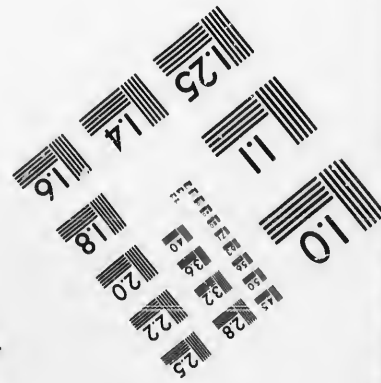
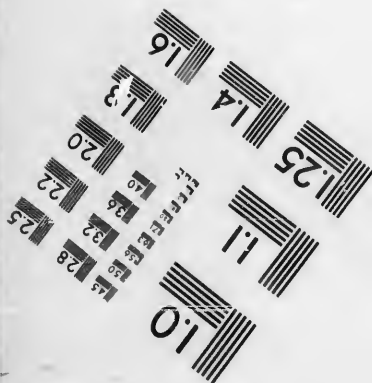
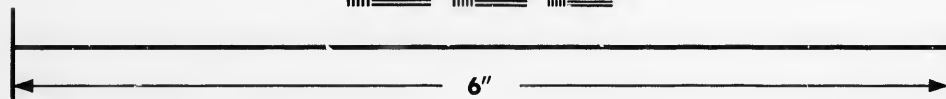
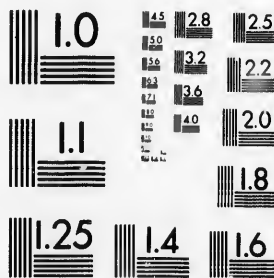


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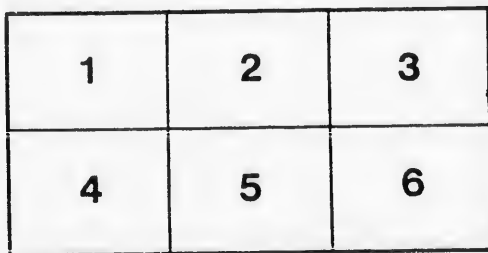
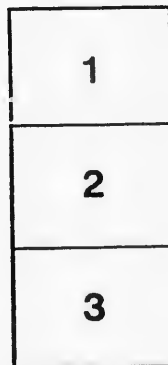
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32X

A MONTH IN THE MARSH,

BY

SAW-WAW-COOSH,

OR

(THE YELLOW FOX.)

---

*Chi mi dara la voce e le parole  
Convenienti a si nihil soggetto  
Chi l'ale al verso presta che vole  
Tanto che arriui ad ula mio concetto!*  
Cr. Far.—Canto 3.

---

CHATHAM, C. W.

PRINTED BY W. H. THOMPSON & CO, PUBLISHERS.  
1880.

1058

To his  
Marsh.?"

Chatham, I

To his two illustrious companions in "the  
Marsh." and himself, this effusion is inscribed by  
**THE AUTHOR.**

Chatham, Dec. 1, 1860.

IN

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# A MONTH IN THE MARSH.

---

"Chi mi dara la voce e le parole  
Convenienti a si nobil soggetto  
Chi l'ale al verso piestera, che vole  
Tanto che arrivi all'alto mio concetto?"

---

'Twas on a calm, October day,  
That season, when the tempered ray  
Of lingering sunshine, yet makes bright  
Each tinted leaf with roseate light ;  
When, seeming ne'er of life more full,  
So fair—yet sadly beautiful  
Departing summer stays to take  
One transient look, and then' to make  
That hectic but delusive ray—  
The sad precursor of decay,  
That three brave sportsmen of renown,  
With dogs and guns arrived "in town."  
By this high sounding designation,  
Is meant the head of navigation  
Of the Canadian River Thames ;  
They must have sadly wanted names,  
"Chatham" the hamlet there to call,

A pretty handlet after all ;  
 Famed for, above all other places,  
 Bevies of quail—for fairest faces.  
 Also, as every sporting man tells  
 For turkeys—ducks—and—pretty aneles.  
 They slept at “The Exchange” that night  
 Resolving, that with coming light  
 They’d seek the marshes of St. Clair.  
 And pitch their spacious canvass there.  
 Bright was the morn—the “risen day”  
 Saw them rejoicing on their way ;  
 O’er rugged roads—o’er plains they pass,  
 Where the luxuriant, tangled grass,  
 Waves rankly, far as eye can see,  
 In glorious, wild variety.  
 Now,—dusky wild fowl cleave the air,  
 Hurrah ! they’ve neared the blue St. Clair ;  
 How dear to every gunner’s eye,  
 Are those vast bogs that meet the sky,  
 Where giant cranes, and wild fowl keep,  
 Their vigils o’er the marshy deep .  
 Hard by that shifting treacherous flood,  
 A solitary shanty stood ;  
 A hungry Gaul possessed the key,  
 And, with great generosity,  
 Flavoured immensely with a spice  
 Of selfishness, and avarice,  
 Offered at once a house and home,  
 Both then, and for all time to come,  
 And, moved by less of good than evil,

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Was overpoweringly civil.  
The wagons were unpacked with care,  
For many a cunning dodge was there:  
Trunks,—boxes,—blankets,—oil-skin cases,  
Portentous to the feathered races;  
Paddles, and pork—"Canards de bois,"  
Fashioned for strategy in war;  
A crafty punt, that screwed together,  
Engaged to float in any weather;  
Again—a packet one foot square,  
Contained a service of tin-ware.  
Four "tots"—four plates—a copper kettle,  
A coffee-pot of that same metal,  
Just made as if t'were to shew  
In what small space such things could go;  
With other things of rare invention,  
Too numerous by far to mention.  
Science again was brought to bear  
Upon our heroes' bill of fare:  
A can—hermetically sealed,  
'Three years before, when ope'd. revealed—  
What? 'twas a moment of intense  
And yet most interesting suspense—  
To the delighted nose and eye,  
The choicest brand of streaked "boulli."  
Ah me, it was a great relief;  
And so they supped on "potted beef."  
Now "nature's nurse" asserts her right  
Good night—put out yon candle-light.

And *Murphy* led them far away  
 'Midst countless quackers, black and grey,  
 Where the shrill cry of clapper rail,  
 Is borne upon the Autumn gale.

\* \* \* \* \*

Morn broke,—when from beneath a bed,  
 Emerged a nose,—and then—a head.  
 “Ho ! Nelson—Nel—son—Daly, Ho !”  
 “Get up, let one for water go”—  
 “And light the fire—put on the pan,”  
 “The potted beef will do again ;”  
 In short, before the dew was off, they  
 Had stewed the beef, and made the coffee ;  
 Having regaled the inner man,  
 The leading covey thus began.  
 “Boys, as we’ve got a goodly tent”  
 (Faith ’twas a clinching argument)  
 “It is not sportsman like, nor pleasant”  
 “To be dependant on a peasant,”  
 “And therefore I propose that we”  
 “Camp in the woods most certainly.”  
 Now ’twas not difficult to find,  
 A spot protected from the wind,  
 For alongside that shooting ground,  
 An ancient, hoary forest frowned ;  
 But, to select a fitting station,  
 Required much ratiocination ;  
 For, the same trees which kept one warm,  
 Perchance, might do a serious harm,  
 When yielding to the western storm,

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A crushing avalanche, in form  
Of treacherous white wood, shakes the ground,  
Spreading dismay and ruin round.  
But difficulties never damp,  
An ardor of the proper stamp,  
And sportsmen will not be annoyed  
By what they cannot well avoid,  
And so, instead of idly loit'ring,  
One of the boys went reconnoit'ring,  
And evening saw a spreading tent,  
Clear of impending detriment.  
Hard by, a mighty walnut tree,  
Had fallen most conveniently,  
And, on this giant monarch's back,  
Did busy axe-men hew and hack,  
Trying, impromptu to prepare,  
A rugged board for forest fare,  
Much time and patience were bestowed,  
Upon the famous "Nelson road"  
Which ended in a hollow tree,  
The kennel of an illustrious three,  
Those famous ears, whose praises here  
In rhyming dog-grels must appear.  
First,—"Snob and Belle"—a prudent brace  
Of setters, sprung from noble race,  
With such discerning noses favoured,  
As to distinguish grouse from grey-bird.  
I never heard a hunter yet,  
Admit that his dog could be beat,  
And every ganner *once* has had

The staunchest "*bird-dog*" ever bred,  
 Though it was ne'er decided, which  
 Was truest—Snob—or Belle, the bitch :  
 Lastly—the grave—the cunning Rake,  
 Ready to plunge in marsh or lake,  
 Who with a tail erect with pride,  
 A vulgar, or strange dog defied:  
 Rake had his faults,—with pain I write,  
 That *eating* was his chief delight ;  
 His taste was keen, and to that sense,  
 All other things had reference ;  
 If he was told to fetch a bird,  
 At once a selfish thought occurred ;  
 The order was associated  
 With dainty bits,—by some dogs hated,  
 But not by him,—no sir!—he thought  
 The morsel had been dearly bought ;  
 And that the brains of "*Tercelle Brancheuse*"  
 Were good for dog's, as well as man's use.  
 Beneath the overhanging green,  
 Appeared an ample magazine,  
 Where Epicurus' self would find,  
 Art, with Philosophy, combined.  
 Meanwhile the peasants came to view,  
 These sights, so wonderful and new ;  
 Some, bolder than the rest, would venture  
 To peep into the tent, or—enter.  
 The wild pigs of "*McGregor's dell*"  
 Were startled by the dainty smell

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Of luscious viands, rich and rare,  
And stuck their snouts into the air ;  
And having found from whence't proceeded,  
Thought 'twas the very thing they needed.  
But Rake, of course was to be found  
Where the good eating did abound,  
He also thought, how nice t'would be,  
To taste those things so savoury ;  
In short, to him the pigs reflections  
Occurred, about these choice refections ;  
So, when the porcine herd drew near,  
He pinched the foremost pirate's ear,  
While Snob, and Belle, not less unkind,  
Tickled the squeaking pig behind ;  
Thus doubly tweaked in front and rear,  
He did not know which way to steer ;  
A dozen times he changed his front,  
Yet always found the pinching brunt  
Of battle, in his hindmost part,  
Defying military art.  
But, just as Belle his tail had caught,  
Occurred to him a sapient thought,  
Proving at last, that after all,  
He was a skilfull general:  
For scuttling to the tent door, he  
In confidence craved clemency ;  
Could we withstand the soft appeal ?  
T'would have required a heart of steel.  
"Go ! kennel up, Snob—Belle—and Rake,"  
(Here the hog got a piece of cake)

And spite of all he underwent,  
 His appetite seemed excellent.  
 "That pig," quoth Nelson, "Sirs you'll see"  
 "Will a perpetual nuisance be,"  
 And that this prophecy was true,  
 The sequel will most clearly shew.

\* \* \* \* \*

'Twas night, and silence reigned around,  
 The illumined tent, and camping ground,  
 For bon-fires, blazing high and clear,  
 Lighted the forest far and near.  
 Within—the logs of white wood tree,  
 Were burning bright and cheerily.  
 Could reasonable man suppose  
 The "aliquid amari" rose?  
 Ah yes! how true that grief and woe,  
 Are sure to damp our joys below.  
 The question had been settled whether,  
 Top boots, of McIntosh, or leather  
 Were best adapted for a boat,  
 And leather lost it,—by one vote—  
 Yet there, as rooted in the ground,  
 A pair of leather boots were found,  
 Which seemed as tho' no power could stir  
 Them, from the perpendicular.  
 Now W-lm-t Br-df-rd, I must state,  
 Was never heard to objurgate,  
 Yet found his temper sorely tried.  
 By this cylindrical cow-hide:

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No matter where he stood or lay,  
"The Boots" were always in the way ;  
"The Boots," perhaps, when hung on high,  
Impinged against his nose or eye ;  
No matter where—the leathern toes  
*Would* strike against his chin or nose :  
Again, "the boots" he did discover,  
Just when the legs had tripped him over ;  
While they were by the camp-fire drying,  
There was no end of vilifying.  
Who bore it all ? I grieve to say  
The author of this roundelay.  
But the same boots, and Bradford's pain  
Shall ne'er be seen nor felt again.  
If these were evils, what were they  
To those which were revealed next day ?  
The night was cloudy, dark, and still,  
But ominous of lurking ill ;  
As they sat round the fire, to quaff  
The generous brew of rum hot stuff,  
Each told the fortunes of the day,  
Or how a mallard got away ;  
Or plotted many crafty snares  
To take the quackers unawares.  
No sooner sought they that repose,  
Which tired duck shooter only knows  
Than rustling leaves, and cracking twigs,  
Proclaimed the onslaught of the pigs.  
Quoth Br-df-rd, waking—"Ho ! there boys"

"Did you not hear that fearful noise?"  
 "Like crunching something crisp or bony"  
 "Nelson! where *is* the maccaroni?"  
 "Aye aye sir," Nelson just could stutter—  
 "Daly! where is the bread and butter?"  
 "Put up sir, in the wooden box"—  
 "They've turned it over,—damn those hogs."  
 W—lt—r was snoring loud and strong,  
 Oblivious of all earthly wrong.  
 And where was Rake? what was he doing?  
 Thinking of spatched cocked snipe, or blue-wing,  
 And kennelled in the hollow tree;  
 Alas! could he but only see,  
 Those ugly snouts, so coolly choosing,  
 Amongst the dainties he was losing.  
 With such events, well might that be  
 A night of dire uncertainty;  
 But we must wait till morning's sun  
 Discloses all the damage done.

\* \* \* \* \*

Happy is he who takes delight,  
 In breakfasting by candle light,  
 And, greedily, can set to work,  
 Upon a lump of bread and pork.  
 Not that good fare was interdicted,  
 Or that the party were restricted  
 To bread and fat-pork, cold, or hot,  
 For to be candid, they were not.  
 "Good gracious! no!—it cannot be,"  
 "Yes! Daly! here—what do we see?"  
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Might well have moved the Stagyrite :  
 The soup was nowhere,—ah ! that gravy,  
 Which they so carefully did lay by ;  
 So nice when one comes home—served hot—  
 (Here Rake looked at the empty pot,)  
 “Where are the pork and mutton chops ?”  
 (The rogues were bothered by the box)  
 “All right” said Nelson, “here they are.”  
 Quoth W—lt—r “hand that whisky jar,”  
 “For really, I am quite relieved”  
 “To find the grunTERS so deceived.”  
 “The flour and bread untouched,” said Daly,  
 “The maccaroni too”—“Oh really.”  
 The butter was’nt tho’,—a thief  
 Had left therein, the marks of teeth,  
 And looking close, they found the mice,  
 Had bored their way to groceries.  
 But turn we to another scene  
 See where those vagabonds have been  
 Duck—quail—and snipe, in dire confusion,  
 Revealed the worst of the intrusion,  
 “*Infandum renovare dolorem*”  
 To state how grievously they tore ’em;  
 The headless ducks and quail around,  
 Accounted for that crunching sound,  
 “*Dissecta membra*” here and there  
 Shewing a terrible affair.  
 The sky had changed, and summer green  
 Was followed by a winter scene ;  
 Each twig, and leaf, and spreading bough,

Forming a silvered arch of snow.  
 With overalls of McIntosh—  
 To Br-df-rd, either snow or slugh,  
 Were quite the same, while soaking leather,  
 Bewailed the sudden change of weather.  
 Two Frenchmen—*mash* bred, *mush* rat hunters  
 Were placed upon the staff as punters,  
 Who swore that they could find the way  
 Through thick or thin, by night or day.  
 By dint of paddle, pole, or oar,  
 They crossed the mud which bound the shore,  
 The haunts of water snake, and lizard,  
 Through which indeed they had to squeeze hard,  
 And staring with unfeigned surprise,  
 Stretching at once their necks and eyes,  
 Big black ducks in the adjoining fen—  
 Old stagers—got up now and then ;  
 And, for those who have never heard,  
 The history of this noble bird,  
 I would recount a single fact, or  
 Just state a trait in his character.  
 Above all things, he hates duplicity,  
 Preferring by all means publicity—  
 I mean publicity of purpose,  
 In those who want his dainty carcase :  
 A sneaking underhanded measure  
 Is sure to meet with his displeasure,  
 For nothing sooner makes him fly,  
 Than practice of mendacity.  
 Therefore, when once you are espied ;

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Unless you are a muff--don't hide ;  
Paddle as tho' you didn't heed him,  
And he will think you do not need him,  
Giving a better chance to bleed him.  
The *colliers noirs*, and *cous rouges* rose,  
In flocks before their dreaded foes :  
Aloft the glistening squadrons fly,  
In bright relief against the sky,  
And gaudy pinions glittering shone,  
Resplendent in the morning sun.  
The ever watchful birds of prey  
Left blood and havoc in their way,  
And hawks, who thought it fair intrusion,  
Availed themselves of the confusion.  
A red legged Falcon, too, was there,  
Sweeping in circumambient air ;  
Mark him--in graceful curves and slow,  
Surveying the expanse below ;  
Then suddenly he checks his flight,  
And from sublime, aerial height  
Like mighty mountain torrent, he  
Descends with fatal certainty,  
And bears a coot across the bog,  
To musk-rat house, on white wood log.  
This pinnacle was one of danger,  
For within twenty yards, the avenger  
Of injured water rails was waiting,  
And, as the robber finished eating  
The second of the gouged out eyes, of  
The coot, both birds he made a prize of.

\* \* \* \* \*

The evening sun had sunk to rest,  
 Beneath the rice fields of the west,  
 That, far away beyond the ken,  
 Stretched to the shores of Michigan.  
 No evening breeze arose to break  
 The calm repose of pond or lake,  
 Which, as in placid sleep they lie,  
 Fling back each tint that gilds the sky:  
 And—save perchance the splash of oar,  
 Or, from the distant prairie shore,  
 The joyous and stentorian song  
 Of homeward journeying "Habitan",  
 Recounting deeds of other days  
 In energetic roundelays,  
 Or, ringing axe in yonder wood—  
 No sound disturbs the solitude.  
*Frank Forrester*, if I'm not wrong,  
 Has said, or some one else has sung,  
 That to appreciate the field,  
 And all the joys which field sports yield,  
 One must, if he's not quite a poet,  
 At all events, be next thing to it.  
 Few men there are, indeed, who see,  
 How duck shooting and poetry,  
 Can be allied, and yet I know,  
 Our jolly trio thought them so.  
 And when the shades of evening fall,  
 Upon the lonely blue "Chenail"

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When dusky ducks, and mallards fly,  
Across the soft autumnal sky;  
To feel the influence of the hour,  
Is to enjoy duck shooting more.  
With these reflections, Br-df-rd pushes  
His craft into a bed of rushes,  
While, with an intervening space,  
Lurked Waw-goosh in deceiving place,  
Thereby to take the dusky ranks,  
Of cunning quackers in both flanks ;  
Avoiding one, with loss and bother,  
They fled into the fire of t'other.  
Br-df-rd's appearance was so queer,  
That it requires description here.  
His flannel shirt, of drabbish blue,  
Was just of that dull quiet hue,  
Which, 'een to quacker's piercing vision,  
Would not arouse a fell suspicion ;  
In short this garment did defy,  
And challenged, rigid *inqui-ry*.  
His necktie—the same color too—  
Would not attract a black ducks view !  
Which, sporting with the autumn wind,  
Was tied in front—sometimes—behind!  
A jacket, of a smoky tint,  
With divers handy pockets in't,  
Ended, where McIntosh began  
To ornament the nether man ;  
Those parts, in leggings were encased,  
From point of toe, to middle waist,

Making that portion of his figure,  
 Swelled out, and ludicrously bigger ;  
 Yet, were they skilfully designed,  
 For boots and breeches met combined.  
 A hat, of that peculiar make,  
 Called commonly, a wide awake,  
 With reeds and rushes, laced and crested,  
 To hide the visage—duck detested—  
 His dress surmounted, to make all  
 Things look quite wild, and natural.  
 Upon his manly shoulder, and  
 Carried a ponderous fuzee,  
 Full six feet long'—Bore—No. 8,  
 With metal of appropriate weight ;  
 And what at first perhaps may seem odd  
 The gun had neither cock, nor ramrod ;  
 To make it still a greater puzzle,  
 Powder ne'er entered at the muzzle,  
 And yet this blunderbuss could bore  
 A duck, at sixty yards, or more.

\* \* \* \* \*

Time passed, what strides it always takes,  
 To him who toil a pleasure makes.  
 Twelve times had night her mantle thrown,  
 O'er oozy plain, and deep lagoon,  
 And twice two hundred birds, and more,  
 The bending hickory branches bore ;  
 But human nature, poets say,  
 "*Est novitatis avida,*"  
 And shooting is both tame and dull,

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There was an isle—'twas far away,  
 Full twenty pipes from Mud Creek Bay ;  
 Whose distant horizon of blue,  
 Relieved the vast, unbroken view,  
 Walpole t'is called—and to this day  
 The home of the Ojibeway.  
 And oft did golden fancy trace  
 Each feeding ground, and lurking place,  
 See in each creek, o'er arched with rice,  
 The mallard's home, and Paradise.  
 They thought of that enchanted vale,  
 Of which we read, in Eastern tale,  
 Of that far distant wondrous shore,  
 That glowed in our boyhood dreams of yore,  
 Whose glitt'ring sands, since time began,  
 Had never been trodden by mortal man !  
 For a thousand moons 'twas said to take  
 In reaching the Isles of Waak--al--Waak !  
 And we were only twenty pipes  
 From that romantic land of snipes.  
 In short, our Wa-ak--al---Wa-ak,  
 Was twenty miles from "Ticky--Tack."  
 Tho' W-lt-r did at first refuse,  
 'To enter into the other's views,  
 Attempting, but in vain, to prove  
 It was more prudent not to move,  
 And giving, as a valid reason,  
 'The extreme lateness of the season,

Yet, that the Island must be won  
 Was formally agreed—nem—con.  
 Quoth B., "With deference let me state"  
 "I think the season not too late;"  
 "However, you, of course can do"  
 "Whate'er your fancy leads you to."  
 "What I propose is this, that I"  
 "Should start to-morrow with Le Gui,"  
 "Taking the smaller tent,—and what"  
 "Are always useful, axe and pot,"  
 "I, in advance, one day would steer,"  
 "You next day following in the rear,"  
 "Leaving one soldier at head quarters,"  
 "To guard the big tent from marauders."

\* \* \* \* \*

Two men in silence sat that night  
 Beside the camp-fire's waning light;  
 They were dejected and alone,  
 For Br-df-d and his guide were gone.  
 And the "Romance" from "Trovator,"  
 Which pleased so much the night before,  
 It charmed them not—that classic air—  
 For their lost chieftain was not there.  
 Perhaps it is not fair, or right,  
 To tell all that occurred that night;  
 Perchance they smoked a little longer,  
 The punch, perhaps, was somewhat stronger,  
 And empty bottles might have shewed  
 How oft that beverage was brewed.

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The owl's ill-omened, hideous shriek,  
 Aroused the camp at the forest creek,  
 And the cry of the wild swan, loud and clear,  
 Told that approaching light was near;  
 Arise, arise! for this is the day,  
 On which we paddle so far away,  
 And at even a blazing camp-fire make  
 On the magical Island of Waak-al-Waak!

\* \* \* \* \*

At noon, the remnant of the party,  
 Had gained the pass of "Chenail Ecarté,"  
 And westward bravely pushing on, soon  
 Came to the pass of "Chenail Johnson."  
 No sign of Le Gui or of Br-df-d,  
 No ooze which pole or paddle had stirred;  
 There was no knot upon a rush-head,  
 To show the spot through which they push-ed.  
 And no mark landwards, served to show  
 The way the rear guard ought to go:  
 For the Indian Summer's mystic cloud,  
 Mantled the marsh in a lurid shroud.  
 At length a rude hut looming high,  
 Shewed a deserted camp ground nigh;  
 Where drift wood, stran led, had withstood  
 The rushing of the spring tide flood.  
 "Here,," said Baptiste, "'tis very plain"  
 "Some savages have lately lain,"  
 "These ashes are not two days old,"  
 "Indeed they are not yet quite cold,"  
 One pole across two others tied,

Supported slabs on the weather side,  
 And proved that the builder never meant  
 To combine use with ornament;  
 Saw-Waw-Goosh gravely did suspect,  
 That Br-df-rd was the architect,  
 And to give to this surmise weight,  
 Proceeding to investigate,  
 He various little relics found  
 Of edibles, which scattered round,  
 Were circumstantial points from whence  
 He formed a chain of evidence;  
 But above all, he found the crotches,  
 And on the logs the fresh carved notches  
 Cut skillfully, with keen edged axe;  
 He noted these important facts—  
 Convinced at last, beyond all doubt  
 That Br-df-rd *was* the sleeper out.

\* \* \* \* \*

A shot was heard across the fen--  
 Another—!ouder—clearer—then  
 A distant figure moved, "What is it?"  
 "Oh! there's my brother," shouted Baptiste;  
 "Yes,—but who is that other man?"  
 "Why, that must be an Indian,"  
 "With head dress of such savage make,"  
 "By Jove—'tis Br-df-rd's wide awake."  
 To attempt description is absurd,  
 Of what then on that marsh occurred,  
 For language never could express  
 That touching scene of tenderness;

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Right glad were they once more to shake  
 The hand that wove that wide awake !  
 "This *ganache* Le Gui missed the way,"  
 Said Br-df-d, "leading me astray;"  
 "And just as night was closing round,"  
 We found a kind of camping ground."  
 Quoth W-lt-r, "hand that demi-john,"  
 "We saw the weeds you lay upon;"  
 "Just hand the tot—I feel delight"  
 "In finding that you are all right."  
 "Shoot many ducks?" "About ten pair,"  
 "Look in my punt—you'll find them there,"  
 "But whereabouts does the island lie?"  
 Said Baptiste; "It must be close by,"  
 "Ha! yonder thro' the haze I see"  
 "The hickory groves," replied Le Gui.

\* \* \*

The Indian Summer moon shone bright,  
 Upon Ecarte's tortuous flood,  
 Like molten silver was the light,  
 Which bathed that western solitude,  
 Through which in lordly grandeur Huron pours  
 His mighty tide to roll on Erie's shores,  
 Beneath the azure canopy of Heav'n,  
 The mightiest gift by Earth to ocean given.  
 Apparently no life was there,  
 So placid was the mystic air,  
 And Walpole Island truly seemed,  
 The Elfin land of which they dreamed;  
 But whether held by duok or fairy,

Was not an unimportant query;  
 And that 'twas by the former haunted,  
 Conclusive proof was not long wanted;  
 For rustling sounds were heard on high,  
 As restless teal fled swiftly by,  
 Whose pinioned cohorts steered their flight,  
 Securely midst the waste of night;  
 And the wild cadence from the west,  
 Where *Honkers* sought their evening rest,

Swept o'er the deep Chenail,  
 Now softly low, now swelling high,  
 Those riot notes of revelry

Like music on the gale!

Meanwhile, the indefatigable Br-df-rd,  
 With axe in hand a sapling had felled,  
 On which, when stripped of limbs and bark, he  
 Soon reared the canvass of a Marquee;  
 Beneath whose time worn folds, I ween,  
 Had many a Cariboo stalker been,

And many a hunter bold,

Who from the chase returned at night,  
 To comrades round the blazing light,

Their wondrous stories told;

So they each had a tale of slaughter,  
 "*Si non fu vero, fu ben trovato,*"

The evening to enliven.

Br-df-rd recounting how one day  
 Thro' five black bears he fought his way,  
 In the deep forests of Malbaie,

And with success had striven:

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Where five brown bears hung by the heel,  
Could that old dingy tent reveal.

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No nerves can bear the painful shock,  
The sudden start in midnight snooze,  
At being roused at twelve o'clock,  
To listen to disastrous news;  
It rained—the reader may imagine,  
Whether that was not cause for chagrin;  
And, as a further source of grief,  
The tent was leaking like a sieve.  
Now, tho' transparent trickling streams  
Of which the thirsty traveler dreams,  
Are charming things, sometimes, no doubt,  
Yet, by the weary camper out,  
Who feels his blanket saturated,  
That charming, trickling stream is hated.  
What constitution ever stood well,  
Eight hour's exposure in a puddle?  
A hydrophatic treatment, which  
The thought of gives rheumatic twitch,  
Yet, in that doleful state they lay,  
From twelve that night till eight, next day,  
When the *first object* of desire,  
Was to renew the extinguished fire;  
But Baptiste was already there,  
Turning his cheeks into a pair  
Of leathern bellows which he blew,  
Till flame from out the faggots flew;  
Quoth Br-df-rd from his puddle, "now sirs,

"The *next thing* is to dry our trowsers;"  
 And to dry trowsers as you know,  
 We want a certain heat, but slow,  
 For, if the fire is hot and brisk,  
 The process must be one of risk,  
 And when the owner's legs are out,  
 He can't feel well what he's about;  
 Br-df-rd, with laudable desire,  
 To hold his garments at the fire,  
 Never once thought while he was drying 'em,  
 That at the same time he was frying 'em,  
 And when he put them on—alack!  
 The roasted spots began to crack,  
 Just in the very parts, of course  
 Where the default could not be worse.  
 Waw-Goosh had better luck than he,  
 But shrunk his woollens fearfully,  
 And vainly by spasmodic tensions,  
 Tried to regain the lost dimensions.  
 Who has not felt that grave discomfort,  
 Of earthly ills the worst,—a shrunk shirt?  
 Like pilgrim's penitential peas,  
 The acme of uneasiness.  
 Where was the veteran W-lt-r, he  
 Of snipe and duck the enemy?  
 There, by the sickly fire he sat,  
 Dejected—wet—disconsolate,  
 So weak, too, as he swore from hunger,  
 That he could not survive much longer;  
 And all the Commissariat store,

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Had been exhausted day before.

"Ah! how true, '*nessun maggior*,'"

Quoth he, "*nessun maggior dolor*"

"*Che recordarsi del tempo felice*"

"*Nella miseria*--I beseech ye"

"Fill me a pipe and let me ask,"

"Br-df-rd!--where is--your brandy flask?"

But he, alas! was out of reach

Of this disjointed, doleful speech,

With Saw-Waw-Goosh he had proceeded

In quest of what so much was needed.

"We cross the prairie," said Le Gui,

"To yonder withered white wood tree,"

"The lodge of the chief of Se-we-ta-gun,"

"Is but a little further on."

\* \* \* \*

The white men told what names and nation

Were hidden by their ragged guise,

Further, they had not much occasion,

For dull and stiff formalities;

Tho' shrunken shirts and tattered pants

Forbid that easy nonchalance

Of manner, which to practised eye,

Is token of gentility--

Tho' Br-df-rd could escape detection,

Only by wary circumspection,

Yet, when the Chief Sewetagan

Announced the Princess Mashquoy,

Their gallantry was called upon.

Quoth B., "Waw-Goosh! advise me, pray"

'No confidence can e'er be placed"  
 "In a single stitch below n y waist."  
 "Advance," said Waw-Goo-sh, "make a bow,"  
 "But mind—you must not stoop too low,"  
 "And, as your garments are not sound"  
 "'Twere better not to turn quite round,"  
 "Besides, you know full well that we"  
 "Don't turn out backs on Royalty."  
 Br-df-rd advanced—if not with comfort,  
 At least with tolerable ease;  
 Altho' he still felt as 'twere some sort,  
 Of cracking noise abotit his knees,  
 And making a profound salaam,  
 In English asked, "How are ye, ma'am?"  
 Nor did he turn his back upon  
 The Princess, or Sewetagun.  
 Again the swarthy chieftain spoke,  
 And thus an awkward sile ice broke,  
 "Bro hers, I hopē you'll stay and share"  
 "An Indian warrior's homely fare,"  
 "Tho' quai-she-gun with us is scant,"  
 "I cannot see the white man want,"  
 "Our hearts are big, tho' we are poor,"  
 "Sewetagun can say no more."  
 These welcome promises of cheer;  
 Fell like sweet music on the ear;  
 The corn cakes were delicious, yet  
 There was one cause for deep regret,  
 The sad reflection did annoy them,  
 Of how poor W-lt-r would enjoy them;

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And the thoughts of his inanition,  
 Almost prevented deglutition.  
 Near while he lay within the tent !  
 Helpless, from lack of nutriment.  
 And wondering with empty stomach,  
 When the lost foragers would come back.

\* \* \* \* \*

Betwixt the body and the mind,  
 A strange alliance all men find,  
 For, when the former is not so ind  
 The latter quickly feels a wound;  
 And after all, good eating is  
 The fountain head of earthly bliss.  
 A wondrous growth of confidence  
 Was the immediate consequence,  
 Of that most oportune relief,  
 Afforded by the dusky chief,  
 Affairs a brighter prospect wore,  
 And they were jolly as before.  
 W—t—r thought of the quail near Chatham,  
 And wanted to again be at 'em.  
 While by some well directed stitches,  
 Br—df—rd contrived to mend his breeches.  
 But rude November's howling blast,  
 Proclaims the Indian Summer past,  
 And winged battalions issuing forth,  
 From the chill regions of the north,  
 Onwards in countless thousands fly  
 In search of a more genial sky.

\* \* \* \* \*

Once more upon Ecarte's waters  
 They sought the big tent and head quarters,  
 Where Nelson had been left, the lone  
 Commandant of the garrison.  
 A bowl of gravy soup that night  
 Restored their pristine forces quite,  
 Added to which, hot rum and water  
 Filled them with fresh desire for slaughter;  
 For obstacles seem overcome,  
 By him who is inspired by rum;  
 Altho' the ardor of the night,  
 Is often cooled by morning light.  
 And when next day they did examine  
 The chances of a feast or famine,  
 Upon a strict examination,  
 These were in favor of starvation:  
 No sago soup—no maccaroni  
 Were to be had for love or money;  
 Besides, the powder magazine  
 Was empty as the soup tureen.  
 'Twas hard to feel the day was come,  
 When they must leave their forest home,  
 But stern realities reveal  
 Sad truths which we would fain conceal;  
 And the same camp ground where of late  
 In evening festival they sat,  
 Is dreary now, and desolate.

\* \* \* \* \*

The trio thought it would be fine  
 To cross the country in a bee line,  
 Tho' twenty-seven miles or thirty,  
 Are apt to make one tired and dirty,  
 Where mud adhesive holds one's foot back  
 And every step is a fresh boot-jack;  
 Yet, they in tolerable plight,  
 Arrived in Chatham town that night,  
 And to conclude—next morning's train  
 Conveyed the party home again.



