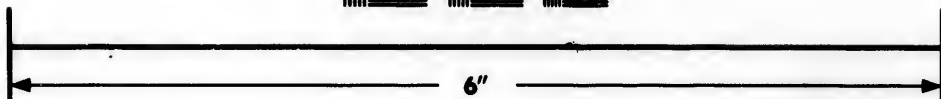
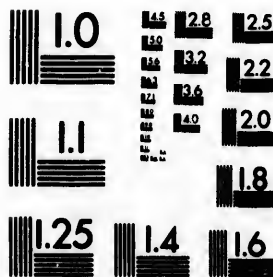


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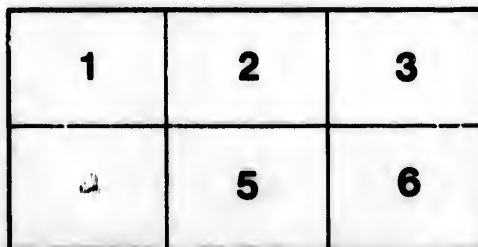
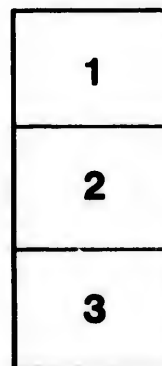
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My Canadian
Sweetheart ;

OR,

A. P. R. M.
AUNT TABBY'S SUMMER BOARDERS

A STORY OF LAKE MEMPHREMAGOG.

ISSUED BY THE

Connecticut Valley & Passumpsic Railroads

1888.

WRITTEN, ILLUSTRATED AND PRINTED BY THE
LIBERTY PRINTING CO.,
107 LIBERTY STREET, NEW YORK.

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MY CANADIAN SWEETHEART;

OR,

AUNT TABBY'S SUMMER BOARDERS.



ON an afternoon in early June I came home from down town to find my mother in tears and my two sisters in a condition of dignified but unmitigated wrath.

The innocent cause was a copy of the *Tribune*, which my mother held in her clenched hand.

"What's the matter, anybody dead? Has your banker defaulted? Has the fashion editor for-

gotten to mention our last night's party?" I exclaimed, in alarm.

"Worse than that," sobbed my fond parent; "read for yourself." It was a modest little five-line notice, hidden away in the wilderness of the *Tribune's* advertising pages, to wit :

Summer Boarders Wanted.—A few select persons will be received at Twin Islands Farm House, Lake Memphremagog. Address for terms and send references to Mrs. Tabitha Cobb, Newport, Vermont.

"Well," said I, throwing the paper on the table; "I don't see anything very terrible about that. Now, I think it is a right jolly idea for the old lady to amuse herself with."

"Gerald Cobb! what do you mean?" cried my mother, jumping to

her feet in a most tragic style. "Have you *no* respect for the family dignity? To think that I should live to have a *marked copy* of a paper sent me with such a notice! Sent, I suppose, by one of that jealous clique we did not include among our guests last night."

Now, to be sure there was no pressing reason why Aunt Tabby should take boarders. Why! she was worth a cool half million, but she was as self-willed and contrary as you can possibly believe, and had no more regard for the "family dignity" of the Cobbs, than she had for the opinion of mankind in general, which was very little. She was, however, a gentle and delightful old lady (and not so very old either) when she had her own way, and I was supposed to be her favorite nephew and presumptive heir.

It was rather strange though, that she should get the idea of taking boarders into her head, and the more I pondered over it the more queer it seemed. It mystified and interested me.

"There's one thing you must do right away, Gerry," said my mother, somewhat quieted. "I want you to get that odious article out of the paper, and then you must go to Vermont and see if Tabitha has gone clean crazy."

"As for the first, mother, you will see that this paper is ten days old, and no doubt the advertisement is stopped by its own limitation ere this, and as for the other mission, I will be only too happy to get a chance to visit Twin Islands once more."

Thus it happened that the following night found me *en route* for Northern Vermont.

My Aunt Tabitha was the well preserved widow of a successful Canadian banker and politician. She owned a pleasant home in Montreal, which was the centre of a most charming coterie of literary and artistic people, who knew and admired the frank, headstrong, masculine old lady. She also owned Twin Islands Farmhouse, a most romantically situated place upon the shores of that loveliest of lakes, Memphremagog, dear to my youthful memory. It had been some years since any of our family had visited Twin Islands, as we had been abroad a large portion of the time.

The White Mountain Express, leaving New York in the morning, keeps along the picturesque and populous shores of the Sound, turning northward at classic New Haven, and meeting the broad Connecticut River at Hartford. For the distance of one hundred miles northward the Connecticut River Railroad is laid beside the shores of the beautiful river, now upon one side and anon upon the other.

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The scenery throughout is peculiarly beautiful and varied.

To the wide awake business man a grand succession of industrial centres present themselves, mills, factories, shops; a very world of busy men and women, whose handiwork goes to every quarter of the world.

Hartford, Springfield, Chicopee, Holyoke, Northampton, Greenfield, Brattleboro and Bellows Falls, are the chief jewels upon this necklace of thrift, while intermediate are scores of lesser communities, clean, bright and happy. The Connecticut River leaves its native hills away up in the northern extreme of New Hampshire, and flowing down past the rugged western spurs of the White Mountains, forms the boundary of two great States, bisects two others, and finally loses itself in the sound at a distance of four hundred miles from Lake Connecticut, its source.

The city of Hartford, where we first meet the downflowing river, is certainly one of the most attractive of American cities.

The shapely gilded dome of the new State capitol reflects from its burnished flank the rays of the midday sun. The broad, well paved streets reach away with charming disregard of the cardinal points of the compass into the loveliest of suburbs. City Park is the pride of the residents. Among other great industries of the city is that of the Colt's Fire Arms Company.

Springfield, Mass., is the next important point, and a passing glimpse of its busy streets and shady avenues of homes justifies the reputation it enjoys as a delightful place of residence. Springfield enjoys a large income due to the presence of a national arsenal. One of the most striking natural features along the line is Mt. Holyoke, a fine bluff suggestive of the abrupt elevations one meets upon the upper Mississippi River. Here the peaceful river winds amid rich meadows dotted with wide spreading elms. These are the storied Northampton meads. From the summit of Holyoke, attained by an inclined plane, a grand view, revealing one of the richest sections in the Bay State, is enjoyed. In the same vicinity is Mt. Tom, also a notable elevation. South Hadley, at this point, is an ideal New England village, very popular as a summering place. Next comes scholastic Amherst, Hatfield, Whatley, and the Deerfields. Two affluents, the Fall and Green Rivers, pour their waters into the Connecticut at Greenfield.

At last, Vermont, with its rugged hills, homely ways, and splendid thrift! Brattleboro, Bellows Falls, where the mills are so closely clustered, and later, White River Junction, one of the busiest of New England railway centres. Lastly, Wells River, and good-by to the grand old Connecticut! for here we take the famous Passumpsic route.



CRYSTAL LAKE.

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At this point I must explain that I have often been overtaken, while traveling alone, with a quite unreasonable, yet persistent desire to diverge from my straight line of progress and plain path of duty. So strongly has this feeling borne upon my mind, that I have often yielded to the tempter and in every instance have had cause to congratulate myself that I had done so. Once I thus unconsciously avoided a fearful accident, and again was saved by my good angel from robbery in a lonely roadway.

As we sped northward along the superb iron pathway which is laid beside the storied Connecticut, I was seized with a strong desire to diverge to Boston; why or wherefore I knew not, but I reflected that a day of delay more or less in my arrival at Twin Islands would not seriously affect the impending calamity to the family honor of the Cobbs, and I therefore consulted my "Pathfinder" guide, and determined to leave the northward bound train at Wells River Junction, and taking the night express over the Montreal and Boston Air Line, thus reach the "Hub" early in the morning.

Well, in this case, my good mentor led me straight into the arms of Egbert Revere, one of my best friends and a rising young artist, just the fellow, above all others, I cared to see, and as his identification with the events to follow has much to do with shaping my story, I again saw why I had been drawn to Boston, certainly so, when, after listening to the outline of my mission, he begged to be permitted to accompany me; and to thus secure sketches of some of the scenery I had described to him for his portfolios. With the readiness of a true Bohemian, he promised to start with me the following morning.

And now the reader will please suppose us to be aboard the morning express, leaving Boston via Concord, over what is known in railway circles as the White Mountains Division of the Boston & Lowell R.R. (or Montreal & Boston Air Line, the train being generally known as the White Mountains & Montreal Express). No day among the thirty with which the girdle of June is set could possibly be more lovely than this bright and breezy morn.

The wide-awake green and white little towns along the Boston & Lowell Railroad (the first link in our chain of travel), never looked more contented and inviting than now.

The long vistas of the shady streets leading away from the stations were gay with handsome equipages and bright costumes. In New England, June is a gala month.

The fields just bursting into the young harvest, the dogwood blossoms shining from dusky glades like stars in a midnight sky; the varied

greens of the woodlands; the blushing kalmias amid the rocks upon steep hill sides; these, and a thousand other manifestations of Nature's awakening after her long winter's torpidity, united in a pæan of praise for the return of the splendid New England Summer. None could more acutely appreciate these beauties than two young men in perfect health and overflowing with animal spirits, let loose from the burden of the social treadmill work after a whole winter of it.

Our story has to do chiefly with that portion of New England which lies in Northern Vermont, along the picturesque valley of the Passumpsic, a tributary of the Connecticut, and upon the shores of Memphremagog. I may be pardoned, therefore, for passing lightly over that portion of our route traversed during the morning hours. We had passed Lowell with the hum of its myriad spindles greeting our ears like the music of bees; we had met Nashua and Concord; then kept along the deeply indented shores of Lake Winnepesaukee, stopping for a moment at its port of Weir's Landing, and we had dined at Plymouth, N. H., in the convenient Pemigewasset House, and then at Wells River Junction we had met a contingent of travelers coming up from New York via the Connecticut valley to join our train at this point.

This brief synopsis of the route from Boston to Wells River may lead the reader to believe that there is little of interest and charm to be seen while the train, composed of elegant Parlor Car and Coaches, speeds along at a forty mile per hour rate over a perfectly smooth road-bed. To avoid this injustice we must describe some of the beautiful panorama which we pass en route. From Lowell to Concord the Merrimack River, now gently flowing through grand old meadows clad in the richest of green, dotted with comfortable, large farm houses, and again bursting forth through rugged rocky banks, over boulders, and forming picturesque cascades, entertains our vision. Leaving Concord, the capital of the Granite State, we pass, in succession, the pretty towns of Laconia, Tilton and Lake Village, beyond which point we skirt the beautiful Lake Winnepesaukee. Stopping at Weir's, the landing on the lake, we had a splendid view of the island-dotted lake, encircled by the outrunners of the Franconia Range. At Weir's there is a fine hotel and cottages offering ample accommodation for the tourist. The next point of interest is Plymouth, in the Pemigewasset Valley, a most romantically located New England village, with a splendid hotel, the Pemigewasset House, at which our train stopped for dinner. From Plymouth to Wells River the traveler enjoys a succession of delightful views of the White Mountain Range and fertile

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picturesque valleys bordering along sparkling rivulets and dotted with neat looking rural homes.

Long before reaching Wells River, my lively and talented friend, Revere, had met friends, a gay party of Bostonians, bound upon a jaunt into the White Mountains, and I had yielded to his urgent solicitations to join them, and thus we purloined two more days; and again, partly, I will confess, from the dictations of my good mentor, I swerved from the path of duty. What would my mother have said could she have known my inconstancy to the family honor and dignity!



PASSUMPSIC RIVER.

We visited Fabyans; the Crawford House, at the head of the magnificent White Mountain notch; made the thrilling ascent of Mt. Washington; then dropped in on the splendid Maplewood Hotel near Bethlehem, and finally bade adieu to Revere's pleasant Bostonian friends at the Profile House, and regained the line of our northward course at Wells River.



BURKE MOUNTAIN, VT.

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At St. Johnsbury, the beautiful little Passumpsic River came down from the mountains to cross our path; and now our way led for many miles along its dashing waters, steadily climbing the hills toward the great divide near Burke Mountain, upon the well-known and picturesque route which takes its name from this winding little river of the Green Mountain State.

At Lyndonville, we passed the general offices of the railroad company, and fifteen minutes later the station of West Burke, where the finest view of the mountain pass is attainable.

I had always loved this beautiful region, and now, after travel with my mother and sisters amid many of the grandest scenes of our own land and abroad, I found my zest for each familiar outlook as we sped along in no wise abated.

To my companion all was new and charming.

"To think," said he "that all this beautiful region has been rioting in a perfect bewilderment of the picturesque, and here I have only just found it out. The 'Passumpsic region' should be a household term in every studio."

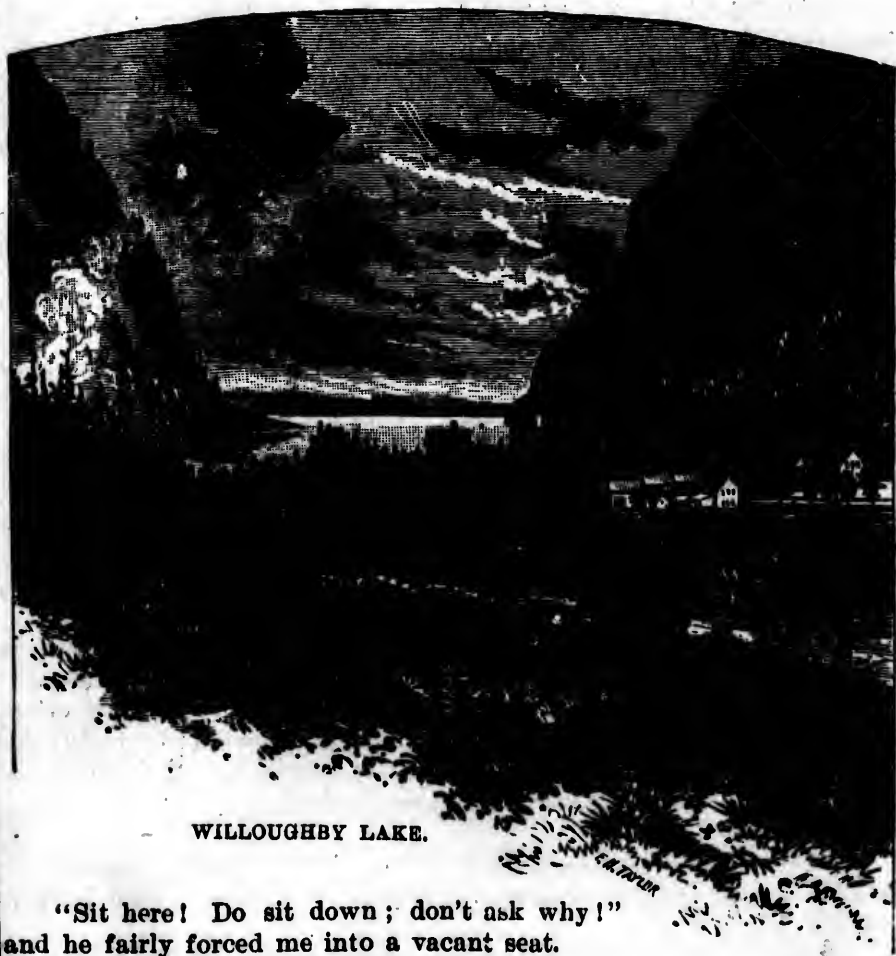
Revere besought me to return from Newport the following morning, and join him in a regular sketch hunt through these hills.

I was obliged to remind him that we were (or at least, I was) upon a high and holy mission for the rescue of the family dignity, and that delays were dangerous. I must see Aunt "Tabby" without delay. Why! some of those dreaded boarders might possibly be upon this very train. If any of them managed to get away, and ensconced themselves at Twin Islands before I could reach the scene, how could I ever face my mother?

That we might better view the fine outline of Burke Mountain, we had left our car and passed through the parlor coach from New York to the rear platform.

From this point northward all the waters flow toward the great basin of the St. Lawrence, gathering themselves for a time in such great pools as Memphremagog and Massawippi beyond, and then wind down the pastoral French Canadian country through scenes as strange and un-American as those reserved thousands of miles from our matter-of-fact centres of population.

At West Burke we are but an hour's ride from Newport, the pretty town at the American end of Lake Memphremagog. As we turned to retrace our steps my companion gripped my arm with the strength of an athlete.



WILLOUGHBY LAKE.

"Sit here! Do sit down; don't ask why!"
and he fairly forced me into a vacant seat.

"Now, look!"

His gaze was directed toward a beautiful sleeper, a girl of perhaps twenty years, whose shapely head was rested upon a pillow across the arm of a seat facing us.

"Heavens, what a pose!" exclaimed the artist rapturously. "Why, man, look at her! I've been trying for months to get a study like that. You cannot simulate the unconscious sweetness of sleep. This will be my academy picture, and a prize, too."

Now, to a man like Revere, whose art instincts grew stronger as his

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life experience broadened, there is nothing on earth which so appeals to the pure sensibilities, as the face of a lovely woman, and when does the soul more clearly mirror its innate purity than in the quiet repose of sleep?

As a general thing, I did not approve of Revere's piratical habit of stealing the profiles of fair ones; encountered all without a by-your-leave; but he would have failed of his art indeed had he not whipped out his omnipresent sketch book, and with a hand long practical in the secret of "sketching on the rail" transferred to its pages the graceful contour of the sleeper with fidelity and spirit. He managed too to avoid the attention of the passengers.

The lady seemed to be traveling without escort, which added to the pleasant mystery which surrounded her.

Revere's pencil lingered lovingly over the outline he had made, now deepening a shadow, or adding a forgotten detail of drapery, and he had not yet satisfied his critical spirit when the whistle sounded our approach to Newport. As we arose to regain our own coach I encountered the scowling face of a dark skinned Frenchman peering through bead-like eyes at the sketch Revere had made.

With a cat-like agility he sprang to the artist's side and hissed into his ear:

"Monsieur is clever; but he has been caught. It is an insult to the lady. I will find and punish him, *sacre!* not now, but in time. He will remember!"

Before we could recover from the surprise created by this attack, the wiry Frenchman had gained the rear platform and leaped from the train, now slowly approaching the station.

Revere, after recovering his breath, was disposed to regard the affair as a good joke.

"Only a crazy *habitant!*" he said. "If he was interested in our 'sleeping beauty' why did he jump the train?"

But I felt differently. There was a most ugly look in that fellow's face, and yet it hardly seemed possible that one so fair and manifestly innocent should be in any way allied with such a vicious rogue as the man who had attacked Revere.



Newport-upon-Memphremagog is a pleasant hillside village, with pretty white cottages. A street of stores and shops along the water and a fine large hotel, the well-known Magog House, close upon the margin of the lake. Waiting steamers are clustered at the wharf, and the surface of the lake is dotted with fishermen and pleasure seekers. Behind the village, crowning the steep hill, is a fine point of outlook upon the far-reaching lake, which stretches for twenty miles away up among the Canadian hills.

From Newport the Passumpsic Railroad continues along the eastern shore of the lake some distance, passing along the picturesque margin of Lake Massawippi in Canada, and continuing to the thriving town of Sherbrooke, where it forms a junction with the Quebec Central Railway, leading through the forests and down the historic Chaudiere Valley to Quebec.

The South-eastern Railway also merges with the Passumpsic Route at

Newport, and north-bound passengers destined for Montreal continue in the same cars around the head of the lake in front of the town and upon a gradually ascending grade westward of the lake, through many picturesque provincial scenes, to the Canadian metropolis, distant less than four hours from Newport.

Revere and I emerged from the throng at the station, having rescued our impedimenta and placed it in the care of the porter, and waited vainly for a possible glimpse of the face which had so charmed us.

The New York car, however, was whisked away toward Montreal, bearing its fair burden away from us all, unconscious of the sketch which had been stolen from her beautiful features. To our great surprise the

form of the Frenchman appeared at the rear door of the coach as the train passed out of view, and evidently recognizing us, he waved a sardonic saluté of adieu, greatly to our discomfiture.

I felt a strong presentiment that we should meet him again, but how little either of us dreamed under what changed conditions it would be.



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MEMPHREMAGOG HOUSE, NEWPORT, VT.



As "Twin Islands" was located some miles down the lake and not upon the regular steamer route, we were to choose between taking a carriage over a winding mountain road, sending word to her ladyship, my aunt, to dispatch the *Glide*, her excellent steam yacht, for us, or to create an "ashen breeze" and propel ourselves to our destination. As both were good oarsmen we decided upon the latter alternative and proposed remaining at the Magog House, leaving at an early hour in the morning.

There was a "sound of revelry by night" at the Magog House, Although quite early in the season, a large party of travelers had already congregated, as tourists very generally stop over here for a day or so *en route* between the "States" and the Dominion. There is, too, a large class of persons who make Newport a regular summer home for some weeks every year, for the sake of its pure mountain atmosphere, fine fishing and romantic environment.

It was doubly for the sake of avoiding the crowd and gaiety, of which we certainly had enjoyed a surfeit in the cities, and for the better enjoyment of the music at a distance, that Revere and I took a skiff, and, rowing far out upon the sleeping surface, floated for an idle hour of delicious repose.

It was such a time as comes to us but rarely in this work-a-day-hurrying world. It brings exalted thoughts and ambitions to one who has yet the world before him, and peace to the gray-haired man whose battles are already fought. It is the dulcet hour of retrospect as well as of resolve for the future; for meditation rather than words. Behind us the twinkling lamps of the village, with the central flood of light from the hotel, were caught up and drawn out upon the mirrored surface in attenuated bars of gold. The sweet strains of the waltz, softened by distance, floated toward us like the elusive strains of an Æolian harp. It was dark, and yet bright starlight. The gems of heaven glowed and glimmered as I have seen them in the latitudes where the southern cross hangs high above the horizon.

Presently there was a sound of oars. We had drifted near a rocky point. The dim outlines of a barge containing three men came into view. They ceased rowing and we heard them conversing.

"It was here Jacques was to meet us. We are early."

"Better early than late; there's much to be done, and he has far to go," growled the man in the stern.

We were now in the deep shadow of a rock and had therefore escaped detection; we prudently held our breath. Why should these men seek a rendezvous at night?

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Now, far away down the lake, under the shadow of Province Island, there came a triple flash of light.

"Ha! the signal! He will be here soon," whispered another of the men. "Let us go further, I do not like these shores, they are dangerous to any who have secrets."

"As for that, there are some secrets which can be buried below the water, if it comes to the worst. Beware of your own loose tongue when you get drunk, Henri!" chided the helmsman, who had a curiously hoarse voice.

The quick nervous stroke of a coming canoe was now easily heard.

Then a whispered hail; a transfer of goods; a long conference, chiefly in Canadian *patois*, in which the helmsman with the hoarse whisper took a leading part; then the boats parted, each moving swiftly by the route it had come.

Revere and I breathed more freely.

"Well!" said my companion with a nervous laugh, "if I only knew what those fellows were jabbering about, I'd be better satisfied as to the size of our little adventure. Glad they didn't catch us, anyhow."

Thanks to my early years along this lake, when I had spent many a day with the French-Canadian fishers of Magog, I had gained a fair knowledge of the *patois*. I learned, therefore, from the confusion of the whispered conference, these points: Smuggling, which had been in its decline along this frontier for some years, was now to be pushed upon a bolder scale.

The "Captain" had returned. He had been seen upon the outskirts of the village that very day in the guise of a traveler. He had been gone several years. He had left important instructions for a rendezvous down the lake. Valuable goods might be expected in a few days. He had gone to Montreal.

"Why did he not stop beyond the village and see us here?" was asked by one.

"Well, if you must know, it's my opinion there's a lady to be looked after."

"Bah! that is the Captain's only weak point," replied the man with the hoarse whisper. "Besides, he will do better to come in at the other end of the lake. It's safer; these Yankees do not sleep."

We rowed back to the village safely in the wake of the smugglers, occupied with our thoughts.

"Gerald, my boy, I have a theory. That pugnacious Frenchman upon the train, and the 'Captain' who has come back to his dis-

reputable crew, are one and the same. Our 'Sleeping Beauty' is the lady in the case."

"Right!" I exclaimed, jumping to my feet in great excitement. "You've hit it!" and I wondered that the idea had not struck us both sooner.

"Then we shall hear from him again. He will keep his promise."

"And from *her*, let us hope," said I.

AT TWIN ISLANDS.

"Yes. I know all about it. You needn't say a word. You folks have an idea that I can live here all my blessed life in solitary state. Now tell me, Gerald, how long is it since I've seen any of you at Twin Islands? 'Four years,' yes, '*four years.*' Well! if my own sister and nieces and nephew can't come once in four years to see me, why, it's time to hunt up somebody who will. That's why I want boarders. I'll donate all I make to the 'Fresh Air Fund' for your children of the slums. I sent that marked copy of the paper to Martha" (my mother's name), "and I am glad it has stirred her up. It will do her good. Ha! ha!" and my jolly old aunt leaned back in her chair laughing with great enjoyment over the pathetic picture I had drawn of the scene when my mother had read the *Tribune* notice, in the hope of working upon her sympathy.

"Come out upon the porch."

She conducted us to a vine-embroidered piazza, from which a superb view of the lake was gained.

It was certainly a grand and inspiring scene. Revere compared it to the best views of the Hudson in the vicinity of West Point.

The broad lake reached away to the base of noble Owls Head Mountain, which extended in successive steeps far among the fleecy clouds, which gathered around its crest.

Far beyond the blue heights of the Canadian hills succeeded each other, and the sleeping form of Mount Læphantus was dimly outlined upon the northern horizon.

Miles away, the busy steamer, *Lady of the Lake*, from Newport, ploughed gaily through the still waters, leaving a heaving wake behind her, and bearing a happy load of excursionists to the Owls Head Mountain House, or the picnic grounds opposite.

(Alas! good Captain Fogg has now made his final voyage.)



"Now, Gerald," resumed my aunt, "here is this splendid view all running to waste, just like my vegetables out there in the finest kitchen garden in Northern Vermont, just because folks who are always welcome won't come and enjoy the one and eat the other. Now, the city is full of good people fairly starving for a chance to get away into this fresh air and enjoy this delicious climate. Yes, *I'm going to take boarders*, that's settled; and what's more, you, Gerald, are to stay here and help take care of them. Mr. Revere shall also stay and fill his portfolio with sketches of the lake. You know all the finest points, Gerald."

My self-willed aunt now bustled into the house and presently reappeared with a small basketful of letters.

"Now, you two young men are appointed 'Committee on Selection and Rejection.' These letters must be answered. Here are some more; just came yesterday; this one, for instance."

She handed me a dainty note, evidently written by a refined hand. It read as follows :

MONTREAL, June 10th, 18—.

Mrs. Tabitha Cobb :

Dear Madame:—We shall be most happy to accept your terms. My niece will leave New York upon the evening express Wednesday. I shall meet her at Newport and reach Twin Islands the following morning. You will, I am sure, like Gertrude.

Your sincere friend,

MARY ALVORD.

“You will see that I have already made a beginning by accepting this party chiefly on account of the old friendship of our early years, between Mary Alvord and myself ; and that, in fact, they are expected here this morning.”



“Would you kindly describe the young lady referred to in that letter?” asked Revere.

“It has been several years since I saw Gertrude Branscomb,” she replied ; “but unless I am greatly mistaken, she has developed into a very beautiful and brilliant woman. I can hardly describe her in set terms ; but ah ! you young men ! I shall have to keep a close eye upon you.”

“Does she in any way resemble this”—and Revere produced his sketch book holding the outline of the unknown maiden up to my aunt’s inspection.

“That — why it’s Gertrude’s very self !” she exclaimed, in great wonder ; “what do you know of her ? Where did you get this ?”

“I purloined it yesterday from the young lady herself. She was, as you see, very thoroughly asleep, so much so, indeed, that she did not awaken at Newport ; and, I presume, went on to Montreal ; at least, she did not leave the train ; we were observant, you see.”

“Well, that accounts, no doubt, for their failure to arrive. They wished to come down this morning by carriage. Poor girl ! she was all alone. How astonished she must have been when she found herself again in Canada. No doubt, her aunt is now awaiting her at Newport.”

"No, she was *not* alone," said Revere, grimly; "the *Captain* was with her."

"I do not understand," exclaimed Mrs. Cobb, with open-eyed wonder.

"Well, neither do we," I replied, and I gave her an account of our brief interview with the excited and hostile Frenchman. I prudently refrained from any allusion to our later adventure upon the lake.

"What was he like, this Frenchman?" queried my aunt, who was now very pale, with forced calmness.

Rapidly Revere penciled the pose, features and malignant glance of our officious fellow-traveler.

"Yes, it is as I feared; *he* has come back. O Heaven! we had hoped he had gone forever."

She arose in great agitation and rang the bell for a servant.

"Send Martin here at once," she said.

When that person appeared, she gave orders for getting the *Glid* ready for a trip to Newport with all possible haste.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," said she with old-time courtesy. "If I have provoked your curiosity it shall be gratified soon; you will go with me, and I will tell you the story *en route*. I may need your help."

THE CAPTAIN AND HIS ADVENTURES.

An hour later the *Glid* was rapidly speeding toward Newport, and my aunt was engaged in outlining the varied and unsavory career of our friend, the belligerent Captain.

"He is not quite French," said she, "his father having married an American girl with whom he eloped. This girl was the sister of Mary Alvord and the aunt of Gertrude. She was rich, and although the husband, Col. Detassé, was a profligate, she still had a considerable fortune left when he, five years later, was killed in a duel. Two years later she too died, and the money went to her son, the man who has now so inopportunately returned to trouble us. When he became old enough to claim free use of his inheritance he at once entered upon a career of such wild extravagance that his escapades are still referred to among the fast elements of Canadian society as the most extraordinary within memory. It is needless to say that his money disappeared like the morning mist. He then gained a commission in the British army, and is credited with considerable active service in India. A few years later he returned to Canada and settling in a wild haunt not far north of Lake Memphremagog he gathered other reckless spirits around him, and for a long time engage

in the pursuit of smuggling. It is thought that his old band still lurk around the lake, but while suspicion points its finger at several persons across the line as well as more than one upon this side who play the part of quiet and law-abiding people, it is difficult to secure evidence against them, and they are unmolested."

At this point Revere and I exchanged glances, but made no comment.

"Four years ago Gertrude Branscomb came to Montreal to visit her aunt, Mary Alvord, and there the Captain, her cousin, met her. She was very young, but a prospective heiress to a large property. The Captain, seeing here an opportunity to retrieve his fortunes, openly laid siege to her heart. Need I say that it was with no success? His past career was but partly known to her, but her maidenly instincts warned her that he was a bold and wicked conspirator against her happiness. Angered and defeated, the Captain once more disappeared, and we have occasionally heard rumors of his presence in remote countries, once in South Africa and once in Turkey; always fighting, and generally upon the wrong side. He seems to lead a charmed life. A year since he was known to be in Australia; now he is here. We must lose no time, gentlemen, for I greatly fear there is mischief in store for our fair young friend."

The urgency of the case demanded extraordinary preparations. While my aunt and artistic friend visited the hotel to assure themselves that neither Mrs. Alvord nor her niece were in the village, I had arranged with the South-eastern Railway Company for a special train, and we were presently whirling along toward Montreal at the rate of forty miles an hour.

The route of the South-eastern Railway keeps the blue lake in view for a few miles, and then, surmounting the uplands, traverses an interesting region across the international boundary line, which rapidly becomes more and more provincial and quaint as we proceed toward the Canadian metropolis. The names of the villages change from the homely Anglo-Saxon to the picturesque French, and we have Ste. Brigide, Ste. Angele, Richelieu, St. Lambert and the like. The queer, clean little houses, with their steep, curving roofs, and the twin steeples of the parish church plated with shining tin; the village curé in his shovel hat and long robe; the clumsy wagons and sleepy little horses, all told us we were in the land of the *habitant*.

We remained nearly two days in Montreal, invoking the aid of the police in our search. We found Mary Alvord at home. She had received a telegram, purporting to be from her niece, to the effect that she had been detained and could not meet her aunt at Newport. This was pal-

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pably a forgery. The good lady's agitation when this was made plain to her was most painful to witness. We next discovered that a young lady, accompanied by a person fully answering the description of the Captain, had left for Quebec two days before.

The operator at the Bonaventure station showed our detective a duplicate of a dispatch in cipher, signed by Jacques Detassé, dated at Quebec



A VILLA ON THE LAKE.

the day before. The man who called for it had a strange and very hoarse voice. It was doubtless the helmsman of the smugglers we had seen upon the lake near Newport.

The cipher was most important; only three terms were intelligible, "Massawippi," "13th" and "femme." These, however, gave us a clue, and taking train for Quebec we reached the ancient walled city after five hours' travel, and soon learned that, as we had suspected, the Captain and his innocent companion, duped, as we afterwards learned, by a series of artfully contrived telegrams forged in the name of her aunt, had left

upon the Quebec Central Railroad, which forms a through line connection with the Passumpsic Railroad between Quebec and Newport. The Captain, evidently expecting pursuit, was bent upon throwing us from the scent. The sketch made by Revere was of great service in identifying Miss Branscomb.

We were forced to wait half a day at Quebec, much to our disquietude, before we could get away upon a train southward; under any other circumstances our stay would have been delightful, as there is no city upon the continent more grand in situation or picturesque in detail than this ancient town beneath its gray and frowning Fortress.

While my aunt rested at the St. Louis Hotel, Revere and I rapidly visited the splendid Dufferin Terrace, whence we could gaze down upon the dingy but charmingly foreign lower town, the shipping and river, with Orleans Island, the Village of Beauport and Montmorenci Falls miles away to the eastward. Then we climbed the long stairs to the great Fortress, and gained the broader view from its battlements. We threaded the quaint little streets, admired the strong and ornate gateways of the city, and everywhere found something to charm and amuse. Revere's pencil was always busy, but now he could put but little spirit into his work, and I felt strangely oppressed, for while we were loitering thus perchance the fair Gertrude was sorely in need of rescue from her captor.

At last came the hour when we crossed the wide St. Lawrence, and taking the train from Point Levis were once more upon the scent.

We were still accompanied by an efficient Canadian detective, who speedily learned from a *habitant* in the employ of the road that the maiden and her persecutor had passed over the route as far as Sherbrooke the day previously; "the lady looked pale and frightened, and the gentleman had been angry and harsh to her," we understood from his *patois*.

Then there came a message that there had been a delay of some hours at Sherbrooke to the train upon which they were traveling, and we were elated to think that we were thereby the gainers.

We were soon speeding on in a comfortable Parlor Car over the Grand Trunk Railway, which is the older connection of the Passumpsic Railroad to Canada, and after passing the quaint town of Richmond we reached Sherbrooke in due time.

Sherbrooke, the northern terminus of the Passumpsic Railroad, is a substantial town, finely situated and solidly built, having several fine public buildings and one or more excellent hotels.

We learned from people at the station that the persons represented in Revere's sketches were now but a half day in advance.

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Again we had recourse to a "special," and an hour after reaching Sherbrooke we were once more upon the smooth rails of the Passumpsic Railroad, rushing onward to the succor of the smuggler's beautiful prisoner.

A feeling of deep gloom possessed me as I sat in a dim corner of our coach wrapt in meditation. I went over mentally all the strange occurrences of the past few days. I tried to convince myself that it was nothing more than a desire to save a fair woman, and bring joy to the hearts of my good aunt and her friend, which actuated me in my eagerness to be foremost in the chase. It was of little avail, however, and I felt that I already loved her whose eyes had never looked into mine, and that my fate lay ahead of me, almost within reach.

I studied the map of our route by aid of a lantern, and when my finger rested upon the name of North Hatley I felt myself once more within the indefinable power of my good mentor. Obedient to the influence which had never yet led me astray, I announced my intention of leaving the train at this point.

Unavailingly, the detective argued that in the light of information he had received it would be folly to stop at this point. I made no argument; I simply and firmly insisted, with the understanding that Revere, with my aunt and the detective, should continue to Newport, take the *Glide* and run to Magog, where they may expect to find either myself or some message. At Magog, too, they might hope for some word from the villainous Captain, who would hardly dare to cross the line with his prize, as American officials were now on the lookout for him.

North Hatley is a little hamlet at the foot of Lake Massawippi, a picturesque lake not greater than one-fourth the area of Memphremagog, from which it is separated by a rugged belt of country sparsely settled and offering an excellent retreat for those who by their overt acts place themselves beyond the pale of the law.

A terrible sense of loneliness seized me as I alighted here in the dark and saw our "special" speed away into the blackness toward Newport.

"Courage!" whispered my unseen angel, and I knew I was upon the right track.

A single light flickered in a bar-room near the station; and at that moment, as I approached it, the door was thrown violently open, and a man, deeply intoxicated, was thrust forth. Steadying himself against a post, he hurled impotent invectives at the head of the Boniface now safely bolted within his castle.

There was something familiar about that maudlin voice. Where had

I heard it? Listening intently to the mixture of *patois* and English, I then knew it was none other than the talkative smuggler, Henri, who had been silenced by the hoarse helmsman that night upon the lake.

It was but the work of a moment to convince "mine host" within of the wisdom of opening his door, and of doing what he might to bring this drunken wretch to his senses. Gold will do much. Upon its potent influence, too, I counted for the guidance and good will of the inebriate.



There was another ally of which I suspected little. That very night the unhappy Henri had been beaten and cast out by the outlaws at the instigation of their brutal captain, and he had come miles across the rugged hills with vengeance in his heart and blood on his lips. Here was the tool my good angel had sent me.

It was gray dawn when Henri had emerged from his stupor sufficiently to listen and understand what I wished of him. The liberal display of gold quickened his senses.

"*La femme? oui, it is wiz ze Capitaine. I take you. It is there,*" and he pointed in a direction which would lead up the lake.

"*Le batteau is better,*" said he, leading towards the shore. Suddenly he stopped, looking into my face with a cunning leer.

"How much, *messieur?*"

"A hundred dollars if you do your duty, another hundred when I bring the lady safely back. Nothing but the prison if you betray me."

Henri considered a moment, and shrugging his shoulders replied: "*Good! write it.*"

By the faint light of the early morn I scribbled my promise, and then, with a satisfied grunt, my guide strode toward the water.

Less than a mile from the starting point, Henri turned the boat deftly into the mouth of a creek, and leaping ashore crept to a lookout, satisfied himself that the coast was clear, and then brushing aside a low bough disclosed a smugglers' post-office and arsenal. It was well hidden in the side of a huge tree. With a simple remark, "you may want," he handed me a heavy old revolver already loaded, with a belt and some cartridges. For himself a similar weapon and an axe was taken.

"Now, *en avant!*" cried the smuggler with animation.

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I, inspired by anxiety unspeakable, and he by revenge, made rapid progress over the rough pathway. Within two hours we had crossed the crest and were descending the slope toward Lake Memphremagog, whose blue waters glistened in the morning sunlight.

The approach to the retreat of the smugglers made a detour needful. We cautiously stole to the verge of a huge rock, and there, within easy



shot, was the outlaws' head-quarters, renovated after years of silence. My eye eagerly sought for the fair form of the prisoner, but in vain.

"*See, ze Capitaine!*" whispered my guide.

Yes, the villainous Captain at least was here, and lounging about watching the preparations for breakfast, or prone in sleep upon the ground, a half dozen of his lawless band.

It would have been sure capture, if not death, to invade the camp single handed, but how wearily dragged the hours of my watch for some indications of the presence of the beautiful Gertrude.

At last I ventured upon an expedient. I wrote upon a bit of paper the following lines :

"Miss Branscomb: Fear nothing. Friends are at hand but cannot come to you yet. If possible, make a sign that you understand and are safe by appearing and placing your right hand upon your head twice."

This Henri placed in a seam of his shirt and undertook to deliver. From my eyrie I watched the return of the outcast to the camp, and saw

him humble himself before the hated Captain. Then he stealthily and with great caution searched the camp, disappearing into the forest more than once upon a pretended errand for wood.

O joy! at last there came the gleam of female apparel from the shadows of the woodlands, and the signal was given.

In my insane anxiety my foot slipped upon a loose bowlder, and in saving myself from falling my hat was lifted from my head by the breeze and swept down, falling close at the Captain's feet. The bowlder went crashing down through the trees, revealing only too surely my retreat.

In an instant the camp was in arms. The prisoner was rapidly borne from sight, and the smugglers, with the desperation of men used to being hunted, were scaling the rugged slope toward my lodgment. Foremost came the Captain.



ward to the dizzy brow of the cliff. The Captain's cruel eyes glared into mine, and he hissed :

"Did I not say we should meet again? I keep my promises."

From the leafy depths below there rang out a woman's cry. Then a rifle shot, and the arms that forced me back to death relaxed their hold. The Captain fell at my feet with a curse upon his lips. A score of armed men led by Revere and the detective came on with a shout, and the outlaws, halting for a brief second at the crest of the cliff, fled away over the path by which under the guidance of Henri I had reached the camp.

The lifeless form of the outlaw Captain was borne down the rocks, and I, with Revere, hastened to discover the fair captive. Within a cleft in the rocks she had been ensconced. Glorious were the eyes and peerless the face which peered out to be assured that friends indeed had come at last.

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It was but an hour's walk to the shores of the lake by a well-beaten path, and leaving the detective and volunteer force in possession of the camp, Revere and I tenderly led the maiden, who bravely bore up to the last, down to the moorings of the *Glide*, where Aunt "Tabby" awaited in great trepidation the result of the skirmish up the mountain.

Need I detail the meeting of the young captive and my dear old aunt? Is it not within the grasp of the reader's imagination to picture the rapture of my good relative over our victory, touched with pathos at the fate of one who might have been a brave and honest gentleman had his early career been properly guided?

As the anchor of the *Glide* was lifted to the cat-head, a dug-out with a single occupant rapidly came out from the shadows of the shore. It was Henri, my guide. Holding aloft the written pledge, written in the dim dawn of that morning, he demanded his reward. Receiving it, he silently and quickly paddled away, and was soon lost in the midst of the islands.

Beautiful indeed seemed the peerless lake as we steamed joyfully toward Twin Islands, and Miss Branscomb related how, overcome by an opiate at the hands of Captain Detassé, she had failed to waken at Newport, and then had been led in bewilderment from point to point through the false telegrams, never doubting that her aunt, Mrs. Alvord, had sent them, until the Captain, throwing off all disguise as to his intentions of forcing her to marry him, had, with the aid of trusted men, borne her away into the forest the evening before.

At Twin Islands we found Mrs. Alvord awaiting with painful suspense our return. We also found still more letters from city people who wanted board, and I, personally, found a series of telegrams and a long letter from my mother, expostulating at my failure to report the result of my diplomatic mission.

"Tell her," said my aunt, whom I consulted, "that your Aunt 'Tabby' has now as many boarders as she wants, and that you are engaged to stay and help care for them. As for these applications, let us make of them a grand jubilee conflagration upon the lawn."

The days and weeks rolled by. Revere, as volatile and gay a Bohemian as lives in all the Hub, was away every day amid the hills and islands with his paints and sketch-book. These beautiful scenes seemed to have inspired him with something like a new idea of life and its ambitions. Thus I was left much alone with Miss Branscomb, and we two played our little part, I the aggressor, she the half-unwilling prize, until one sweet September day we confessed each to the other our vanquishment by the omnipotent little god of love, and pledged our word of engagement.

How proudly my heart beat as we two slowly wandered, arm linked in arm, back to the dear old homestead, and how it fairly leaped into my throat as in plain view, as we came around the corner of the hedge, I saw my mother with a most distressing look of dismay upon her well-bred face, and my sisters a little behind, still with wonder.



There are some moments in a man's life when he needs all the courage bequeathed to him by the united blood of brave ancestors. Such a moment is the one when he must needs acquaint his female relatives with the one who holds his heart, and will stand closer than they in his future life.

My Gertrude was greeted by my mother and sisters with perfect but freezing courtesy. In less than two days they were in love with her.

One evening my dear old aunt, calling me into the garden, confessed

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that her advertisement for "boarders" was simply a ruse to bring Gertrude and myself together; that she had even written the letter shown me as from her friend Mary Alvord, and authorizing me to tell my mother that it was she who had sent the marked copy of the *Tribune* to our house, which had created the commotion with which my story opens.

Thus was the family dignity saved.

Perhaps some day I may write the brief but lively story of the courtship of my cheerful friend of the palette, Revere, and my charming elder sister, but that affair should have a book to itself.

'Tis June again. To-day we have traveled once more northward over the Passumpsic route. I have read to my wife, nestled by my side, looking so sweet and demure in her gray traveling suit, this story of our strange acquaintance, and she remarks as I close:

"You have forgotten one thing, my dear Gerald."

"And what is that?" I ask.

"To thank your good angel for bringing us, through danger, safely together."

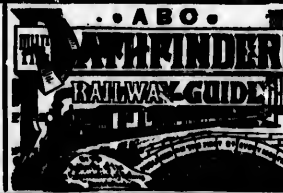
"Two good angels conspired in this case, I think, and we will thank at least one of them at Twin Islands to-day," was all I said.

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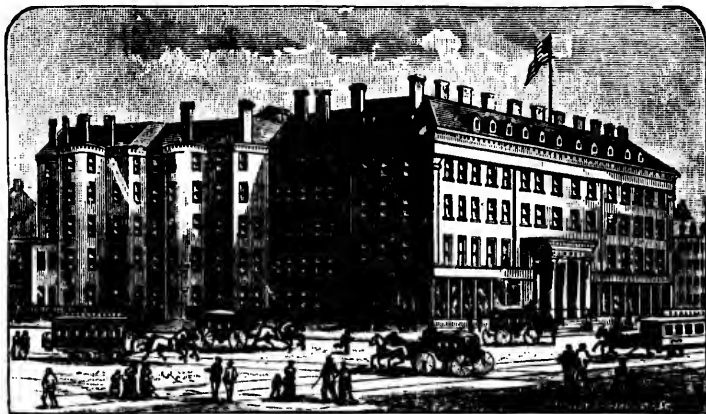
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