a little chat regarding the most important of village interests and the latest neighborhood happenings, a few *pleaisanteries* in houses where the absence of recent sorrow permits, and then, with a blessing on home and in-

mates, the *curé* takes his departure; the housewife breathes freely once more, and the entire household resumes its every day attire and avocations, while the two august buckboards make their way to the next expectant home.

This is the regular program in all the houses except those appointed as lunching or dining stations for the *curé* and his wardens. It is hardly necessary to state that even greater stir and excitement prevail in settlements to whose portion this honor falls. It does not surprise us to learn that the champion cook of the village is frequently borrowed for these occasions by sister housewives diffident regarding their own culinary merits and capabilities, yet more than eager to entertain their august guest worthily. It is said that, as one after another of the good woman's famous dishes appear before the astute quartette, her influence is invariably recognized; and many a congratulatory remark directed towards the behind-the-scenes region where she so modestly and so worthily officiates.

One can imagine with what satisfaction the *curé* and his attendants turn homeward from the last of these annual parish calls. The tour

BEAUTIFUL IN NATURAL OUTLINE

of the village and its vicinage is a comparatively light task; but immense fatigue attends the journeys to the back country and the gulfward regions generally designated by the vague term of down below.

To return one moment to the prosaic matter of scrubbing. Never before attending a Ste. Anne des Monts cleaning séance, had we imagined that this extremely practical occupation could be accompanied by a suggestion of genuine poetry. Our enlightenment came about in the following manner.

Early on Saturday morning, when business called us to make a halt at a habitant house, the whole dwelling seemed all at once to overflow with the concentrated essence of balsam fir and other delightful evergreen fragrances. On asking the reason of this sudden Christmas tree atmosphere, we were led to the kitchen where, kneeling on the shores of a sudsy sea which threatened to deluge the entire floor, were three sturdy *créatures,* as girls and women of habitant communities are always termed. A vigorous floor scrubbing was under way, but instead of the usual conventional and uninteresting brush plying, our trio—with a certain rythmic movement, and to the accompani-

ment of a favorite song—deftly manipulated evergreen branches. With the first symptoms of limpness the moist branches were discarded and replaced by fresh, crisp specimens.

No wonder that the fragrance of the woods pervaded the entire house.

"My mother always cleaned in this way," said the conductor of the scrubbing manœuvres, as she proceeded by means of a large drying cloth to put the finishing touches to the floor, "and I have always followed her example. It seems to me that nothing ever makes a *plancher* so sweet and clean, as scrubbing it with evergreen branches."

A moment or so ago I spoke of Sabbath quiet, and the mention brings to my mind a recent experience which has exemplified for me *stillness* as I never before knew it. Nothing beyond a few moments of utter quiet, but such quiet as is rarely known during the day-lit hours of inhabited regions.

All through the night which preceded this still Sunday, the storm had raged with such violence as to drive slumber from the couches of all but those inured to the vagaries of coast tempests; but with the morning

came peace, perfect security on sea and land. Yet so long as even the subdued murmurs of voices broke upon the ear the silence was marred. It was only at the hour of mass, when the houses were deserted and the church held in its wide embrace not only our villagers, but their neighbors from far and near, that the stillness reached its culmination.

At this wonderful moment I stood upon the shore where the balsam fir fragrance blended with the breath of the placid sea. I was absolutely alone, not a living creature within sight. No sound, either near or remote, reached me. The solemnity of the hush that had fallen upon the world called for such reverence as one betows on sacred things, and until a peal from the organ woke the echoes, the stillness continued unbroken.

When the people came flocking out from church, I left my lonely post and directed my steps homeward. For I was loath to dispel, even by friendly converse, the influence of that strange, still moment; and whenever its memory presents itself to me, I realize that, once in my life at least, I have listened to silence.

The *curé's* visit was hardly over when preparations were entered upon for the feast of Ste. Anne; *La bonne Sainte Anne,* as she is invariably designated and invoked by her Canadian votaries.

The foundation of this cult was laid nearly three hundred years ago, when, a terrible storm threatening destruction to some Breton sailors who were navigating the St. Lawrence, and who in their dire peril invoked the patroness of mariners, a vow was registered by the storm-tossed travellers to erect a chapel on whatever spot the saint would enable them to land. This is the well-known origin of the far-famed shrine of Ste. Anne de Beaupré situated on the north shore of the St. Lawrence at a distance of twenty miles from the City of Quebec.

No fewer than forty towns in the province of Quebec now bear the name of the mother of the Virgin. Ste. Anne des Monts, on the south side of the St. Lawrence and distant from the City of Quebec some three hundred miles, represents Gaspé's most important shrine; and always as the twenty-sixth of July—the feast of the patroness—approaches, all French Canadian Gaspe-

sians direct their thoughts and their prayers towards this hill-crowned coast village.

When I began the writing of this little chronicle we stood, as I said, on the threshold of the feast of *la bonne Ste. Anne* and summer was at its height. But the Octave came to a close more than a fortnight since, and now ripening grain fields wave in unison with the billows of the sea, and more than one evidence have we that the beautiful, bright season is already on the wane.

For eight days—reckoning from the eve of the feast—whether skies smiled or whether they frowned, the pilgrim multitude daily wended its way to the shrine of Ste. Anne des Monts. Those arriving by boat, as well as a small proportion of the great concourse which thronged from landward directions, spent the Octave with friends in the village; but the majority came and went daily, even when their homes were at no inconsiderable distance.

Not infrequently there was to be seen the old world spectacle of pilgrims—both men and women—in penitential garb, bare-headed, barefooted, silent, except as their lips moved in prayer while the beads of the chap-

let slipped through their fingers; looking neither to the right nor to the left, saluting no man by the way, having proceeded thus in fulfillment of a vow for perhaps a score or more of weary miles. It might have been in grateful recognition of a benefit received or in the hope of securing some ardently desired object that the vow was undertaken. Even tonsured heads are sometimes seen among the pedestrian pilgrims; the clergy of other parishes occasionally proceeding thus under a vow to the shrine of *la bonne Ste. Anne.*

The towers of the village church stand out in bold relief against a background of sky and hills, and the shrine constitutes the most important feature of the coast for miles and miles around. It is said that mariners far out at sea watch by day for the first glimpse of these towers with all the eagerness which, at nightfall, marks their search for the beacon lights stationed here and there along the rocky coast.

To us, even the bell of the Ste. Anne's church has a marine character, and its tones seem ever to chime with the varying moods of the sea.

Two small dwellings and a convent—which in this region of simple architecture assume stately and imposing proportions—stand between our cottage and the church, but do not materially interfere with our view of the sacred edifice, nor cut us off from the sight of whatever may transpire in its neighborhood. Thus from our windows it is easy to keep a watch on parishioners as they assemble on Sundays and holidays, so that even adverse weather did not deprive us of the view of the pilgrim concourse. The days of the Octave were nearly all marked by unimpeachable weather, however, and our observations were taken mainly from a hill top looking both seaward and churchward. But while enjoying to the full the perfect atmospheric conditions and all other harmonious influences of the occasion, we could not banish thoughts of the terrible time when bleak winter would replace smiling summer, and Sunday and holyday reunions would be held under Arctic auspices. For even at that merciless period, unless unbearable cold or the wildest storms make the journey an impossibility, the call of the church bell is answered by the appearance of representatives from the most remote as well as the

nearest points of the parish; and even in winter during service hours a goodly array of horses and sleighs await their owners in the open space around the church. It is true that the steeds are always well blanketed during the frigid waiting periods, yet the majority of the poor creatures frequently stand knee deep in snow, not even the roughest shelter having been provided for such emergencies.

A trio of Carmelite fathers assisted the Ste. Anne des Monts *curé* in conducting the services of the Octave, and the sombre garments, rigid demeanor, fearless denunciations and rugged eloquence of these strangers suggested the presence of so many wilderness prophets.

Numerous were the friendly gatherings and conferences that took place between services; many of the visitors not having met since the last Octave or perhaps for much longer periods. The social element was kept entirely in abeyance, however, and the occasion recognized as a distinctly spiritual one. But solemnity and impressiveness reached their height when, in the twilight of the last day of the Octave, the pilgrims assembled in the cemetery for the hour of remembrance of the dead.

The deep shadows fell as from our outlook

point we watched the strange throng; but even when the dusky forms were barely distinguishable, we could still follow the course of the procession as it wended its way in and out among the graves, for each pilgrim carried a lighted candle, and a long line of tiny twinkling stars marked the mourners' route.

Now their solemn dirges rang out upon the still night air, or again, as they halted and knelt, came the wail of the *De profundis* or the monotonous refrain of the chaplet or litany.

And looking away over beyond the church and the cemetery we could catch the glint of quiet waters that told of a sea at rest, while an occasional flash from a passing ship answered the will o' the wisp gleams of the lights among the graves.

We left the hill and met the procession as it filed out from the cemetery, and our own hearts swelled as the sobs of mourners smote the air and the glimmer of candles fell on tear-stained faces.

The next day when the Octave's last service had closed, we followed for a short distance a body of pilgrims bound for points above Ste. Anne des Monts. During a halt at the ferry, chance brought our way vari-

ous interesting scraps of the pilgrims' conversations. One woman, who was evidently feeling something of the reaction which must ever follow times of great spiritual and other tension, held forth as follows:

"All honor to *la bonne Ste. Anne.* I owe her much gratitude, and no one more happy than I to have assisted at her feast and attended the Octave services; but *c'est assez comme ça. Pour une escousse* it is well, but an Octave every day, *non, non, ça n'irait pas!*"

VI

ALONG SHORE

AT high tide the waters of the St. Lawrence make their way to within a generous stone's throw of our dwelling; but even in their fiercest moods the waves have never been known to encroach on the road which passes between us and the shore.

Before us stretches an expanse of waters which we term the sea; and boundless as the sea it appears, except on days when certain atmospheric conditions combine to intensify the clearness of the air, and present to the eye the effect of minimized distances. With this occasional lifting of the far-off veil we catch glimpses of a shadowy, irregular bluish tracery, which represents the opposite points of the St. Lawrence's north shore; Pointe des Monts, Seven Islands and other wild, bleak regions, their rugged outlines so softened by remoteness as to suggest vague, tender, low-lying clouds, or a continuation of the waters with a slight variation in their hue. For at the point where the village of

Ste. Anne des Monts is situated, the St. Lawrence attains the noble width of fifty-four miles.

Beyond our shores and beyond the northern tracery of which I speak, the land recedes until it disappears from our view, and the river widens out into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. On their way to the ocean the waters outline on one side the Gaspé peninsula, while the opposite coast stretches out toward the sad, wild region that leads to Labrador.

Twelve feet represent the tide's greatest rise in the vicinity of our village. As the waters ebb, there comes to view beyond the shingly beach a long, rocky region, with here and there pits deep and perilous when hidden by the waves, though harmless in full daylight when the tide is out. Again one sees huge boulders on which the children love to perch at low tide, and over which small boats may pass in safety when the waters are at their height.

There are also regions favorable to clam habitation, and soft, oozy stretches where one sinks knee deep in seaweed tangles. But in our neighborhood, the largest portion of

the surface laid bare by receding waters consists of layers and layers of serrated rocks suggesting an endless number of upward-turned graduated saws. Sea urchins, curious shells and various specimens of seaweed represent the treasures after which the children seek; while mussels and various other fishy deposits allure multitudes of crows to the beach. Also our shore is seldom without its representatives from among the gull, fish-hawk and kingfisher tribes, but the voice of the *"gentille alouette"*—(the snipe) reaches us most frequently in the still hours of twilight.

We have but to look from our windows or step to our front door to keep in touch with all that passes for miles and miles out at sea, as well as that which transpires in either the neighboring or the comparatively remote 'longshore regions.

One day as we sat on the "gallery" or front platform of our dwelling, our attention was attracted by a great flapping and floundering among the pools left by the outgoing tide in the near rock-shallows. The agitators of the waters proved to be a dozen or more of stranded white porpoises, and their desperate

manœuvres continued until the incoming tide effected their release.

On another occasion—this also from the vantage point of our gallery—we detected the spouting of a company of whales, and while all such occurrences as the two just cited seem matter of fact enough in the estimation of our villagers, to us inland people these evidences of the proximity of monsters of the deep bring with them a sensation of strangeness and almost of awe.

Every morning, when propitious weather permits—and the stormy days have been comparatively few during our sojourn at Ste. Anne's—we hasten to the shore to see what new treasure the tide has deposited on our beach.

I remember the joy with which we once came upon a strange assemblage of large, heavy logs tossed together in such a manner as to form what suggested a succession of huge arm chairs; a structure so comfortable and hospitable that we unanimously determined to adopt it as a regular resting place and observation post.

But I remember also the dismay with which, on the morning after the treasure had been

discovered, we saw it riding seaward on the top of the outgoing waves. A broken boat which held forth the same fair but delusive promises of serving as a refuge and resting place shared the same fate. The tide is what the children term an Indian giver, and we have learned to seize without delay and carry away any of its portable offerings which take our fancy; well knowing that the next rise and fall may claim every detached object on the beach.

An incident reported as happening recently in a neighboring parish set our entire village agog for a few days and induced a score or so of idle people (ourselves among the number,) to pursue low-tide researches with renewed zeal and quickened expectations.

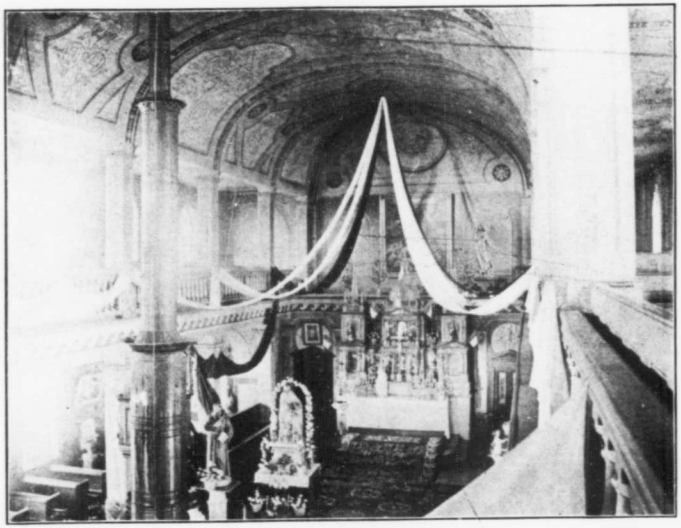
It is stated that a fisherman discovered among some shore *débris* a water-logged pocket-book containing bank notes of various denominations, amounting in all to seventy-five dollars. The finder immediately betook himself to the *presbytère,* and laying the pocket-book and its history before his *curé,* retired and awaited developments.

On the following Sunday at High Mass the *curé* made the matter known from the

pulpit, and each parishioner was enjoined to aid in spreading the news and tracing the owner. But no one coming to lay claim to the pocket-book, it was returned to the fortunate finder.

The simple honesty of this entire transaction impressed us deeply. From the time of our coming among these people we have noticed the general disregard of locks and bolts which implies a complete immunity from thievish depredations and a well-founded trust in their fellow-beings. We learn that two or three burglarious attacks have been made on the stores of this neighborhood, but no dwelling of this section has ever been approached by thieves. Our front door is barred at night "lest the wind should blow it open;" but although the more sheltered entrance at the back of the house is furnished with a lock and key, no fastening other than a latch secures that door, even during the unguarded hour when the village sleeps.

A roomy, comfortable looking building occupying a central position in the village represents the prison, but we can learn of only three or four depredators ever having been committed to its keeping. The causes of in-



INTERIOR OF PILGRIMAGE CHURCH

carceration were salmon-poaching, the shooting of moose out of season and the selling of spirituous liquors. No saloons are allowed along the coast and when liquor is bought and sold the transaction is effected in an underhand way and in defiance of local law.

Certain it is that, whatever may be the faults of the inhabitants of this region, deeds of violence are not perpetrated among them, and the most defenseless human being— whether man, woman or child— may make his way to the heart of the loneliest bush regions or proceed from one end of the coast to the other without fear of molestation from human kind.

This unique situation, once understood, it will be easy to imagine the consternation and dismay of the children of our village as well as of some of the more credulous among their elders, when the announcement reached them, as it did recently, that fifteen robbers were proceeding along the coast with the avowed intention of plundering all the dwellings on their route.

In our neighborhood the bomb was thrown by a white-faced, trembling little girl, who with many a backward and sidelong glance

of terror, stole out to her unsuspecting playmates and communicated to them the dire piece of intelligence.

"*Grand'mere* is very ill." The child spoke in whispers as if fearful lest a louder confidence should reach the ears of some lurking depredator. "The doctor says she cannot live many days, so our father and mother have gone to Chemin Neuf to bid her good bye; and there are at home only us five children. Never in our lives, until last evening, have we thought of being afraid; but at that time a man from down below who was passing our house bade us lock our doors and remain inside because of the robbers who are approaching. *O malheur,* is it not terrible! We were awake all night,—at least we cannot remember that we slept—and until now no one of us has dared to venture out. I came to warn you of the peril, and I must hasten back that we may again bar the doors. *Bonne Sainte Anne,* to think that we are in danger of being robbed and murdered, and *son père* and *sa mère* so far away! Good bye, good bye. Take heed to yourselves, I pray you."

Even in the home of the philosopher, the

panic made itself felt.

"Think of it, *son père,*" exclaimed the agitated youngest child. "Fifteen awful robbers in three wagons are on their way to us! They are even now at Cape Chatte and will be here shortly. Everyone is doing his best to protect his house, and the cattle are being driven to the stables. Shall we not take our precautions like the others?"

"There is no need of all this dread," answered the farmer calmly. "Think you that the coast authorities would permit a body of robbers to proceed thus undisturbed on a tour of bloodshed and plunder? The approaching company is composed of Gypsies —*Bohémiens,* we term them. They are a strange people regarding whom we know little save that they sprang from a most ancient race—(which race they themselves cannot rightly say) and that something in their blood drives them ever onward. They care not for settled homes such as ours, but they are continually wandering over the face of the earth, getting gain by telling fortunes, selling charms and mysterious medicines and trafficking in horses with those foolish enough to be induced to exchange honest

steeds for stolen ones, or sound beasts for broken-down animals. There are no doubt good and bad among these people as among all others, but *les Bohémiens* are never looked upon as desirable visitors. More than once they have been known to rob hen roosts or to carry off sheep and pigs and even cows and horses; and alas there are well-founded stories of little children having been beguiled from their houses and carried off by *les Bohémiens,* perhaps never to be heard of again. Such terrible instances, however, are most rare, but while the band is in our neighborhood it will be well for us to keep a watch on the fields and an eye to the house. But we need not distress ourselves with the fear that our homes will be invaded, nor their inmates attacked. These wanderers are too timid and probably not malicious enough for such bold practices. There is even no danger for the five children whose parents are absent; though the little ones must no longer be left to themselves and their terrors."

But though the philosopher's hopeful words were circulated freely in that portion of the village where panic reigned, they

carried only partial reassurance. One woman confided to us her anxiety regarding *"une cochonne et ses dix petits"* which had wandered off into the intricacies of the bush, and another housekeeper was in distress about a truant company of geese. We met a young girl searching for a cosset lamb and a second maiden was greatly disturbed concerning the whereabouts of a pet hen and her entire downy brood. In our own establishment, the youngest child's nightmares (which had for their motif the slaughter of his father and mother, the loss of his own scalp, and the abduction of the faithful old family horse), set in vigorously long before we had retired to our sleeping apartments.

The fears of one of our little friends were all for the safety of our tiny Chihuahua dog.

"Guard Fifine well, I pray you mesdames," the child said earnestly. "What would become of the tender, loving little beast, were she to fall into the hands of those dreadful men!"

Perhaps, at this stage of the panic no little ones felt safer than did the five children whose parents were with the dying grandmother at Chemin Neuf. The entire little

brood slept, without a shadow of fear or responsibility during all the remaining nights of the reign of terror. For the hospitable presbytery sheltered them, and the *curé's* sister, who is *"sa tante"* to all the village children, mothered and comforted them.

The kind chance that has favored us from the time of our coming to Ste. Anne des Monts did not forsake us on the occasion of the robber-drama's culmination, for we returned from an upper field ramble just in time to hear the thrilling announcement that the gypsy band had reached our ferry.

It was at an hour when the adult male population of the village was occupied either with field or mill duties, or claimed by fishing interests, and in the absence of their natural protectors the frightened women and children dared not advance to the front, but took their observations from the rear of their carefully secured dwellings, holding themselves ready, at the earliest intimation of danger, to retreat to their strongholds.

Yet, instead of increasing the terrors of the situation, the robbers' actual presence brought to the watchers a feeling of assurance and a generous measure of courage.

Gradually the rear outposts were abandoned for exposed positions near the street, and one small boy who, until the time of the robbers' advent, had been fairly stiff with terror, now strutted out from his hiding place and exclaimed boastfully:

"Bah! I have no fear of *les Bohémiens*, me!"

"If I had but known that they were like this—" murmured a pretty young girl.

"Thou would'st not have remained awake all night for fear of them," supplemented a companion.

"Thou thyself wast not altogether without dread," retorted the first speaker. "Did'st thou not vow that—"

"But look, look quickly at the wretches, how black they are," hastily spoke the second, as if eager to divert attention from herself. "And their hair! Ste. Appoline, it is coarse and wild like the mane of a horse."

"*Ma foi,*" broke in an elderly woman, "did'st thou never wash thy face nor pass a comb through thy hair, thou also would'st be black, *pas mal,* and *ébouriffée* not a little."

"One sees," said another "that they begin early to *griller* themselves in the sun—*les ef-*

frontés! Do but look at that smallest infant. He has not on a stitch of clothing, *le petit malheureux.* That *vielle sorcière* might at least spare him the dirty red rag with which she has tied up her wicked old gray head."

"Who knows? Those little ones may have been stolen from their homes," was the suggestion of another.

"Craignez-pas," responded a knowing-looking old dame. "The little blacks resemble too much the big blacks for any one to be mistaken about their parentage. They are gypsy gamins, every one of them."

While these and many other equally uncomplimentary comments were under way, the strolling band was slowly wending its course toward a point beyond the lower village. The three heavy wagons were drawn by twice as many halting, emaciated horses. The occupants of the vehicles were, one old woman, two of middle age, two younger women, four men and six children—fifteen all told. The entire party was unprepossessing and sinister in appearance—no shadow of loveliness attaching itself even to the children—but it was towards the aged woman that the largest share of our villagers' dislike and indignation was

directed.

"*Parlez-moi pas de c'te vielle-là,*" ejaculated one of our near neighbors, herself a woman well advanced in years. "The old witch is no doubt the wickedest of them all. She has the air of being capable of any iniquity."

But an incident which occurred just at this juncture led us to look for a general modification, if not a complete reversal, of the highly inimical judgment.

As the band passed the church, the aged gypsy and two of the men rose, bowed deeply and crossed themselves with a show of great devotion; while all the other members of the company, either independently or—as in the case of infants—by proxy made some demonstration of reverence.

But lo, the implied allegiance to their shrine served only to intensify the indignation of the villagers, and comment became louder and more unfavorable than ever.

On the morning of the following day while we were taking a 'longshore stroll, there rushed out to us from her home, the child whose sympathies are so heartily enlisted in favor of our little dog.

"Maman begs that the ladies will enter,"

she exclaimed. "The old *Bohémienne* is here."

Followed by our inseparable, the little Chihuahua, we immediately proceeded toward the kitchen. There— eated near a table on which the housewife had placed a simple repast—the aged gypsy was holding forth in mongrel French regarding the potency of her charms and remedies, and the advisability of providing one's self with a generous share of her magic wares.

"All, all, all diseases, no matter what, of man or beast, I heal, I heal," droned the monotonous voice.

"Let her care for her own wretched horses then," came in a loud whisper from one of the party. But the crone took no heed of the interruption.

"Yes, I can cure all," she continued. "The *mal au ouelle* (presumably *mal aux yeux*), the *mal au bouche,* the *mal au l'oreille,* the *mal au dain* (*mal aux dents*), *enfin* the *mal au toute!*"

The last expression appeals so forcibly to the humorous sense of our fun-loving villagers that it has been regularly adopted by them, and many now delight to feign themselves in

advanced stages of that fell disease, the *mal au toute.*

But the monotonous voice of the old woman became suddenly animated as she caught sight of our little dog.

"Ah, Ah, Chigaga, Chigaga," she exclaimed eagerly. "Many, many have I seen in *Mexique."*

"En Mexique!" whispered another member of the family. "She has been even there. Said not our neighbor rightly that *les Bohémiens* wander over the face of the whole earth?"

"Yes, many, many have I seen, and one, two, three, four have I owned."

"Depend upon it, *Mesdames,* she stole them, the poor little beasts. Ah, it was not for nothing that I warned the ladies to guard well the tiny Fifine!" This an aside from our cautious and sympathetic little friend.

"And worth much money, oh, much, much money," continued the gypsy; "but they die, always die; not one could I keep."

"Where was then the famous medicine that cures all ailments whether of man or beast?" queried, in a discreet undertone, still another incredulous one.

In vain did the gypsy offer, for a small compensation, to reveal the future and to provide charms against evil chances of every nature. In vain did she attempt to allure by juggler-like displays and sleight of hand exhibitions which, to these simple-minded people, must have appeared like the veriest witch-craft. In our village at least she and her band reaped no harvest; though in a small hamlet among the back hills a sick man was inveigled into exchanging his own good horse for a worn out beast, and induced to hand over to the gypsies a little hoard of savings amounting to five dollars; and all for the sake of an amulet which was to bring him soundness of body at the expiration of a fortnight. But the ailment increased instead of diminishing as the days passed, and at the close of the fortnight, when the gypsies were well on their gulfward way, the victim, broken in spirit and wretched in body, was vainly deploring his folly.

"On te l'avait b'en dit, hein?" was the triumphant salutation of one and another of his village comforters. "Hereafter thou wilt reserve thy confidence for the good *Sainte*

Anne. Is it not so?"

But linked with this coast are the tragic, as well as the pleasing and merely curious traditions of other sea-washed stretches. A short while since a young villager who had put out from our shores for a day's fishing came hurrying back with terror-inspired speed, and, in agitated accents, told of a dead body which had floated so near his boat as to have come within easy reach of his grasp; a golden-haired girl clad in garments which still retained much of the brightness of their hue, in spite of all they had endured from the waves' rude buffetings.

"And did'st thou not seek to seize the poor creature and to bring her ashore that her friends might learn of her fate and that she might receive Christian burial?" asked a sympathetic villager.

"What! *I* lay a hand on the unfortunate one?" ejaculated the lad shudderingly. "God forbid! And even though she floated face downward I could scarce bear to look upon her, much less to touch her. No, no! I hastened shoreward, and when I again glanced toward the body it was far out on its way to the sea."

Pursuit failed to overtake the poor girl, and all inquiries regarding her brought forth no enlightenment; so the mystery of the golden-haired one remains in the keeping of the deep, or of its desolate border stretches.

In the cemetery at Ste. Anne des Monts, within an enclosure that separates its inmates from the other sleepers of the churchyard, is a small wooden monument, on which are inscribed four stranger-names. This simple record represents another of our shore's tragedies, but one around which no haunting mystery lingers.

A Scotchman and his family, newly arrived from the mother-country, were proceeding in a schooner from some point above Ste. Anne's, intending perhaps to push on as far as the shores of the alluringly named New Scotia. But when they reached the neighborhood of our village a squall overtook the vessel, and it was cast upon the rocks. In the effort to transfer the unfortunate travellers from the boat to the land, several lives were lost; and of the little Scottish group no one remained save the desolate head of the house, who had become separated from his family at the time of the transfer.

The wife's body was carried out to sea and never recovered, but the four children were cast upon our shore and their bodies given a resting place in the cemetery at Ste. Anne des Monts. And thus it comes to pass that four adherents of the Scottish kirk, sleep in the shadow of this Canadian coast shrine.

To these pathetic instances might be added scores of others of a like nature, for the list of coast accidents is a long one. Even last week in the late moonlight and early dawn of one of the stillest of nights, there might have been seen wending its way from a point far down the coast towards an open grave in our cemetery, a weird little cohort bearing the body of a drowned man.

But strange to say, none of these solemn examples move our people to adopt the first steps towards averting such disasters. Among our own villagers, from the child to the veteran, we have not found a single individual who is able to swim. The marvel is that the Peggotty annals are not more frequently repeated here, and that the entry "drowned dead" does not figure still more conspicuously among the items which go to make up the sum of mortality's sad record.

It is not only in the matter of the sea's tragedies that one's thoughts travel from these Gaspé villagers to the dear, homely fisher-folk with whom Dickens has peopled the stranded boat on the shore of the Yarmouth village.

Sometimes one sees a blue-eyed, golden-haired little Em'ly, her hand placed trustingly in the secure grasp of a Master Davy, while they clamber barefooted over the rocks or race along the sandy stretches which the outgoing waves have left smooth and fair. Or again, as the waters come curling softly back the little ones wait at the edge of the foamy curves, and shout with glee while the waves caress their naked feet. Wilder waves are courted more discreetly, but no child dreams of approaching the beach when the majestic breakers come roaring and surging shoreward.

But the wind-tossed locks of these little seaside dwellers are auburn or raven as a rule, and the eyes in which the sea is here reflected are generally dark in hue. For though the fairer type of beauty is that held in highest esteem among these people, and to be the parent of *un petit blanc* or *une petite blanche* is

considered an enviable distinction, yet the average coast-dweller of this region is not light in coloring.

From the time of our arrival we have been impressed with the general comeliness of the faces that we see around us. Among them are countenances of a type so fine and dignified as to furnish unmistakable evidences of an extraction of no ordinary character. And indeed, on making inquiry, we learn that the earliest settlers of this region were refugees from Evangeline's land. Members of that happy little band of Acadians, who before the terrible time of their dispersion dwelt in that fruitful, peaceful valley on the shores of the Basin of Minas.

In that dread hour when "leaving behind them the dead on the shore and the village in ruins," the poor Acadians fled, some there were who found their way to the very shores which we now tread, and surely it is not unnatural to attribute to this noble ancestry, much of the dignity of bearing and fineness of countenance that we note among our villagers.

The most realistic of all the Peggotty visions came to us one wild night when a rest-

less mood led us out into the storm. Though sleep brooded over the majority of the dwellings, lights still twinkled here and there, and an affectionate interest led us to halt before the half-curtained windows of one of the cheeriest houses in the village. Radiance poured forth from more than one point, but the brightness seemed to concentrate itself in the kitchen; where, beside a glowing fire, sat a sturdy longshoreman whose duties would presently summon him to battle with the storm. The wife was busy transferring steaming dishes from the stove to the table, and at her husband's knee was stationed their little daughter. With all the might of both chubby hands the child struggled with a huge souwester, in whose depths she occasionally buried her own curly locks, while at other times she attempted to adjust the unwieldly gear to her father's head. The whole performance was accompanied by bursts of childish laughter in which a man's deep tones occasionally blended, while the mother smiled in sympathy as she went about her work. In a corner of this same room was a cradle where, half smothered in warm wraps, lay the infant son of the

house; but neither the merriment within nor the wildness without disturbed the slumbers of this sturdy young coastman.

"Ham Peggotty and little Em'ly happily married," we whispered to each other as we stole away from the pleasant scene.

The drift wood of this region—though interesting in quality and generally fanciful, sometimes even fantastic in form—has not the charm of the derelict fragments which one gathers along the ocean's shore. For although, as I have already shown, portions of old boats may be cast upon our beach and bits of wrecked ships may find their way hither, these are rare happenings, and the mass of the accumulation consists chiefly of gnarled tree-roots and twisted branches; of refuse from saw mills; of great logs which have broken loose at the time of spring drives, or of planks, deals, ties and other truant products of lumber yards. Hence this driftwood does not possess the qualities which result from the presence or influence of copper and iron bindings and fastenings.

In watching the escape of the imprisoned rainbows, the play of the green and red and

blue and pink and purplish flames which dance among the fires built of fragments gathered on the ocean's shore, one thinks.

"Of wrecks upon the main,
Of ships dismasted that were hailed
And send no answer back again."

But sitting before the drift wood fires of our coast, one's thoughts dwell either on events connected with the lumberman's life in remote wintry forests, or on the season when the loosening of the Ice King's hold liberates the pent up tributary rivers whose swollen waters wrench from their riverside tenure great trees and tender saplings, and sweep away not only this harvest of forcibly acquired booty, but also all the toilfully won logs deliberately committed by the lumberman to the water's charge.

Now in the pictures formed by the dancing flames, we see—darting hither and thither—intrepid figures armed with long spiked poles. Here they leap fearlessly from one whirling log to another; there they contend with an obstinate "jam;" yonder they haul logs from their hiding places among the bushy tangles and eddies of the riverside; guiding, propelling, restraining everywhere;

sometimes even slipping into the icy waters in their heroic attempts to direct their refractory charges toward the path that leads to the regions of protecting booms and cages.

In the main our villagers are what may be termed a quiet folk. During the day their attention is generally claimed by their various avocations, but in the long evenings of the short summer, when the sunset glow lingers till nearly ten of the clock, the people are generally at leisure and seem loath to relinquish the fleeting out-door opportunities afforded by the season of warmth and light. The elders loiter around their doors or on their galleries, or linger in neighborly chat at friends' houses, while the young people cluster around popular trysting places and the children play in the streets or wander along the beach.

Now and then one hears the strains of an accordion and perhaps a few voices join in the *complainte* or cantique which forms the musician's theme. Again the children's feet will respond gaily to the lively sawing of the violin bow, and more than one impromptu dance have we witnessed at the twilight hour.

But in the bush region at a little distance

back of the village, there fall upon the ear at this restful season no sounds save such as tell of birds bidding farewell to the day and welcome to the night; or of swaying trees or rustling leaves; of little streams singing their way shoreward or of quiet cattle grazing in nearby meadows. Here one realizes to the utmost the beauties of a "summer night which is not night." And in the quiet influence of this "long mild twilight, which like a silver clasp unites to-day with yesterday," one experiences a sensation akin to that with which one enters a sanctuary.

Along these shores may at any time be heard a sound in presence of which all merriment, even the most thoughtless, is temporarily subdued, and, for a time at least, a solemn hush prevails.

Though this subduing sound is but the tinkle of a little bell, the message which it carries is a momentous one, announcing as it does that some member of the flock has reached the point where his feet press the border land of the unknown country. Two vehicles are seen approaching and the black robed figure in the second conveyance (the bell ringer being the herald) is on his way to

administer the last rites to the dying.

Among the dark folds of the priest's garments one gets glimpses of his sacerdotal vestments, and in passing he holds aloft an emblem at sight of which each villager drops on his knees, bows his head and makes the sign of the cross.

As the sound of the bell dies away the villagers turn to each other with eager inquiry or conjecture.

"It will be the wife of Gaudiose. She has long been ill and the end must be at hand," remarks one.

"No, the voitures are passing the dwelling of Gaudiose," says another. "More likely it is the little one of Poléon who is dying. The child was badly burned yesterday and is worse to-day."

"Or perhaps some one has been hurt at the mill," ventures a third conjecturer.

"The aged father of Joseph has been failing lately. It may be that Le bon Dieu is for him."

And so speculation continues until its possibilities are exhausted or the reality of the case becomes known.

But solemn as the note of the passing bell

must ever be, there is no hour when its voice seems to us quite so impressive as when it breaks in thus upon the simple merriment in which the villagers join at the close of the day.

THE HALT AT THE FERRY

VII

FARTHER ALONGSHORE

AFTER weeks of speculation anent the mysterious shore region hidden from our view by the long seaward stretching arm at La Tourelle, we set out on a voyage of exploration.

With the route thither we are not altogether unfamliar, as even from our gallery the most distant points of the curving road are visible; but our real intimacy with the locality dates from this—our first jaunt beyond the precincts of the lower village.

The route represents merely a continuation of the long almost unbroken street of the coast; and here as nearly every where else on the road from Little Metis, the settlements so merge into each other that their boundary lines can be recognized by none but experts. Yet we pass a hill of some importance in journeying from the first to the second of the villages which stretch along the shore towards the point of La Tourelle.

While we were still in Lower Ste. Anne

regions, strong fishy odors from L'Echouerie's beach reached us; and we found ourselves in the equally malodorous Ruisseau à Patate, without knowing just when we quitted L'Echouerie's borders.

The quaint names of these settlements naturally arrest our attention, and "Why L'Echouerie, Why Russeau à Patate," we ask our escorts.

Regarding the origin of the latter appellation we receive no enlightenment, but in the matter of L'Echouerie's naming, the story runs that years and years ago, when the space now lined with primitive, though comparatively comfortable dwellings was marked by a few scattered huts, a deserted vessel became stranded (echoué) within the precincts of the beach curve now known as L'Echouerie. The dwellers in the huts, thinking that much profit might accrue to them through securing the vessel, gathered together every available bit of rope and fashioned wythes innumerable with which they did their best to moor the ship to the shore.

Night fell as they completed their heavy task, and it was no doubt with glowing an-

ticipations of what the morrow's closer inspection of their prize would reveal, that they quitted the ship's neighborhood and betook themselves to the shelter of their rude houses.

But when in the early morning they went to the shore to investigate their treasure, lo, not a sign of it was to be seen; for the tide had carried away, not only the wandering ship, but even the very fastenings with which it had been so laboriously moored. No news of the derelict ever reached these shores, and, but for the fact that the little settlement was named after the occurrence, all remembrance of the incident would long ago have passed away.

Evidences other than the disagreeable ones which salute our olfactories proclaim these villages to be pre-eminently fishing stations; and on days when everything is favorable to such undertakings the St. Lawrence of this region is dotted with fishing boats or with the swaying floats which indicate the presence of huge nets.

But on the occasion of our passing, the little boats of L'Echouerie and Ruisseau à Patate are resting in their harbors, while long

stretches of gracefully festooned nets hang from the hooks of their drying poles. Perhaps the light is too searching, the day too fair for the prosperity of a haul.

But no such interference affects the rival industry of this region. The penetrating buzz of the mill in operation at Ruisseau à Patate tells of busy times in the little settlement. To-day the mill hands are sawing and trimming white birch logs, (all destined in their final evolution to become spools,) while cullers perform the finishing touches and lop from the slender squared sticks all crooked or knotty or otherwise defective portions. A little beyond these precincts men and women and boys and girls are making tidy bundles of the sticks which have passed inspection and have been pronounced ready for shipping.

All along this coast at intervals of varying distances, saw mills are to be seen. Some there are which concern themselves with woods destined for railroad ties, telegraph poles, deals, shingles and pulp wood, but the preparation of spool wood forms the chief milling industry of this region.

Before visiting the shores of the Gaspé pen-

insula we had taken scant notice of spools and certainly had never considered them in any other light than as mere holders of thread; but these apparently insignificant objects have assumed great importance in our eyes since we have witnessed something of the wonderful machinery which their existence sets on foot.

It is represented by gangs of chantier men in the woods in winter, (smaller companies being employed at other seasons,) and by hundreds of hands in the midst of the buzzing, whirling apparatus of the mills in summer. Great shore-stretches are lined with nicely evened structures of the neatly sawn and carefully culled spoolwood; while securely tied bundles of the same commodity are being loaded into carts which make their way out to the sail boats stationed as near shore as it is possible for them to approach. On beyond —anchored out at a point where the depth of the St. Lawrence promises immunity from coast damages—one sees the ships towards which the sail boats make their way and to whose charge the bundles of spool wood are finally consigned.

These ships are homeward bound Nor-

wegian vessels and their cargo of spool wood will be unloaded at Ardrossen, near Glasgow, where the interrupted work will be resumed and carried on until the carefully prepared sticks have resolved themselves into spools.

Great consignments of these spools travel back to the western shores of the Atlantic, and for aught we know to the contrary, the thread with which we stocked our work baskets before leaving our New Jersey home may be wound on spools fashioned from wood originally sent out from these very shores.

But of all circumstances connected with this remarkable industry, nothing so impresses us as does the havoc caused by the presence in the white birch of an occasional innocent looking streak which is termed the red-heart. Many a fair appearing representative of this family is cut to its core, before the presence of the red heart is even suspected; hence many a sorry looking white birch, deserted when half hewn, is found by those who penetrate to forest recesses where the echoes have been awakened by the sound of the lumberman's axe.

In answer to our outcry against this apparent waste and cruelty we are told that

where the red heart is found in such proportions or positions as to affect the boards from which the spool wood is made, it renders the wood worthless. Not that the body of the spool suffers detriment through the red heart's presence, but because the little nick or notch which is always cut in the spool's rim for the purpose of securing the thread's end, cannot be made in the easily crumbling and brittle red heart.

All this discriminating and lopping off and rejecting for the sake of an apparently unimportant little notch!

The inventive genius of our age is such that a rectifying measure must soon be discovered; but at the time of this writing all spool wood operations and calculations are based upon the avoidance of the red heart.

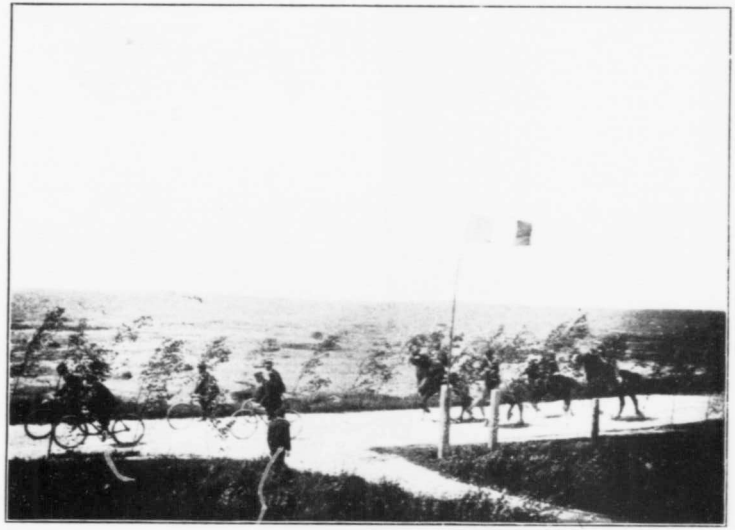
It is acknowledged that in this region no attention whatever is given to forest protection as far as the matter of restocking or of judicious selection in hewing is concerned; and fears are occasionally entertained regarding the possible exhaustion of even Gaspé's apparently inexhaustible forest wealth.

But we are assured that, for the present, little can be done for forest protection save in

the matter of avoiding forest conflagrations. Although in all public places are posted copies of regulations relating to measures for avoiding or extinguishing forest fires, and although great vigilance is exercised by the powers that be, serious fires, even great conflagrations, do occur, and the wonder is that they cease to rage until every tree has been consumed.

Many a fire which originated with the harmless intention of securing a small clearing, has made such headway before control could be regained, that whole forests have been endangered, settlements enveloped in smoke—sometimes attacked by flames—and cinder particles have been distributed even among the dwellings on the coast.

Recently, on one of these terrifying occasions, when all effort to subdue the flames had proved of no avail, a delegation from a back country region came to ask the Ste. Anne's curé to return with them to the scene of the conflagration, where it was hoped his prayerful influence would overcome the power of the fire's fury. We learn that it is not unusual for the villagers to call upon their priests to aid thus in subduing the lawlessness of both flood and fire. On the occasion when



MONSEIGNEUR APPROACHES

we saw the reverend gentleman depart with his anxious parishioners, though control was not immediately gained, the fire did not work serious damage.

Chantier men, berry pickers, pleasure seekers, in fact all makers of camp and smudge fires, as well as all smokers, are in turn charged with carelessness and considered responsible for much of the damage which results through forest fires. Again it is claimed that great vigilance is exercised by all frequenters of the bush, and a curious theory, which has its supporters among certain of the village and back-country folk, is frequently advanced as a satisfactory solution of the fiery outbreaks.

"It is thus that it happens"—a peasant informed us. "In the spring when ploughing has taken place, many a field is left with its furrows rolled over, and a great warmth is nourished and locked up in these folds of the earth. But should the season be a very dry one, the warmth becomes greater and greater till the earth can no longer contain it; and at length the heat bursts forth in flames and communicates itself to the nearest grasses or shrubs, and thus it spreads

and the forest is reached."

It is by way of a long hill that we arrive at Ruisseau à Patate, and barely have we reached the settlement's heart, when another hill confronts us. Up this elevation we make our way, and after reaching its summit, we adhere for some time to the level to which it has led us.

On and on we go, ever skirting the beautiful coast curves, meeting ever with the homes of the fishermen or mill operatives, until at last we gain the other side of the first of the Tourelle points; and looking seaward we behold the interesting object from which the locality is named.

On the shore's edge, at a little distance from the rocky point of which it once formed part rises a stony tower or pillar; a tall, unwieldy looking column, more bulky at its top than at its base. It represents a vein, a fragment formed of sterner stuff than was the rocky hill of which it once formed part; hence better able to resist the wild onslaughts of the elements. Looking gulfward beyond this obelisk (which is called le bonhomme) we see another curve with its long outlining row of fishermen's

dwellings, and rounding this point we behold in the dim distance another Tourelle, or tower; a smaller pillar of stone, a second resisting vein, wedded through popular sentiment to the first Tourelle and known by the name of la bonne femme.

As we wend our way toward this distant point, the scenery grows wilder, the houses more scattered and more simple in character and the advent of strangers is evidently a great rarity. The glorious air overpowers every adverse influence, so that even on the stretches where fish are being landed and prepared for salting and packing, we may breathe without being unpleasantly reminded of the practical details of fishing industries.

And, most gratifying of all, we reach a region which has not hitherto been invaded by camera fiends.

Leaving our vehicle on the highway we follow a foot path leading shoreward, and approach a little company of fisher folk by whom the "black box" is viewed with great interest; and a large cod, fresh from the sea, is obligingly held aloft that its photograph may be taken.

By the way of an entering conversational

wedge we relate the latest news from Ste. Anne des Monts—the metropolis of this part of the world—and we give expression to our unfeigned admiration of the beautiful wild region of La Tourelle. Next we enter into a very simple dissertation on the most important differences—climatic, physical and sociological—existing between our own land and the remote one we are visiting. From those of our new acquaintances not too timid to express their views, we receive an intelligent response; the general attitude is unmistakably friendly. In particular is this the case with the children, whose approval we have won through the medium of brilliantly colored sweets.

No doubt even in this remote corner—more than a hundred miles distant from a railroad —there are those who follow the newspapers' trend and who keep in contact with the world's most important moves. But we cannot help thinking that, for the majority,—next to those revered individuals most closely connected with the great religious body to which the inhabitants of La Tourelle, and indeed of the whole coast belong; next in importance to the curé, the Bishop or even higher ecclesias-

tical dignitaries, and more famous than the hero of a thousand battles, is the man whose portrait and autograph figure on every alternate bottle of the pyramidical structures with which the show windows of the few scattered one-roomed stores of this region are adorned. The name of this widely known celebrity is Perry Davis—and his *Pain Killeur* represents the coast's universal panacea.

The alternating bottles bear a simple device by means of which we learn that their contents are derived from the useful and ornamental plant known as the ricinus.

The friendly chat over, we again press forward, no less eager than at the outset for a glimpse of the ever alluring on-beyond. But we abandon the quest when, after leaving La Tourelle, we find the outlook holds forth no promise of solving the mystery. Points and curves continue to limit the distant view, and we are assured that a little beyond the comfortable milling district (glimpses of which settlement are vouchsafed us as we glance over the tops of the trees in whose shade our road loses itself) the route becomes wild and rocky; almost impassable in fact. The steeps are formidable, even in the estimation of the

hardy traveller of "down below," and the settlements, more and more straggling and solitary. Some comfortable, even luxurious, homes there are to be found, we are told, along the desolate route, but they are as rare as roses in a wilderness.

A single mission chapel breaks the long churchless stretch between Mont Louis and Ste. Anne. Clearly we have reached the end of our pilgrimage, and we can easily understand why some contend that Gaspé should be called Gaspèche; an Indian appellation, signifying the land's end.

So with one last, affectionate, all-embracing glance in the direction of the glorious gulf expanse and the grand wild region of its southern borders, we turn about and journey back towards that comparatively populous and stirring district, the village of Ste. Anne des Monts.

VIII

SEAWARD AND SKYWARD

MANY a time since coming to Ste. Anne des Monts I have thought of the case of a wearied teacher and of the remedy which an oculist prescribed for her when she went to him with the story of her aching eyes.

"What is your outlook as you sit at your desk?"

"It is bounded by the opposite wall."

"And is the wall a blank one? Have you no opportunity of looking beyond it and of gaining a glimpse of the great out-of-doors?"

"None whatever."

"Then as you value your sight, move your desk and take up your position where, when you raise your eyes from your work or your pupils' faces, your gaze will be able to wander out to some remote point of view. Change the focus frequently, and above all things, seek wide views."

As we look out on the glorious expanses, which in this region present themselves on

every side, we wish it were in our power to confer on all tired eyes the boon of unfettered outlooks.

It has often been noted that among dwellers in regions where the vision is exercised by frequently looking up at great heights or roaming out over vast horizontal stretches, the sight retains its vigor long beyond the period when less favored mortals are compelled to seek the aid of glasses; and in the case of our villagers we have another testimony to the truth of this theory, for spectacles are rarely seen among them.

But no doubt their naturally excellent vision is supplemented by familiarity with the features and characteristics peculiar to the region.

This is noticeably the case when the question is one of pronouncing on the character, even the individuality of approaching water craft.

"That will be the *Louisia*" remarks one, as far out on the horizon there dawn the misty outlines of a schooner.

"Or *le batiment du gouvernement* is on its way to us" announces a second sentinel, and the prophecy is fulfilled as a busy little boat

emerges from the shadows and steams toward our shores. The stump orators alight for a few short speeches in the course of which they set forth the peculiar advantages of their own political tenets over those of all opposing parties; and, the harangues completed, the campaigners again board their vessel and steam away to the station next scheduled.

The sighting of any of the Norwegian vessels which approach our shores in quest of spool wood, is attended with great interest and greeted by endless comment among the spectators on the coast. In the course of its spread the contagion of the excitement attacks even ourselves, and we also linger on the beach and watch and speculate and at times almost fancy ourselves capable of directing manœuvres.

With the passing of the days we make the acquaintance of the ship's Captain, and many a stirring tale of experiences in strange lands or on distant waters have we heard from the lips of these kindly Norse gentlemen.

Some memorable holidays there are, delightful occasions on which a ship dons its gala dress and summons us to sit at its hos-

pitable board; and it is with the romantic sensation of responding to the invitation of a Viking that we gratefully accept.

Thus it is that we have the opportunity of entering into a close acquaintance with that beautiful creature, that most life-like of all inanimate objects, a ship.

The days merge into weeks and the vessel becomes to us as a permanent feature of the grand panorama. We sight it from nearly every point of our day-journeyings, and all through the night, swinging at such a lofty height that its glimmer blends with the radiance of the stars, glows the vessel's friendly signal-light.

But one day the Viking announces that the ship has received its full cargo and is about to leave our shores. The tide conditions of midnight will be most favorable to the undertaking, he tells us; hence at that hour, usually so tranquil on board our ship, a great activity prevails. The signal light is supplemented by a galaxy of other lights, and still other glimmerings in the near neighborhood of the ship indicate the presence of the consequential little steam craft that has come to tow the vessel out into the great waters. Then there is

the rattling of lifted anchors, and the tug's noisy signal for departure, and the lights move slowly out towards the gulf.

In the breaking of the dawn we see the tug at anchor near our shore; but the glass reveals in the dim distance a shadowy ship with every sail set, heading for the open sea.

"We miss it, do we not, the beautiful vessel?" exclaims a villager who, like ourselves, is gazing out on the river toward the now lonely stretch so recently the dwelling place of the friendly ship. "It is always thus; when they leave it seems very desolate for a time. Village neighbors move away now and then, but, as a rule, their dwellings remain. In the case of the Norwegians we not only lose our friends but they carry their houses away with them."

This qualified statement with regard to the flitting of villagers: "as a rule their dwellings remain," would have proved mystifying indeed, had we not already received enlightenment on the subject.

"First we lived at Ruisseau à Patate, then at L'Echouerie, and now we belong to the village of Ste. Anne des Monts," said the wife of one of the mill operatives to us recent-

ly. "But as we have always occupied the same house, all these settlements seem like home to us."

It was the amazement which greeted this little confidence that obtained for us an acquaintance with the fact that, in these localities, there is a small migratory population which patronizes the system of hiring portions of land and of erecting their own dwellings on the leased property. One medium-sized house, at present a resident of upper Ste. Anne's, has five times pulled up stakes and journeyed thus to five different sections of the village.

The architectural simplicity of the majority of these coast houses, makes their dissection, removal in sections, and putting together again, a comparatively easy task. Necessity, expediency or partiality for other sites, seem to be the motives which underlie the moves.

When remoteness from or nearness to friends, relatives, schools, churches and commercial or other important centers, interferes with the happiness or well-being of a household; when unwelcome features intrude themselves on one's landscape and unsightly objects mar one's horizon; when neighborhood

skirmishes trouble the atmosphere, in short when one's surroundings become in any way distasteful, how delightful to be able thus to pick up one's dwelling and to deposit it in any new and congenial locality which one may select!

Through much exercise of our seaward vision we at length become familiar with the various lines of steamers whose representatives pass within sight of our coast; the preference always being given by them to the St. Lawrence's southern shore rather than to the less direct and more unfriendly northern coast.

At times we sight some illustrious stranger for whose passing the pages of the press will have prepared us. To-day we have the honor of viewing far out on the sea's highway a royal squadron, and it is with a certain sense of exultation and superiority that we congratulate ourselves on the fortunate circumstances by means of which we humble coast dwellers are vouchsafed this earlier glimpse, while great cities all aglow with the brilliancy of holiday preparation, and multitudes keyed to the highest pitch of expectation, and state dignitaries primed with eloquent greetings, and

bands of musicians and well-drilled companies of paraders, still wait for the vision that is passing our shores.

At another time we sight a boat which is bearing a company of learned gentlemen to the far-off shores of Labrador. It is the point selected by these astronomers for observing the approaching solar eclipse. Other scientists are hastening hither and thither in the effort to catch other aspects of the heavenly phenomenon, some going far over seas, even to Egypt's shores, and the whole scientific world eagerly awaits the result of their observations.

Even in our village the unscientific world has its keenly interested representatives.

"What will it be like *l'escrippe,*" we hear a little lad asking of his father.

"It will be like this" the parent answers, "At the time of 'l'éclipse the sun will be hidden by the moon's passing between it and the earth."

"But hidden, son père!' Where is then the marvel? Is it not thus more than half the time? When we are asleep, for instance, or on days when the sun does not shine at all? And if it is to be hidden, why do these

wise men give themselves the trouble of looking for it? To go so far to search for what will not be there! It is not reasonable."

Disappointment is indeed the portion of our people, for rain and leaden skies usher in the early morning hours, and dawn shortly merges into a general twilight.

Not even so fortunate as our unscientific selves are the learned gentlemen in Labrador; for the grayness of their morning is deeper than ours.*

In the early hours we take up our position on the beach and gaze steadily eastward. At the time of its rising the sun keeps behind the clouds but its presence is indicated by a certain subdued brightness, and towards this comparatively luminous point we direct our

*"In British America the eclipse began soon after daylight, but the low altitude of the sun at this time of the day tended to lessen the value of such observations as should be made; but, waiving this drawback, the great amount of fog which usually covers the coast of Labrador in summer made it highly probable that the sun would not be seen at all. These considerations led me to eliminate the American continent from the problem of eclipse stations. As afterwards learned, nearly the whole eastern North America was dominated by a heavy storm of large extent during the whole day of August 30, and no observations were made of the eclipse.

Rear Admiral Colby M. Chester in the National Geographic Magazine of November, 1906.

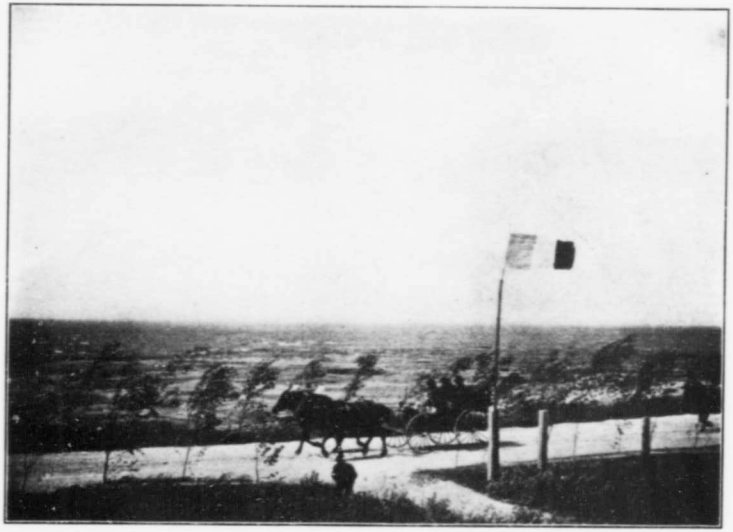
lens.

Gradually the clouds spread and spread until all attempt at brightness is banished and universal grayness prevails. This we know represents the height of the eclipse. Two hours later this grayness has so deepened that even near the window we can hardly distinguish print or see to enter our journal notes. This rather depressing condition of the atmosphere is followed by a clearing and even by glimpses of the uneclipsed sun.

A weird fogginess prevails at the sunset hours, and on the following morning a wonderful pink and purplish mistiness hangs over the land. Even when the sun shines these beautiful, strange mists are ever outlying, and for a few days atmospheric disturbances are noticeable.

It seems like tampering with sacred things, this profane effort of ours to catch and hold the heaven's sublime expression. But we attempt it more than once.

One July morning at a little after three, when the sea was utterly calm and the breath of the balsam-fir was borne coastward from the forest, I looked from my window, and saw a vision of unforgetable



MONSEIGNEUR PASSES

loveliness. Clouds of transcendant majesty and of unspeakable radiance announced the coming of the sun; and with his appearance the effulgence deepened and spread until it colored the face of the whole sky and mirrored itself in the tranquil sea. The homes of the sleeping villagers were now bathed in a golden glory and again silhouetted against the calm sea and the illumined sky.

The silence of this worshipful hour was broken by a single voice, but that voice so harmonious that nature even in her sublimest moods, finds it ever attuned.

Floating seaward from his home in the forest's heart came the voice of the hermit thrush.

It is comparatively seldom that we view these midsummer sunrises, though at night our windows are left uncurtained in the hope of being aroused by the early brightness.

But in this land of wide sweeps and tonic atmosphere, sleep is a despot and rules with no light hand. She is moreover a very Shylock and insists on receiving every moment of her due. Let us but attempt to interfere with her early morning sway and before the day is at its height, she envelops us in an

atmosphere of irresistible drowsiness, and we pay to her the equivalent of the time stolen for the sunrise glimpse.

But with the day's closing we are apt, as I have said, to be found assembled on our gallery or stationed near the beach, watching for the earliest indications of the transformation scene.

Sometimes both sea and sky are ablaze and the hills stand out as against a conflagration.

Sometimes it is but a wild assemblage of illumined clouds with which the day closes. A glory upon glory only broken reflections of which are caught by the tumultuous waters.

More frequently at the dying of the sun the vision is that of a long shaft of crimson or gold, or of a prostrate pillar of fire cast clean athwart the waters; the radiance broken when our shores are reached.

Sometimes a sheen like satin rests on the quiet sea; and only on the face of serene waters gleam the opalescent lights.

Times there are when the mere passing of a little boat over the mirror-like sea will call into being myriads of tiny golden ripples, while, with each lifting of the oars, rises and falls a shower of golden drops.

The so-called mirage scene has many times been repeated—though always with varying effect—since the evening of our arrival; and strange pranks the phenomenon plays through its grotesque disregard of perspective and its whimsical multiplying and subtraction, lengthening and shortening, increasing and diminishing of objects.

Is it through fear of being turned into ridicule by this Puck of the atmosphere, that the dignified north shores so seldom reveal themselves to us? Fifty-four miles distant though they be, the mirage may at any time seize upon their appearance for a display of its necromantic power.

Now the hills of that far off coast seem to rise and form in lofty columns or a succession of turrets. Now the columns and the turrets blend, then break again and gradually sink as if below the surface of the water.

Passing boats may suddenly dwindle thus and rise to weird heights. We once saw a trio of four-masters (miles and miles out at sea they must have been) whose sails gradually narrowed while the vessels reached upwards till their mast tops seemed about to pierce the sky.

Ships are treated with comparative respect by the Ariel of the mirage, and solely weird and romantic effects appear to be reserved for those poetic vessels which the winds guide. But it is perhaps because of their more practical method of locomotion, that steamers are subjects for caricature. In their apparent rising they are generally made to assume ridiculous, even grotesque, proportions; sometimes nothing but a huge ungainly hull being visible. This phase is generally followed by a strange flattening and lengthening process by which the hull becomes absorbed and the smoke stack and its immediate appurtenances appear suddenly to have been transferred to an elongated raft of perilous thinness.

We realize that the peculiar clearness of this atmosphere does not enhance the day-lit hours alone. An added lustre and brilliancy characterize even the night skies and enchantment, in a reverent form, seems to extend to the queen of the night herself. Now she rides majestically among tumultuous clouds and looks down into the face of angry waters. Again from heights unclouded or from banks of luminosity or through tender fleece-like draperies she casts her beams on tranquil seas,

while forests and glade, hill and valley, are illumined with a light which rivals that of day, and entire villages are bathed in lustre.

Mystery and solemnity are here intensified by night's wonderful quiet; a quiet on which the voices of both winds and waves may fall without thereby disturbing the rare peace of the hour.

One mid-July night my sister, who had tarried on the gallery after I had betaken myself to my sleeping room, summoned me back to look at what she termed "a wonderful cloud."

And a truly awe-inspiring sight it proved to be.

A marvellous phosphorescence fell like a vast, deeply-fringed curtain over the entire northern sky; so luminous that it glowed, so transparent that even through the strange whiteness the stars' radiance and the heavens' blue depths were clearly distinguishable.

The curtain waved and shimmered and finally floated away, and as we marvelled at the vision one who stood near us said: "You have been looking upon one of the many phases of the glorious Northern lights."

Though the attempt to depict it be as futile as were the effort to imbue these dull printed characters with a rose's fragrance or the melody of a bird's song, yet must I speak of the radiance of still another of these night skies.

A month later than the occasion on which we first saw the north enveloped in its curtain of light, came our second vision of the aurora borealis.

In every direction except northward the heavens were all a glitter with the radiance of the stars, and leading up to the zenith was the lustrous nebulous path which is here termed St. Peter's road.

And such a merry-making, such a twinkling and a racing and a chasing, such a darting hither and thither as was going on among the stars. All the midsummer night fairies of the sky were abroad, and in the absence of their queen these lesser lights glowed with a lustre that approached her own.

"When a star falls, a soul goes up to God" say the simple-hearted folk of another northern land; but no such solemn thought attached itself to the mirthful stars that shot athwart the blue depths of our wonderful

sky.

But towards the north was a reverence-compelling sight. There heavy clouds brooded over the river, but above the darkness spread a vast luminous tract. Not transparent, hence giving no hint of a blue sky on the curtain's other side, but fairly opaque in the depth of its lustre.

And all around this region from the horizon to the zenith, extended great shafts of light; some simply luminous, others deepening into gold and tinted with a glow as of a conflagration.

Against the calm waters in which the soft sheen was reflected were outlined a few human dwellings—the link between ourselves and immensity.

"La mer fleurit blanc," our villagers exclaim on days when long lines of breakers surge shoreward. Or, are the furrows broken into white-capped waves, "the sea has turned loose its flock of sheep," is their poetic thought regarding the unquiet state of the waters.

Perhaps the sea is at its grandest when on some dark night, as the agitated waters come surging shoreward, their blackness is relieved

by crest of fiery foam, and a glorying surf outlines the beach; while the sea-washed boulders, left bare for a moment as the waters withdraw to prepare for another furious charge, stand out like rocks of living, pulsing light.

IX

AT THE SIGN OF THE HALF-WAY HOUSE

BUT infinite as are the charms which the sea possesses, they do not hold us ever at its side. Sometimes we wander through roads which lead to back-country stretches; and, looking beyond the overlapping hills, we gain glimpses of tiny settlements nestling cosily in the hearts of unsuspected valleys. Or again we penetrate to regions where wildness holds absolute sway. Where occasional clearings unmarked by any sign of human habitation, serve but to emphasize the wildness, and furnish opportunities for looking upon yet more remote hills and forests; mere sign-posts to the region beyond which stretches Gaspé's still unexplored interior.

In the upper meadows which lie at a distance of a mile or more back of our dwelling, there is one height in particular where we obtain an outlook which, for breadth and beauty and variety, appears to us unsurpassable.

Too remote from the coast is the watcher

on this mount to catch the sound of the sea's voices; yet near enough is he to keep in tune with the great river's varying moods, and to note all that passes on its highway as far as the eye can reach. From this height one is able also to overlook the long coast sweep which stretches from Cape Chatte to La Tourelle, as well as to command an intimate view of our village and of all the meadow lands and bush sections which lie between Pisgah and the shore line. Then, on either side and back of our outlook point, extend range upon range of forest-clad hills and ravines; all suggestive of mystery and of the presence of strange wild inhabitants which shun the haunts of men.

Here and there on this elevation we come upon heaps of stones which in reality represent nothing beyond a very prosaic and laborious attempt to clear the land; but to us it is as if each stony pile was an altar erected in remembrance of a heavenly vision.

But midway between our village home and the Height-of-the-wide-views, is a little forest lodge; an unpretentious nook whose subtle charm is such that for its sake we frequently abandon a proposed pilgrimage to Pisgah, and

yield ourselves up instead to the delicious listlessness and la. y enjoyment which the neighborhood of the Half-way House induces.

Yet not altogether in idleness are the tarrying hours passed. For eyes are captured by the sight of forest beauties or busied in following the manœuvres of the feathered folk of the woods, and ears are entranced with their melodies; and in long-drawn inhalations we imbibe the fragrance of evergreens and wild flowers.

And "who so rich as we," is our frequent exclamation as we rest in the shelter of this forest lodge. A plain little cabin constructed of stout saplings and bare boughs, which in turn are so cunningly hidden by branches of balsam fir and spruce that not a suggestion of the frame-work is to be seen.

Three sides and a roof has our dwelling, but the front is open to the air and the sunshine and the restful views.

Walls hung with tapestries of balsam fir; couches made of layers and layers of this same fragrant and abundant forest-commodity; chairs and tables fashioned from gnarled roots, fantastic boughs, and stumps of trees; floors strewn with the balsam needles that drop

from our roof, and carpeted with a soft moss through which peeps the sturdy little evergreen herb whose roots are threads of gold—such are some of the furnishings of the Halfway House.

And all around us in every direction, now clustering under the trees, now venturing out into the half shady open, riots a delicate evergreen vine bearing braces of as exquisite flowers as one could wish to see. The namesake and best beloved of the Great Linnaeus—the twin flower—the *Linnaeus borealis*—whose vines carry it to the door of our lodge, and whose tiny blossoms sometimes peer inquiringly into our very dwelling, while their perfumed breath mingles with the fragrance of the balsam fir. Was ever combination of fragrance more luscious or more delicate than this?

"She clings with her little arms to the moss," said Linnaeus, when telling a friend of the ways of his favorite flower—"and seems to resist very gently if you force her from it. She has a complexion like the milkmaid; and oh! she is very, very sweet and agreeable."

In the moist regions at the entrance to our

bush are entire fields of the wild blue flag, and the outlying meadows of which the opening near our hut permits us to gain glimpses, are gay and fragrant with clover and buttercups, and whitened with daisies. Hardy ferns, golden rod, Joe Pye weed and many other sturdy plants and flower folk line the roadside, while the blue vetch flings its tendrils over field and wayside flowers alike. Researches in the deeper woods gain for us visions of delicate, spirit-like ferns and of timid, shade—and moisture-loving plants and flowers. The pipe of peace and the moccasin plant (the *pied de cheval,* the latter is not unaptly termed by our villagers) being among our most highly prized trophies.

The spruces—red and white—are beautiful and fragrant in their haunts, but experience has taught us not to remove them from their out-door settings. They shortly deteriorate and even become disagreeable when carried into the house. But the balsam fir retains its sweetness for years after it has been gathered, and several mounds of its young tips now drying in our rooms, represent our provision for a score or more of slumber cushions.

Red squirrels dart in and out among our evergreen lattices, birds perch on the outjutting supports of our cabin, and sometimes even the retiring hermit thrush will alight on the rails which form our nominal front door —a barricade against possible intrusion from cattle.

Never have songs of feathered minstrels sounded sweeter to us than do the bird notes which fall on the fragrant air of this tranquil haunt.

During musical seasons the woods fairly ring with the serene song of the hermit thrush and the clear silvery call of the white throat; while robins, juncos, vesper, song, and other sparrows, nut-hatches, chickadees, woodpeckers, cedar birds, warblers, vireos, finches of various kinds, and I cannot say how many other representatives of the feathered tribe, are seen or heard in bewildering numbers.

Neither here nor toward the shore does the English sparrow tarry. I saw two or three of his variety near our village recently but they had rather the air of transients—commercial travellers, government inspectors or some such migratory beings—than of

individuals who were considering the question of permanently taking up their quarters with us.

The road which winds before our hut is not worn by the frequent passing of either feet or wagons; yet the grass-covered route is a thoroughfare of a certain kind. Now and then our outlook will be eclipsed by a load of hay on its shoreward way; or the crackling of the neighboring bushes will be followed by the appearance of a stray horse or a cow. Or perhaps a herd of cattle will pass us on its way to the nearby brook; or a flock of sheep, bound for pastures new, will halt before our hut and bestow on us a few moments of inquisitive and startled attention.

Days may elapse without bringing one of our own kind to the neighborhood of the Half-way House, yet human passers there are now and then. It may be that a single individual or a little company bent on field pursuits, berry quests or cattle hunts, will give us a polite *bon jour* in passing, or—in response to our invitation—will halt and chat awhile.

One day we capture a very young Nimrod —a village lad armed with no home-made

weapon, but with that familiar city product, an air rifle. We are bent on a reform, but cautiously and somewhat indirectly we begin our crusade against bird-slaughter.

"Can you tell us the name of that bird?" we ask, pointing to a busy, unsuspecting robin.

Without a moment's hesitation, the juvenile hunter makes answer—

"Ca c'est une outarde, mesdames," (That, ladies, is a bustard).

We propose *rouge-gorge* as a more appropriate title, but it is easily seen that the suggestion does not find favor.

"There are those who call that bird a *merle"* (blackbird), he continues with something of the air of a concession, "but as *rouge-gorge* it is never known among us."

"And the little bird yonder," we continue, pointing to a slate colored junco.

"That, mesdames, has no name. It is simply a bird—there are a few with names, such as *l'alouette,* le pic-bois, le martin pêcheur, le chadronnet* (*chardonneret*) *le récollet, l'oiseau de proie, le hibou, le corbeau, le corneille, le goêlant,* but for all the rest they

*The snipe, shore lark, the woodpecker, the kingfisher, the goldfinch, the cedar bird, the bird of prey, the owl, the gull.

RAZOR-BACKED PIGLETS

are simply birds—red birds, blue birds, black birds, gray, brown, yellow, green, mixed-colored and even white birds. But all these are simply birds—*tout simplement des oiseaux.* Do the ladies not see that there would not be names to go round if each kind had its own?"

"Could I have classified our feathered friends with the simple directness made use of by your young hunter," said an eminent ornithologist to whom we related the foregoing incident, "I should have economized time and strength sufficient to enable me to embark on an entirely new field of science."

But however circumspectly and cautiously we may have intended leading up to the moral of the interview, all circumlocution was cut short, as, during a pause in the conversation, our Nimrod raised his rifle and took aim at a hermit thrush.

"You must not shoot that beautiful bird," we exclaimed, in tones altogether unlike the ceremonious ones we had hitherto used in addressing our caller.

Desisting from his purpose but unabashed the little lad made answer:

"It is for the service of man that *le bon Dieu* makes all these creatures."

Such an air of reproof and superiority and such an appearance of conscious rectitude accompanied this statement that we could hardly forbear smiling. But a little dissertation on what is comprised in that large term "the service of man," caused the youngster to modify his opinions and brought him, temporarily at least, to accept our point of view.

"After all, it is true that these little creatures sing pleasingly, and the bush would be less agreeable without them; and I never before understood that they eat the little beasts (insects) that injure the nice cherries and berries and spoil the grain. I thought that birds served man in no other way than by furnishing him with food. Partridges, for example, are certainly for that purpose, but the law does not permit us to kill them out of season.

"And I want to shoot now—I want at once to try my new gun on some living thing. What shall it be?

"Ah, I know! I will kill the crows! They are black and wicked like the evil one. This very morning did I not see two of the mischievous creatures swoop down among some

tiny chickens that were out walking in the field with the old mother hen, and in no time two of the poor little things were sailing through the air in the clutches of those wicked crows. Why had I not my gun then? At any rate, this is what I will do. From this time forth I will kill every crow I meet!"

We admitted that we ourselves had witnessed more than one successful crow attack on a band of tiny chicks, and we deplored the depredation quite as earnestly as did our young friend. But we told him of the crow's valuable assistance as a coast scavenger, and although we had no fear that our hunter's threat of universal slaughter would be accomplished, we carefully explained that for more than one reason the extermination of the crow race was not desirable.

How much the latter part of our lesson impressed him we cannot say; but at any rate we received for our dear friends, the birds of the bush, a solemn promise of immunity from attack.

Not long after the young huntsman had gone his way, our lodge was honored by a visit from another village lad. Number two was passing us by with a respectful salutation

merely, but we invited him to enter; and it must be acknowledged that in issuing the invitation, curiosity influenced us quite as much as did hospitality.

It was neither Sunday nor feast day; yet here was a twelve-year-old lad decked out in holiday attire—even to a little button-hole bunch of flowers—and sauntering through the fields and woods with the leisurely gait and manner that belong only to days of fête, and that indicate so plainly the respectful regard due to one's best clothes.

"And it is fête in our neighborhood" he made answer when we approached him on the subject of his gala attire. "The ladies heard the church bell ringing this morning?"

"Yes, this morning, and on every other morning, afternoon and evening since our arrival," we made answer.

"But, pardon, it is not every day that the bell rings in this particular manner," he retorted eagerly. "This morning it meant something especial. In the night a little daughter came to the home of our neighbor, the blacksmith. When the baby was about six hours old (which proved to be at the hour of mass) they took her to church for her chris-

tening, and I," with a look of delighted importance, "I was chosen to be her godfather. And so it is fête to-day both in the blacksmith's home and in ours."

"No doubt your families are related" we said, thinking we had found the clue to the selection of this very young godfather.

"Pardon, we are but friends and neighbors," he answered.

Remembering that in a certain long ecclesiastical list of individuals whom a man may *not* marry, the name of his goddaughter figures, we were beginning to distress ourselves with regard to the possible thwarting of a romance between the bright little boy before us, and the young lady who was six hours old at the time of the morning mass. But we soon concluded that not only was the matter no affair of ours, but that the bridge was one which would not require crossing for many a day to come.

Since our conversation with the young godfather, we have learned that even at the present date the selection of godparents from among juveniles is not an unknown observance in old world countries; and in the case of our villagers, it no doubt represents a rem-

nant of the customs brought hither by their Norman ancestors.

In spite of the little lad's statement that the ringing of the church bell denoted something particular on the morning in question, it cannot be claimed that baptismal chimes are unusual sounds in these localities where the proverbial Canadian family figures so conspicuously. Twenty-two children is the largest count of any couple within a radius of ten miles of Ste. Anne des Monts. The banner-family of the village is represented by a cluster of nineteen children; the parents of seventeen taking second rank, while of families of fourteen or fifteen olive branches, there are too many to excite particular comment.

When speaking to these easy-going villagers regarding the care and responsibility of bringing up large families, we are always met with the assurance that the charge of a good sized family represents less trouble than do two or three children or even a single child. The not unusual custom of adding to their households by the adoption of orphans proves that practice supports these people in their generous theory. We have noted with amusement that a certain ceremonious behavior gen-

erally characterizes the attitude of foster parents towards the children of their adoption. "One must remember that he is an orphan," said a foster mother to us, by way of vindicating her conduct in excluding from the punishment which she administered to her own children, a little orphaned ward who had transgressed with the others and deserved an equal share of the chastisement.

It is perhaps some phase of this same sensitiveness that induces us to throw a veil over the shortcomings of this land of our summer adoption; for I find myself reluctant to acknowledge that even this ideal refuge, the Half-way House, has its occasional drawbacks. Now and then the neighborhood of our forest nook suffers through visitations from mosquitoes, black flies and those almost microscopic scourges known as sand-flies. *Bruleaux,* the latter are appropriately termed by the French. But the outdoors of this region is large enough to meet all possible demands and emergencies, and on the rare occasions when the hospitality of the Half-way House becomes inhospitable, we avoid its neighborhood and wander along the coast or through the village. Both of these localities enjoy

immunity from all the aforesaid forest pests.

One day when mosquitoes in modified moods and numbers were present in the neighborhood of the lodge, and the smoke from a mound of evergreen branches and birch bark scrolls sufficed to keep the intruders in check, chance turned the occurrence to our great advantage and put us in the way of hearing a pleasing little legend of the coast.

"Here, one is indeed well," said a farmer-acquaintance, as he halted before the Halfway House. "But back there," indicating the dense forest-region from which he had come, "back there it is terrible to-day, and one is *massacré* by the flies."

An enumeration of the coast villages whose nearness to forests invite occasional fly and mosquito visitations, brought us to the mention of Grand Mechin, and in answer to our speculations and conjectures with regard to the origin of the settlement's name, our visitor proceeded to relate the following legend.

"In the olden days when ours was still a savage country and the brave French missionaries came hither to make known the gos-

pel story, there roamed through these regions a few Indians, and by them it was asserted that Outicou, one of the great spirits of evil, had taken up his habitation near Les Islets.

"He clothed himself in a gigantic human form, and many and terrible were the tales told of his deeds and of his might. Never was he seen during the day, for night was the time of his power; but only in his own domain could he work evil, and then to none but the unbaptized. Any of these unfortunates who came within his power he ate without ceremony.

"But in a measure as this dreadful practice became known, fewer and fewer were his human repasts. For the savages, as they approached Outicou's domain, would either hasten to a missionary and ask to be baptized, or else they would halt over night on the safe outer confines of the Grand Méchant's territory, as the giant's domain soon came to be called.

"Now there was one savage more obdurate than all others, and to the pleading missionaries he always made answer: 'Not today will I be baptized. Later, later. There

is yet no haste.'

"But one dark night this very savage, in company with another savage and a strange missionary, found himself within the boundaries of the Grand Méchant's kingdom.

" 'I cannot remain here,' said the unbaptized one. 'I will push on beyond this settlement, and await your coming.'

" 'But why can you not rest with us here to-night?' said the missionary, to whom the story of Outicou was unknown. 'We are too weary to proceed and the night is so wild.'

" 'It is because, because,' said the savage hesitating. 'Because, because—' and only after much urging would he relate the story of the Grand Méchant. On hearing the tale the missionary did but laugh.

" 'But if you have this dread of the evil one, and if the sacred rite can preserve you from him, why not let me administer the sacrament at once?'

" 'Later, later,' replied the Indian, still undecided. 'There is yet no haste.'

" 'At any rate, I command you to remain here to-night,' said the missionary; 'and I promise that no harm shall overtake you.'

"So the savage remained, and, with the missionary and the baptized Indian, he lay down in the tent. But not to sleep, for the terror of Outicou was upon him.

"And not without reason; for at midnight there was a sound as of thunder and the terrible face of the giant peered in at the tent.

" 'You are mine. I have long waited for you,' he hissed, pointing a threatening finger at the trembling savage. 'Come with me, for you are mine I tell you.'

"But just as the mighty arm was being thrust into the tent, the Indian drew over himself the robe of the sleeping priest at whose side he lay.

"At this, Outicou withdrew; but in parting he said—fire flashing from his eyes as he spoke the words: 'I leave you for the present but I will shortly return, and in pledge thereof I lay my club at the door of your tent. You will see that it is the weapon of a being of might.'

"In the morning when the missionary awoke, the terrified savage related to him the story of the midnight apparition; and without any urging presented himself for baptism.

"When his forehead was sealed with the

sign of the cross, he stepped boldly from the tent.

"But lo, at the door lay Outicou's pledge: a mighty tree torn up by the roots. At sight of it the savage quailed.

" 'Fear not,' said the priest, 'for it shall serve a holy purpose.' And with the aid of the savages, he fashioned of the tree, a cross which he blessed and planted in the very spot where Outicou had stood.

"At the sign of the sacred symbol, the Grand Méchant (or Grand Mechin as the name became at last,) fled and halted only when he reached Abitibi.

"And never more was he seen in the neighborhood of the village which is still known by his name."

X

WITH THE WINDING RIVER

THE Grande Rivière of Ste. Anne des Monts empties into the St. Lawrence at the point where we saw the homeward-bound pilgrims crossing the ferry. During daylit hours, it is the practical side of this river that impresses us as we halt at its mouth; for here—at a short distance, from the coast—is stationed a large mill: the goal of all the logs that are floated down the Grande Rivière. Here also are stacks of lumber and cords of pulpwood as well as various buildings connected with the mill's workings.

Of village houses there are but few in this particular locality. Therefore, during those hours when the din of machinery is no longer heard, the place is almost solitary, and in the dimness and quiet of twilight the supernatural predominates and the manor house resumes its ancient character.

When the building is illumined by no other light than the light of the moon, or of flames

leaping and curling around the logs in the open fire place; when no sound other than the booming of the surf or the uncanny creaking of ancient stairways and sunken floors is heard,—then is the hour for fancy's sway.

Gradually the ghostly creakings resolve themselves into the rustle of garments and the play of dancers' feet; while hither and thither glide the shades of merrymakers of over seventy years ago; and the scene of weird revelry lasts till the flouting of some practical onlooker, or the approach of prosaic hours puts the ghostly visitors to flight.

But to-day we do not halt near manor house precincts, for our destination lies far beyond the region of mills and booms and stony piers. We are bound for that remote, dreamy-looking country, glimpses of which are vouchsafed us where the nearby hills separate at the bidding of the Grande Rivière.

About a mile above the river's mouth,—at a point hidden from us by the stream's windings—our guides and our skiffs await us. To join them we are compelled to make a lengthy détour.

Were it not for low-tide conditions, we might embark here, at the point where the

boom meets the mill. Instead, however, we cross the ferry and drive along the coast route till we reach the first diverging road. It lies at our left and appears, at the outset, chary of unfolding its length. But arrived at the summit of the hills toward which it leads, all concealment is at an end, and a beautiful vision bursts upon the view.

Before us is displayed the entire Happy Valley: its fields of many-shaded grains all billowing and shimmering in the sunlight; its vast meadow-stretches breathing forth incense of clover and new-mown hay while, wandering through its near and distinct pastures, are herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

On either side of this beautiful wide valley-plain, rise range upon range of wooded hills. Now and then the forests invade the meadows and make friendly overtures to the human habitations,

Beyond the confines of the hamlet, rising over the heads of the pine-clad heights on which some of the homes are perched, may be seen still other heights; but by none of these is the vision bounded. The eye wanders on until it rests on the soft blue outlines of the Shickshock Mountains, some seven-

teen miles distant from the valley's heart.

As we proceed plainward from our coast-hill elevation, all sight of the sea is cut off; nor is the vision of the St. Lawrence regained until the hamlet's heights have been climbed.

On entering the valley itself we note that even the character of the atmosphere is changed, for here no salty flavor mingles with the aroma of the wild flowers or of the forest trees; and the thermometer rises several degrees under the influence of the sheltering coast hills. It is as if we had suddenly been transported many miles southward, and were passing through one of our own beloved New England valleys.

There are days on which our valleyites complain of the really intense heat, and envy the coast dwellers their comparative immunity from this extreme. Not infrequently do smudge fires smouldering before the doors of Happy Valley houses, indicate the presence of persecuting flies and mosquitoes. But there are compensations in this, as in every other case.

Winter's rigors, as experienced by shore dwellers, are known to the valleyites only when they pass beyond their sheltered domain.

A COMPANY OF FISHER-FOLK

For the wild winds of the coast are intercepted by the same protecting hills which exclude from the valley, the sea's refreshing summer breezes.

But great as are the attractions of the hamlet, beautiful as are the vast meadow stretches, and, grand and imposing, both near and distant heights, the glory of the valley lies in none of these, for its river is its crown.

The glittering waters meet our gaze the moment we reach the coasthill's summit, and at our left winds the silvery stream, all through the valley's precincts.

Southward, beyond the hamlet's limits, we see the Grande Rivière as it emerges from forest boundaries and makes its way seaward. Now it glitters through the trees, again it disappears in the dark recesses of the woods. Next it winds its sparkling length through meadows gay with clover, daisies and buttercups.

Here its high steep banks are honeycombed with myriads of cliff swallows' nests; there its borders are so low that the higher tides trespass on the meadow confines.

It is where the river approaches the hamlet that our guides await us.

We alight at the most advantageous road-point, which, by the way, proves to be beside the dwelling of our Happy Valley host. Himself a king among fishermen, he is ready, with good advice and cunning tackle, to supplement our sportsmen's needs. For, through the courtesy of those who control the fishing rights, we are permitted to try our luck with the denizens of the Grande Rivière.

Followed by many an encouraging *bonne chance,* we leave the road for the foot-path leading across fields to the riverside, and are soon comfortably settled in our skiffs.

One passenger and two guides is each boat's regulation apportionment; for though the river runs smoothly and even lazily in certain sections, in others it rushes madly over dangerous slants and stony stretches, and overweight would tax the guides too severely and might even involve peril.

This is a region where—during summer's gentle rule—optimism reigns; and in this atmosphere, anxieties and painful memories do not thrive. For Mother Nature here takes possession, and hearts grow peaceful and childlike under her wise sway.

Now the river widens and now it narrows. Now the rounded summits of the Shickshocks appear; now they vanish. Now the wooded hills close in around us, again they recede; but the hamlet once left behind our path is through the forest, and from its borders and its depths float the greetings of feathered minstrels.

Here, as in the hut's neighborhood, hermit thrush and white throat hold high carnival while many a humbler strain blends in the chorus.

Now the kingfisher's lively rattle breaks upon the air. Here the Canada jay puts in his impertinent word. Again the gentle sandpiper's voice is heard as he goes bowing and teetering along the riverside course; and there, a company of startled ducks skim the waters and disappear in a bush-protected harbor.

The stream's greatest extent is lined with a wonderful collection of smoothly worn stones, ranging in size from tiny pebbles to great boulders. But again, it is from fern clad banks or high sharp rocks that the trees look down into the water's face.

Sometimes the forest halts on the brink

of sheer clay banks, at whose base lie deep, tranquil pools; and in these and other quiet depths, we catch glimpses of dusky figures, —forms, at sight of which the sportsmen's eyes sparkle and the guides exclaim triumphantly. To their keen vision these finny shapes are often discernible even among the rapids.

And rapids innumerable there are, though not all formidable as far as depth is concerned. For frequently, when passing through them, our boats scrape their rocky river-bed, and at times the guides step from the skiff to the stream, and tow and propel their passengers through the rushing water courses.

But other rapids there are where the force of the volume is tremendous and where boats, under unskilled guidance, would be whirled about and dashed to pieces on the rocks, or engulfed in the treacherous eddies and mad currents.

There may have been times when our attitude towards these guides (nearly all of whom, by the way, are chosen from among members of the Happy Valley clan) has partaken largely of a species of kindly patronage; the outcome, perhaps, of our supposed superiority as people of higher intel-

lectual attainments, as representatives of a wider, more cultured realm.

But how insignificant and inferior and unskilled we feel as we sit passively in our skiffs, while our sturdy boatmen pilot us through the turbulent waters. And how small and superficial our supply of knowledge, when compared with their practical store. To them the path through the seething waters is as distinct and as practicable, as is to us the safe, well-worn path through the meadows, or the hillside's zigzag route.

Now we swerve to the right of the stream; now we veer suddenly towards its opposite bank, as the boat follows the impulse of the heavy metal-tipped poles which our guides wield with such easy grace. This grace of action is undisturbed even when wild waters call for rapid and violent movement; and the metal tips crash loudly and irregularly against the threatening boulders.

This up-the-river voyage is up-hill work indeed in many sections, for the slant of the river is considerable. But on the return trip there are stretches where an occasional skilful dip serves to guide the boat and even the rapids' violence is turned to good account by

these clever navigators.

Halts along this route are regulated by no Mede and Persian schedule. They follow the whims of fancy rather, or are perhaps influenced by humane dictates. For even our sturdy boatmen require an occasional rest, and opportunities for a riverside club-meeting, usually follow the exertion of poling through a long series of obstinate rapids.

Again it may be in response to hunger's demands that the little boats draw up on the shore; and, in this practical emergency, our guides again prove their resourcefulness and their superiority; and evoke, not only our admiration, but our envy.

But it is neither for refreshment nor rest, nor yet in answer to a roaming fancy's suggestion that we halt at this particular section of the riverside. The rapids yonder, represent a salmon rendezvous and the hour for the test of sportsmanship has come.

We, the feminine members of the expedition, are courteously urged to try our luck, but we unanimously and persistently relinquish all possible chances in favor of our escorts; and from the comfortable nook to

which they lead us, we watch the manœuvres of our sportsmen.

Oblivious of us, and of everything not relating directly to the quest, they soon become, in their eager consultation of a certain thin volume whose few pages are all flyleaves and whose mysteries are as readily apprehended by the unlettered guide as by the college-bred sportsman or the man of the world.

In subdued, but animated tones, they examine and discuss the contents of the strange volume. Much is said concerning the relative merits of Professors and Silver Kings, of Brown Fairies and Jock Scotts and of many another pretty, innocent-looking little winged creature beneath whose borrowed plumage lurks the salmon's deadly foe.

The sportsman's choice made and his tackle in order, he proceeds to the great undertaking. Next we hear the whistle of the long fine line, as, in response to the fisherman's artistic manœuvres, it swings now backward and now forward; now to this side and now to that. Escaping, as if by miracle, the clutches both of treacherous tree-tops and waterside tangles. But whether in looping or undulating or with a simple direct cast, the line almost in-

variably carries the fly to the very spot where the presence of the beautiful prey is either recognized or suspected.

Again and again the air is cleft by the delicate whizzing and whistling of the line, but human speech is little heard during this momentous period.

Now the interest condenses and centres around a single sportsman; a lucky fisherman who silently, but impressively raises his hand for a minute as if to bespeak our closest attention. And the guides exchange triumphant nods and gestures, and utter low exclamations of delight as the delicate upper rod bends like a bow, and the reel rattles merrily and the long line lengthens and grows taut as—under the guidance of some mysterious agency—it darts madly down the stream.

"One must either *let* the salmon work or *make* him work," remarks an eager fellow sportsman, as, with keen appreciation and unqualified approval, he follows the acting fisherman's skillful tactics. "The salmon needs no urging now, and for a time he will wisely be allowed to have things much his own way."

No doubt, at this point, the victim's hopes run high; if indeed he has yet any suspicion

of the fact that he is a prisoner. Perhaps he gloats in the supposed undisputed ownership of a detached, if an uncomfortable and unswallowable fly, as his captor gives him his way; at times even following submissively along the bank or venturing out into the stream in accordance with his captive's whims and the case's exigencies.

But such one-sided sport cannot continue indefinitely, and at times the cautious shortening of the line brings the prize to a halt or influences his selection of a route. Again he leaps high into the air, but the glittering vision may be succeeded by a wild dash through the rapids: a complete disappearance, or even an apparent escape.

But next we see his salmon-ship being cautiously drawn towards his captor, and we, in our ignorance, conclude that the struggle is about to end. It is naught but the da capo sign however, and the exciting history repeats itself from the beginning.

The interest of the guides and sportsmen does not extend beyond the scene of conflict; but we sometimes permit our eyes a wider range. A range which includes not only the wild romantic settings of the picture, but the

absorbed watchers themselves, as they conjecture and discuss, or hope and dread or advise and commend.

"Forcez le pas trop, m'sieu," whispers cautiously through fingers curved to speaking trumpet proportions, a guide of the conservative school.

"Forcez le encore un peu m'sieu," cries through a transmitter of the same convenient pattern, an excited and venturesome local fisherman.

But the hero of the occasion, heedless alike of praise or blame and too absorbed to note suggestions, proceeds on his own wise way until the grand climax is reached. Then he makes a signal shoreward in response to which a guide armed with the cruel gaff, steps cautiously into the stream, and with the body bent low in the hope of escaping the victim's notice, he advances cautiously towards the point where the line ends and the fly holds the struggling, weakening salmon. Perhaps no movement, not even the exciting one when the first thrill of the rod, or the first tug at the line is felt, can equal in intensity the sensation of this culminating instant. For, even at this advanced juncture, the fish may elude his pur-

suer. Unwise haste, unwise delay, a slip of the gaff or some mischance which neither sportsman or gaffer can foresee or forestall, may liberate the fish and send him darting back to his free companions.

But success rewards our sportsman's clever manœuvres and his assistant's adroitness, and in another minute the gaffer holds his prey aloft.

Shortly after this, the salmon is deposited on the beach, where a single blow on the back of his head puts an end to his struggles.

Then the Ohs and the Ahs of satisfaction and delight as the beautiful creature is held up to view! And the congratulations, the speculations, the canvassings of the entire course of the capture. What joy in it all!

"Do you suppose," said a thoughtful feminine onlooker, "that the greatest of Wall Street triumphs can yield such genuine delight, such unalloyed exultation, as this simple experience affords?"

It is not always from the riverside that our sportsmen carry on the siege, for it may be from the heart of a skiff that the long line is cast. As we proceed on our journey, a sudden lowering of voices and a quick re-

versal of propelling poles* may announce that a golden opportunity awaits the salmon hunter.

Even the actual capture may be effected from within the boat, and the waters at the skiff's side froth and foam, as the cruel gaff enters the beautiful body and the struggling prize is lifted out of its friendly element.

Speaking from the sportsman's point of view, six successes and two failures are scored during this expedition. Perhaps the salmon record them as six failures and two successes.

But, according to the interpretation of that most genial and kindly of fishermen, Dr. Henry van Dyke, our six captives have attained the most enviable distinction to which a salmon can aspire.

"Suppose a fish is not caught by an angler, what is his alternative fate? He will either perish miserably in the struggles of the crowded net, or die of old age and starvation like the long lean stragglers which are sometimes found in the shallow pools, or be

*This reversal of the pole—this substitution of the flattened wooden top for the sharp metal point—is made with the view of avoiding the telltale click against the rocks.

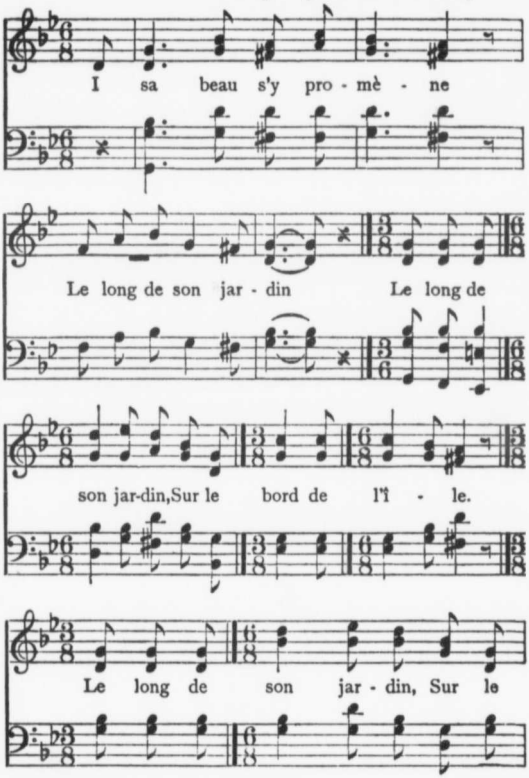
devoured by a larger fish, or torn to pieces by a seal or an otter. Compared with any of these miserable deaths, the fate of a salmon who is hooked in a clear stream, and after a glorious fight receives the happy dispatch at the moment when he touches the shore, is a sort of euthanasia. And since the fish was made to be man's food, the angler who brings him to the table of destiny in the cleanest, quickest, kindest way, is, in fact, his benefactor."*

*"Little Rivers," by Dr. Henry van Dyke.

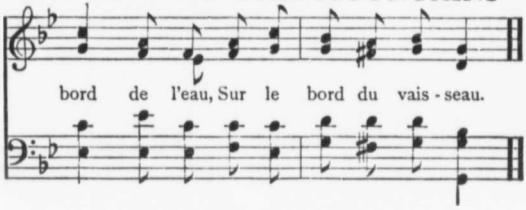
XI

Sur le Bord de L'eau

Arranged by M. Mc. D. de Regt.



ST. ANNE OF THE MOUNTAINS



So sang our guides as we embarked on our second up-the-river expedition.

With mid-August, (from which period dates the governmental prohibition of salmon-fishing in Canadian tributary streams,) comes a narrowing of the sportsman's scope. Until some weeks after this date, however, no injunction is laid upon trout-fishing and it is in quest of the be-jewelled beauties that our second Grande Riviére expedition is undertaken; the expedition which opens with the song of the beautiful Isabeau's wanderings and her galant's tragic fate.

In his *Chansons Populaires du Canada,* Monsieur Ernest Gagnon characterizes this air as *une délisieuse mélodie;* but, in order to appreciate to the utmost all the wistfulness and weirdness of the strains, one should hear them under conditions as fortunate as those that favored our introduction to Isabeau.

To the rythm of musical waters and the

murmurings of deep fragrant forests, ring out the untutored, but not unmusical voices of our guides while their lithe figures sway in accompaniment to the song. Even the click of the pole tips, or the soft dipping sounds which tell of journeyings through quiet waters, all having their share in perfecting the melody.

A soloist begins the story of Isabeau's wanderings through the river-bordered garden of her island home. A band of sturdy voices repeat the lines, and thus leader and chorus proceed through the entire song, all uniting in the wailing refrain with which each stanza closes.

Sur le bord de l'eau,
Sur le bord du vaisseau.

After a time Isabeau perceives that a barque equipped with thirty sailors, is approaching the island. The youngest of the sailors is singing. Isabeau tells him that she would like to know his chanson, and, in response to his assurance that he will sing it for her if she will step into the boat, she embarks.

But suddenly she bursts into tears.

RUGGED SENTINELS

"What is the matter with you, my beautiful one, that you weep so bitterly?"

"I mourn my gold ring which has fallen into the water."

"Weep no longer, la belle. I will dive for it."

In the first plunge the galant is unsuccessful. In the second, he appears to have dislodged the ring, for it vaults into the air, on ly to disappear again however, but the faithful lover seeks it anew, and from the third plunge he never returns.

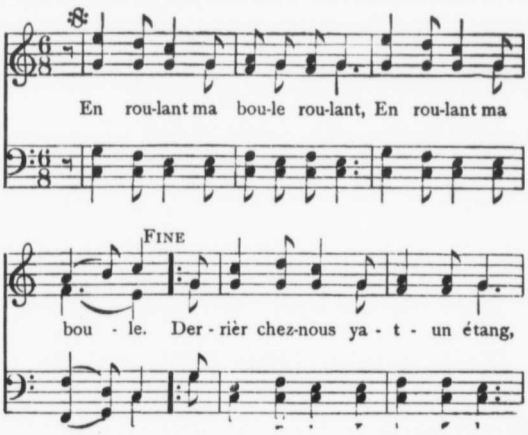
De la troisième plonge
Le galant s'est noyé,
Le galant s'est noyé,
Sur le bord de l'île.
Le galant s'est noyé
Sur le bord de l'eau
Sur le bord du vaisseau.

Thus ends the melancholy story and, inane as it may appear in its cold-blooded English rendering, we all agree that no Canadian chanson is better fitted to echo among these lonely northern forests or to blend with the

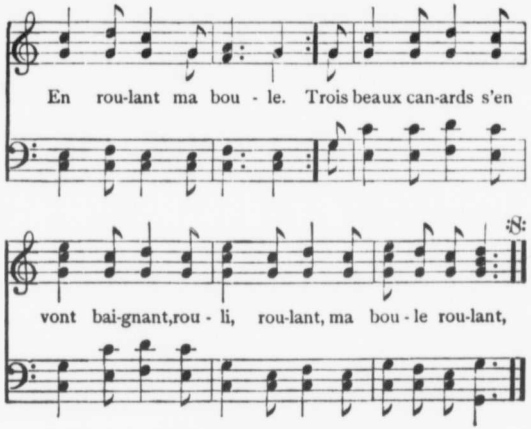
varying voices of this solitary stream, than is the song of Isabeau and her unfortunate admirer.

But while we are still discussing the tragedy and its quaint musical setting, the guides (perhaps with counteractive measures in view) break out into a rollicking air, in keeping time with which the poles click rapidly and the boats speed merrily along. Soloist and chorus follow each other much as in the song of Isabeau.

With many repetitions of the theme and to



ST. ANNE OF THE MOUNTAINS



the almost incessant rolling of the ball, we are told of a pond where three beautiful ducks are bathing, when calamity overtakes one of their number.

The king's son—who is out on a hunting expedition—arrives on the scene. He points his large silver gun at the black duck, but, by a species of reflex markmanship of which he does not seem to have the monopoly, he kills the white one. (*Visa le noir, tua le blanc*).

"O king's son, thou art wicked," exclaims the duck's owner. "Wicked to have killed my white duck!

"From under his wing, he loses his blood; from out of his eyes come diamonds, and from his beak, gold and silver. His feathers are flying in the wind.

"But three ladies are picking up the feathers, and from them will be made a camp bed where all passers may rest."

"C'est pour en faire un lit de camp,
En roulant ma boule
Pour y coucher tous les passants,
Rouli roulant, ma boule roulant,
En roulant ma boule."

This is another song, to attempt to translate which is iconoclastic, and which, separated from its hearty accompaniment, has neither charm nor interest.

As we pass among quiet pools, salmon after salmon is indicated to us, but no particular activity characterizes their movements on the occasion of this second excursion.

"They are lazy and heavy now," remarks a guide. "They know that the law is on and that they are protected, so they dare to take their naps even in broad daylight."

"But what if, through no seeking on the

part of the fisherman, quite by accident, let us say, a salmon were to attach himself to a hook at this forbidden season, what would happen then?" we query.

"Ah, if the *salmon* were to break the law," replies the guide, "surely the fisherman could not be held responsible for the offence, and on the salmon's own head would fall the consequences of his misdeed!"

Suddenly, in a still, sheltered pool a little in advance of us, a widening circle is seen. It is followed by the appearance of a second and a third spreading ring. Then a shimmering body leaps into the air.

"The trout are rising," exclaim the sportsmen; but we note that the statement—though made with zest—is not accompanied with the excitement and exultation which, on the earlier outing, announced our approach to salmon neighborhoods.

Nevertheless, lines are soon whizzing through the air and reels are again rattling gleefully, and, now from the boats, again from the shore; now among the rapids, again in quiet waters, sometimes while treading the midstream path, the sport is carried on.

But the cruel gaff does not appear in these

operations, for a landing net comes to the sportsman's aid when the fish has been won and brought to its captor's neighborhood.

This milder method of securing the prey meets with our approval, and even secures the patronage of some feminine members of the expedition.

Mosquitoes and flies make their presence felt to-day, though not to any great extent, and the midday fires which our guides build as we halt by the riverside, serve a double purpose. Their smoke rids us of the winged pests, and their flames and embers cook our repast.

What a charm there is about a meal prepared and partaken of under such delightful auspices. The beauty of our surroundings, the sense of freedom which their largeness and remoteness inspire, the absence of conventional trammels and superficialities—these and many other wholesome influences combine to make our impromptu meal the most successful of banquets.

Here, as throughout the entire journey to-day, there is one lack however. The bird orchestra is silent, for the song season is over.

It is with renewed interest and admiration that we watch the skillful guides as they unpack the provisions and proceed with their practical preparations.

The banner fisherman of the day generously donates to the dinner the string of trout which forms the pièce de résistance of the meal; and as the sweet, pink, smoking-hot morsels are laid before us—their jewel-studded casings all crisp and brown from contact with the sizzling frying pan—we no longer wonder at good old Isaac Walton's almost devout rhapsodies on the subject of certain newly caught and artistically cooked fish.

When testing the flavor of the Grande Riviére trout, we exclaim, as did that Prince of anglers, anent a pike in its perfection of preparation: "This dish of meat is too good for any but anglers and very honest men."

Snatches of song and merry chat keep pace with the progress of the delectable meal, and when appetites have been satisfied, surplus provisions stowed away, and camp fires carefully extinguished, we again take to our skiffs and resume our up-the-river journey, in course of which the morning's pleas-

ant happenings are repeated. There is fishing, singing, loitering, shore-investigating and forest reconnoitering, and at last we arrive at the camp which represents our shelter for the night.

A little farther on, the stream in its windings brings one suddenly to the sight of the comparatively near Shickshocks, though six or seven miles distant they still are. But the vision of the unveiling of the solemn, lonely mountains will not be ours till the journey is resumed and the cloud-crowned monarchs are bathed by the morning sun.

Lonely enough the deserted camp appears as we view it from our skiffs. The sun has already disappeared behind the forest-clad hills, and the chill of a late August nightfall makes itself felt. The voices of the stream are minor-keyed now, and strange shadows brood over the mysterious country that stretches off toward those solitary regions where the Wild holds undisputed sway.

But it is with the speed of magic that gloom is banished and a transformation scene effected. The empty skiffs are drawn up on the beach while rugs, blankets and provisions are being transferred to the little lodge whose

doors now stand invitingly open, and from whose every window gleam welcoming lights.

Next the crackling of a lively fire is heard, and soon, from kitchen precincts, steal the most appetizing odors. Nor have we long to wait till we are summoned to that genial centre—the dining-room table. A centre where glows the brightest of all the lights and where forest nosegays nod their fragrant welcomes.

And the feast?

It consists of smoking hot coffee, and smoking hot trout; of potatoes still singing the frying-pan scherzo; of hot buttered toast, of hot pancakes, of tasty galettes. Indeed it represents a genuine triumph on the part of our guides; and a more satisfied or more light-hearted company than ours it would be hard to find.

But suddenly something happens. An occurrence commonplace and frequent enough in the commonplace world where we have hitherto lived, but of unusual significance in this place of remoteness and solitude; and especially impressive in the hours of darkness.

A guide from the outer staff knocks at the door and announces that some unknown persons are approaching.

"Somebody coming? What can it mean," we exclaim; and in less than a minute the dining room is deserted and the whole company is assembled at the riverside.

Now all eyes are directed toward the distant, down-stream point where dances a lantern's light.

"Holà, Holà, vous autres. Quelle nouvelle apportez-vous?"

But mocking echoes are the only answer.

"Holà, Holà," cry the guides again and again, while nearer and nearer flutters the will o' the wisp light, and sounds of steady poling begin to be distinguishable.

Answering shouts are now heard, and finally there reach us with unmistakable distinctness, the four simple words which reveal the object of the expedition.

"On apporte des télégrammes."

With the announcement of the strange skiff's approach, vague fears had fastened themselves on the ever-anxious feminine mind. Fears which assumed the proportions of certainties, during the latter moments of this apparently interminable waiting time.

But it was with apprehensions regarding

business exigencies and interferences that the masculine brow grew gloomy. For as word had been left that none but urgent messages were to be sent after us, our sportsmen naturally interpreted the intrusion as a menace to their well-earned, and—at best—all too limited respite from business thraldom.

However, as is so often the case with threatened evil, our speculations were all astray and our fears proved groundless. It was through a misunderstanding that some harmless, unimportant messages were allowed to make their way to us. In the end, the misunderstanding even turned to our advantage, for, through the error, our party of guides was reinforced by two sturdy villagers with powerful lungs and good song repertories. Thus two lusty voices were added to the chorus with which the forests echoed as we gathered around the fire at the close of the banquet: the feast so alarmingly interrupted but so happily resumed.

And such a camp fire!

Out on the stony beach at a point where the river repeats the glowing picture, is the site selected for the conflagration.

A huge accumulation of logs, (more than

a generous cord is represented), flanked and surmounted by a heterogeneous mass of forest refuse, glows and roars and sends forth myriads of sparks, and yields a fragrance in which the aroma of the green wood and the curling, sputtering birch bark, blends with the perfume of snapping resin-charged boughs—spruce, tamarack and balsam fir—and the sweet faint odor of moist earth and leaf-mould.

In the light of this beautiful holocaust, the neighboring forests stand out illumined and friendly. But sterner, darker, more mysterious and more threatening than ever, become by contrast the remoter wilds.

With faces turned toward the raging fire, and with wraps so disposed as to shield us from the chilly forests which lie behind and on either side of us, we watch the varying phases of the Rembrandt picture.

The guides flit in and out, in search of fuel for the hungry flames. But, in the midst of the activity, a fun-loving boatman halts and carefully examines the glowing pile's dimensions. Next, with a daring that makes us shudder, and an agility that fills us with amazement, he steps on the end of an outjut-

ting log and vaults clean over the fire.

Incited thereto, perhaps, by the horror and wonder of the feminine onlookers, a second agile guide repeats the feat. He in turn is followed by another daring companion; then another, and another, until the ring is complete and a circle of guides revolves through the flames.

A game of leap frog follows; and, in its execution, the merry-makers frolic around the dangerous centre with the unconcern of dancers on the cool sward.

But a request for a song induces a quieter mood, and the guides join the group seated round the fire.

The first response is from a soloist, and the selection, one which has been sung and encored many a time during this happy holiday.

In tones of melting tenderness and pathos and with gestures indicative of great sentiment and emotion, the virtuoso proceeds. So plaintive, so touching is his rendering, that one almost loses sight of his very practical theme which is simply an iteration and reiteration of the statement that cabbage soup is made in the soup kettle.

And now a story, a story, is the request

from all sides, and in response, in simple but eloquent words, one of the guides, Joe, presents to us the picture of another campfire; another flame-illumined circle of which he was a member.

It is the spring season, and a band of north shore Indians, just returned from their long and terrible hunting expeditions in the interior, have assembled to tell each other of the winter's experiences.

Hardships have been the universal lot and one by one the savages rise and relate stories of hunger, and cold, and peril, and loss.

The listeners sit cross-legged on the ground; their eyes directed toward the fire; their pipes wedged between their teeth; their lips opening only to emit clouds of smoke; and during the greater part of the recital there is little to suggest that the narrative possesses the slightest interest for them.

But not a word falls unheeded, and now and then the stolid listeners are roused even to the pitch of expressing their sympathy. When fate has been particularly cruel, and loss and suffering have been almost unendurable; or perhaps when some unusual deed of prowess has been performed, or some great

victory scored,—then from the approving, or sympathetic circle will issue a series of monosyllabic exclamations corresponding to "Yes, yes; yes, yes," while heads nod wisely and eyes seek the speaker's face. This is all that is required to convince the sufferer or the hero that his companions are in closest touch with him.

But the exclamations which greet the story's close are the last comments which he will hear on the subject. A single recital of woes must suffice. Once related the incident is looked upon as closed, and the painful memories must not be revived.

"Ah, had the ladies but been present with their cameras," exclaims Joe as he proceeds to relate another of his north shore experiences, "what wonderful pictures they might have secured!"

But now it was no longer a question of shore dwellers, but of Indians who inhabited the remote forest country many miles back from the St. Lawrence. How the intelligence reached them it would be difficult to say, but by some chain of communication which had its starting point at the coast, this distant settlement learned that on such and such a day,

a strange boat would halt at the tributary's mouth near whose source they dwelt. A boat which travelled neither by the aid of poles nor oars, nor paddles, nor yet by means of sails; but by the force of water, heated till it burst into steam. And this marvellous thing they determined to see.

"Ah but it was the strange sight that we beheld when they appeared! Every man, woman and child was dressed in the hide of a caribou. The animal's skin was put on as a garment (and the sole garment it was,) so that if an Indian chose to walk on all fours, he would have the appearance of a caribou. These garments once donned are not apt to be taken off until they are worn out, or outgrown—(though the smaller hides are used for children only) and a suit lasts years and years: perhaps even a lifetime.

"To many of the hides the heads were still attached while some of the company even wore horns. In cases where the head was preserved, the wearers were not only furnished with an entire suit of clothes, but with a hood as well, one sees.

"So down toward the river came these strangely attired people; these caribou walk-

LONELY ENOUGH

ing on their hind legs. With wonder, awe, curiosity and much suspicion they drew nearer and nearer to the steamboat which was now resting in a little harbor. They had come quite near indeed and were eagerly discussing the strange object when, 'Let's give them a salute,' whispered one of the expedition.

"A loud shrill toot was next heard, but at the first shriek of the whistle the savages took to their heels! Back to the wilds they flew—large caribou, medium-sized and small, all vanishing as if by the power of the evil one, and soon not a hide was to be seen. It is supposed that they never halted until they reached their settlement, nor do I know that they ever again ventured to the coast.

"Ah could the ladies but have photographed that flying company!"

Now the fire burns low and the faces of our companions show but fitfully in the light of the dying flames. Silence has fallen on the company and the dark outer world is encroaching on our circle.

Suddenly the little Mexican dog starts, looks searchingly towards the deep recesses

and utters a low, threatening growl.

"Ah la fine petite bête! She hears something. Some prowling creature; a moose perhaps. Shall we call?"

Soon a beautiful sheet of white birch is twisted into a gigantic horn and through it is uttered a wild, roaring, bleating challenge —a challenge which always closes with a strange grunt or a series of grunts.

Again and again the woods ring with the call of the guides, but only the echoes answer. The forest itself is more silent, more solemn, more mysterious than ever.

Once more silence falls on the company. A drowsy silence it is, for the gayer mood has passed and the hour for rest has come.

Then good nights are uttered, the company breaks up and we betake ourselves to our shelter, there to sleep as do care-free, light-hearted little children.

But one sound reaches us as we linger on the borders of the dream country. A voice floats over to us from the cabin where the men lodge. It is the refrain of Isabeau.

Sur le bord de l'eau
Sur le bord vaisseau.

Then silence, forgetfulness, sleep.

XII

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

IT was perhaps midway between the time of our earlier fishing excursion and the expedition which brought us to September's eve, that there came to us an awakening, disturbing message: one whose warning would not be ignored, strive as we might to disregard it.

The atmosphere was charged with it, the clouds showed it forth, and both sea and winds proclaimed it loudly.

Secure in the warmth and the brightness and all the other genial influences of summer, we had gone heedlessly on our way, as if our happy holiday were to last forever. But on the day of the warning, there was a sharp sudden change, and even while August was but half spent, a frosty breath made itself felt.

"It is cold to-day; cold, cold, cold," said an aged villager on the morning of the awakening day. "Autumn will soon be here."

"Let the ladies pay no heed to him," said

a vigorous young matron through whose veins the warm life blood coursed rapidly. "It is the chill of life's autumn which *le pauvre vieux* feels. Let the ladies have no fear. Summer will return. To-morrow will be warm again."

And the morrow was warm, and summer returned for a time; but our sense of security had vanished, and no reassurance either on the part of the season or of the villagers, could make us forget the untimely visitor with the frosty message.

With early September comes the fulfillment of his subtle promise.

Bright, clear, but almost crisp is the atmosphere now. Brisk walks replace the seashore loiterings. Even in the sunshine or in the hut's shelter, we have no fancy for lingering.

Night encroaches more and more on the province of day, and six o'clock, or earlier, sees the villagers comfortably housed. Gathered around their cheery fires instead of assembled on their galleries or in sociable little roadside clusters.

Immortelles are now but snowy promises; bunchberries snuggle down among browning ferns, and the hills, so recently greening, are

taking on autumn's richest, deepest tints.

Potatoes are being harvested; a few, little hands are already mittened, and shoes and stockings are de rigueur.

In their fireside talks people canvass the probable time of the last steamer's latest passing, or the earliest dates on which the Shickshocks have been known to don their white caps.

There is mention of banking the houses; of bringing out warm clothing, and of looking after wood supplies.

Bears have come down from the forest and have invaded our farmer's sheep fold—their store of summer provisions is at an end.

There are unspeakable glories in the day-lit sky; but wild, awe-inspiring glories they are. Dark cloud-fringes dip into the sea and the sun goes down with a Dies Irae effect. Sometimes—by a strange contrast—a golden belt will encircle the horizon and mellow gleams will rest on village and lowland; while angry clouds will roll up from behind the hills, and lurid lights will play around their tops and the great dome seems about to accomplish the destruction of the universe.

The surf pounds madly against the rocky shore. All the sea voices are sullen and deep toned, and the curl of the crested waves is cold and merciless.

But the night skies!

In the beautiful dark depths the stars glow with such a radiance as none but frosty seasons know, and the Northern lights are tinged with flame and red and gold.

They dance, and shimmer, and wave, and play, and come and go; and now we know why the French have bestowed upon them the name of Les Marionettes.

"Ah could the ladies but behold them in Winter. Then they sway so rapidly and merrily that their swish and crackle can sometimes be heard."

Winter?

With the very mention of that terrible season our thoughts turn longingly to our own dear land. A land whose September is a beautiful modified summer, whose October is golden-glowed, whose November is not unfriendly, and whose worst winter is genial when compared with the Arctic season which this region promises.

And we realize that at last we have come

to the parting of the ways.

When September has lived out half its days and the Shickshocks are white-crowned and the little pools ice coated, we bid farewell to the village and the hardy, kindly peninsular folk and turn our faces homeward.

"See!" we exclaim, when the ninety mile drive has been accomplished and we are again nearing the village of Little Metis.

"See! There is a welcome sight."

And the sight indicated is the brace of glistening steel rails which mark the path of the iron horse.

Nevertheless, it is with sincere gratitude and hearty good will that we echo the farewell of our village escorts.

A l'été prochain.