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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK DOWN THE RIVER TO THE SEA ***

DOWN THE RIVER TO THE SEA

BY
MISS MACHAR

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DOWN THE RIVER TO THE SEA

CHAPTER I—NIAGARA.

The brilliant sunshine of a July day lighted up the great cataract and the rich verdure of the surrounding landscape, bringing out all the wonderful variety of hue in the surging mass of falling water, the snowy clouds that perpetually veiled and unveiled it, the iridescence that floated elusively amid their ever-shifting billows, and the deep emerald of the islands that nestled so confidently among the foaming, seething rapids that swept down the slope above, in order to take the fatal leap. The Clifton House veranda had its usual complement of lounging groups of guests, most of them so absorbed in gossip, flirting, or the last sensational novel, that they scarcely seemed to notice the grandeur of the scene they had come so far to enjoy. Of a very different class of visitors was May Thorburn, who sat silently in a vacant corner of the wide veranda, gazing at the ceaseless rush of the Horse-shoe Fall, in a speechless ecstasy of delight. The brown-haired, brown-eyed, rather pale girl, who sat so absorbed in the wonderful grandeur of the scene before her, was not quite sure whether she was the same May Thorburn, who, only a few days before, had been all engrossed in the usual endless round of home duties, sweeping,

dusting, or stitching away at the family mending (and how much mending *that* family needed!), and trying to squeeze in, between these homely avocations, a little of the poetry and music in which her soul delighted. And now, here she was, in the midst of Nature's grandest poetry and music, realizing what had been the day-dream of years! And all this wonderful happiness had come about through the thoughtful kindness of her cousin, Kate Severne, in inviting her to share the delights of a trip all the way from Niagara to the Saguenay—names that had so long stood in her mind as equivalents for the greatest enjoyment that any tourist could hope for—at least outside of Mont Blanc.

She had come by way of Hamilton, and as the train swept her rapidly through the region of peach orchards, her mind was full of vague anticipations of the delights of the prospective journey, with occasional speculations as to Kate's two Scotch cousins, Hugh and Flora Macnab, whose visit to Canada was the immediate occasion of this present trip. Kate, who had repeatedly gone over the whole ground before, and knew it well, wished to act the part of *cicerone* herself, while her kind, though somewhat peculiar aunt, Mrs. Sandford, was the *chaperone* of the little party. It had been the thoughtful suggestion of this aunt that May, who so seldom had a holiday, should be invited to join them, a suggestion which Kate had gladly carried out, in the kind and welcome letter of invitation which had put May into such a little flurry of delightful excitement and preparation.

The rest of the party had arrived before May; and her cousin Kate had met her at the Clifton House station with an enthusiastic welcome and a torrent of information as to their future plans, scarcely half of which May could take in, being quite happy enough in the sense of being *really at the Falls* at last, and of getting her first glimpse of them. She only vaguely heard, in an unreal sort of way, Kate's eager account of her cousins—how "nice" and amiable Flora was, and how well she could sketch; and how Hugh, though very quiet, was very clever, too,—had taken honors at college, had somewhat injured his health by over-study, so that he was obliged to take a rest, and had even written a little book of poems which was soon to be published,—indeed, was now in the press. "And I shouldn't wonder if he were to write another about his travels here, and put us all into it," she added.

May had no particular desire to "be put into a book," but, just then, the interest of the scene before her, with the thunder of "many waters" in her ears, was strong enough to exclude all other ideas. Her eager, watching eye just caught a glimpse of what seemed a giant's caldron of milky spray, and behind it a dazzling sheet of snow; but her cousin hurried her on into the hotel and up to her room, which, to her delight, commanded a splendid view of the Horse-shoe Fall, on which she could feast her eyes at leisure to her heart's content. And now, indeed, anticipation and faith were swallowed up in sight! She had, of course, frequently seen photographs of the great cataract, so that the outlines of the view were familiar enough; but the exquisite coloring, the ceaseless motion, the sense of infinite power, no picture could possibly supply. As she lay dreamily back in a lounging chair, on the veranda, scarcely conscious of anything but the grandeur of the scene, a line or two from Wordsworth's "Yarrow Visited" flitted across her mind:

— "this is the scene
Of which my fancy cherished
So faithfully a waking dream!"

"No!" she mentally decided, "no 'waking dream' could picture Niagara."

"Well, dreaming as usual?" May looked up with a start, as she felt Mrs. Sandford's plump hand on her shoulder. "Kate wants you to make haste and get ready for an expedition. Here are the Scotch cousins. This is Flora, and this is her brother Hugh. You don't need any formal introduction. Kate will be down in a moment, and you are all going for a long stroll, she says, for which I don't feel quite equal yet after my journey, though it *is* a charming afternoon; so I shall stay here and rest. Kate has promised me not to let you run into any sort of danger, and I am sure you'll find her a capital *cicerone*."

Kate, who appeared just then, renewed her promise to be most prudent, and especially to look after her cousin Hugh—her aunt's chief object of anxiety. "And, indeed, you *need* taking care of," she said, in answer to his attempted disclaimer. "You know you're under orders not to overwalk yourself, or get heated or chilled, so mind, Kate, you *don't let him*. I don't want to have to stop on the way to nurse an invalid!"

"I don't think you need be at all afraid, Aunt Bella," the young man replied, with what May thought a pleasant touch of Scottish accent, though his pale face had flushed a little at the allusion to his semi-invalidism, which had been the immediate cause of his journey to Canada. His sister Flora, however, with her abundant fair hair, which, like her brother's, just missed being red, looked the picture of health and youthful energy.

May, with her straw hat beside her, needed no further preparation for the expedition, on which she was, indeed, impatient to set out at once, Kate, to her relief, leading the way with Mr. Hugh Macnab, who was not *her* cousin, and it did not seem to her that she could find anything to say to any one so learned and clever as this quiet-looking young man must be. It seemed much easier to talk to the frank and merry Flora, who tripped on by her side, looking very fresh and trim and tourist-like, in her plain gray traveling hat and gray tweed dress, made as short as a sensible fashion would allow, and showing off to perfection a lithe, well-rounded figure and a pair of shapely and very capable feet. The party entered what is now called Victoria Park, and walked

leisurely along the brink of the precipitous cliff that here formed the river bank, stopping at frequent intervals the better to take in some particular aspect of the wonderful scene before them.

"That's the advantage of not taking a carriage, *here*," explained Kate, who had relentlessly refused all the entreaties of the hackmen. "It's ever so much nicer to go on your own feet, and stop just where you please, and as long as you please! We don't want to hurry *here*. It's a charming walk, now that all the old photographic saloons and so-called museums have been cleared away! By and by, when we feel a little tired, we can take a carriage for the rest of the way."

May soon felt the dreamlike sensation come over her again, as they wandered slowly along the steep cliffs of shade, and came from time to time on some specially charming view of the white foaming sheet of the American Falls, so dazzlingly pure in its virgin beauty, as it vaults over the hollow cliff into the soft veil of mist that perpetually rises about its feet—always dispersing and ever rising anew. Then, as their eager gaze followed the line of the opposite bank, black, jagged and shining with its perpetual shower-bath of spray, what a glorious revelation of almost infinite grandeur was that curving, quivering sheet of thundering surge, with its heart of purest green, and its mighty masses of dazzling foam, and its ascending clouds of milky spray,—sometimes entirely obscuring the fall itself, as they float across the boiling caldron,—sometimes partially dispersed and spanned by the soft-hued arc, which here, as at the close of the thunder-storm, seems like the tender kiss of love, hushing the wild tumult into peace. From many other points she could get better views of individual details, but no nobler view of the mighty whole, than from this silent, never-to-be-forgotten ramble. No one said much; even the lively Kate lapsed from her office of *cicerone*, or, rather, best fulfilled it, by her silence; for, when the infinite in Nature speaks, the human voice may well be still. And how grand a voice was that which the cataract was speaking,—even to the outward ear! The "voice of many waters"—mighty as thunder, yet soft as a summer breeze—seemed to leave the whole being immersed and absorbed in the ceaseless rush and roar of the "Thunder of Waters"—the majesty of whose motion appeared to be, itself, repose.

This feeling deepened as they advanced nearer to the edge of the Horse-shoe Falls. They paused on Table Rock, so much less prominent than it used to be years ago. At every turn they paused, lost in the grandeur of the present impression. It was Kate who first roused them to a sense of the passage of time, and gave the order to proceed, for the afternoon was swiftly gliding by.

"Well!" said Hugh, "I never felt as if I had got so near the state of self-annihilation, the '*Nirvana*' we read about. I don't wonder at suicides here, under the fascinating influence of these rushing waters!"

"Really, Hugh," exclaimed his sister, "I should scarcely have expected to hear *you* rhapsodizing at such a rate! We shall have to look after him, Kate." Hugh replied only by a half smile, but May noticed his heightened color and the absorbed expression of his dark blue eyes, and began to feel much less shy of him. She had much the same feeling herself, though too reserved to say it out.

Kate hurried them on, until they had reached the very edge of the great Horse-shoe Fall. Here they stopped and sat down on a long black beam of timber that lay on the side of the quivering torrent, there seeming almost stationary, as if pausing in awe of the mighty leap before it. Just inside the old beam lay a quiet pool, reflecting the sky, in which a child might bathe its feet without the slightest danger, while, on the outside, swept the great resistless flood of white-breasted rapids, moving down the steep incline with a majesty only less inspiring than that of the cataract itself.

"Well! don't you think Niagara deserves its name, which means 'Thunder of Waters'?" asked Kate, after a long silence.

"It scarcely could have one that better describes the impression it makes," said Hugh Macnab, in a low, meditative tone.

"Are *you* tired yet, Hugh?" asked Kate; "shall we walk on—it's a good mile—or take a carriage?"

"Walk, by all means," said Hugh, "if the rest of you are not tired."

They walked leisurely on by the shore, washed by the swift hurrying water, while, above them, to their right, Kate pointed out the railway track along which they had come, and the point at which they had stopped, in order to get the celebrated "Fall view."

"I shall never forget it," said Flora. "I was a little disappointed at first about the *height*. I couldn't see *that* from there, nor realize it at all! But the grandeur of the scale quite took my breath away. It was like seeing Mont Blanc for the first time. It takes a little while before you can feel yourself grow up to it!"

"That's it exactly!" exclaimed Kate. "That just expresses my own feelings when I saw them first. Well, May, you look sober enough over it all."

"Oh, Kate, it's too grand for words; I'm trying to 'grow up to it,'" she added, smiling.

They reached the bridge leading to the lovely Sister or Cynthia Islands, nestling amid the tumult and foam as safely as in the embrace of a calmly winding river where the constant shower-bath of the spray keeps the foliage and the ferns at their greenest and freshest; and the contrast between the tranquil beauty of the woodland ways and the turmoil of the rapids beyond greatly heightened the charm of the scene.

"Now, we must take a carriage back," said Kate decidedly; and no one objected now, for all were tolerably tired, between the physical fatigue and the mental strain involved in the mere appreciation of so much beauty. They stopped for a few minutes at the Burning Spring, to look, as in duty bound, at that natural curiosity, and then settled themselves comfortably in the carriage they had hailed, while Kate gave the order to return by Prospect Drive, along the bluffs above, whence they could take in the whole sweep of the grand river from Navy Island, at the foot of Lake Erie, to the dark, narrow gorge below the Falls, where the waters fret and toss their crests, like angry coursers fretting at the curbing bit.

"Now," said Kate, "if it were not so late already, I should have had you driven to Lundy's Lane,—only about a mile and a half west of us; but it's too late, for to-day."

"What is remarkable about Lundy's Lane?" inquired Hugh Macnab. "I confess my ignorance."

"Oh, of course; one doesn't expect *you* to be posted in Canadian history," Kate replied. "Lundy's Lane is where the British troops and Canadian volunteers beat the Americans eighty years ago, when they tried to take Canada."

"Oh! I see. Pardon my ignorance. I never happened to hear of such things as battle-grounds in connection with Niagara. I shall have to read up these historical associations."

"May can tell you all about it," replied Kate. "She's great on Canadian history. And there is something about it in my guide book; so you can read up in the evenings all about Lundy's Lane and Queenston Heights, and then you can see them both, if you care enough about it."

The drive was charming, under the slanting rays of the August sun; the sky and water taking on such exquisite ethereal tints, the iris on the clouds of spray so delicately bright, that their gaze was constantly turning backwards as they glided rapidly over the smooth high-road back towards the "Clifton."

"Now for a rest, then dinner—and then, you know, we shall have the moon, and a lovely time for watching the Falls by moonlight."

Kate's programme was fully enjoyed—not least the latter portion of it. They were all tempted forth for another stroll along the river bank, halting again at some of the points from whence they had so greatly enjoyed the afternoon views, to compare the difference of the moonlight effect—less distinct, but more romantic and suggestive. Kate and Flora preferred, on the whole, the play of color and cheerful light of day, while Hugh Macnab endorsed May's preference for the moonlight, which is as effective at Niagara as at Melrose Abbey. They sat long on the piazza that night, saying little, but silently enjoying the marvelous scene—the glory of the white, shimmering water, the solemn majesty of the ascending column of misty spray, and the strong contrast of light and shade—until the picture seemed to have become a part of their mental consciousness, never to be forgotten and a "joy forever."

Next morning the party met at breakfast in good time, as they had a long day before them, and meant to make the best possible use of it. It was a charming morning, and they all set off in the best possible spirits, enjoying the Falls both in the present and the future. To begin with, however, there was a difficulty to be got over. The juniors were all eager to cross the river in the ferry-boat, so as to have the glorious view of the great cataract from a point of view which gives a different and grander impression than almost any other. But Aunt Bella stoutly refused even to consider the suggestion of trusting herself to the tender mercies of a cockle-shell of a boat tossed on that "boiling flood." The difficulty was finally settled by Kate, who put her aunt under the care of a hackman who promised to take her across the suspension bridge and meet them at Prospect Point. The rest of the party, in high glee, followed the winding road that leads down to the ferry, and were soon packed into the large, heavy skiff. Here, indeed, they had the full view of both of the magnificent falls and of the boiling, white caldron below, and the dark, malachite-green rapids that seem to press like a solid body down the narrow river gorge, after leaving the turbulence of the boiling basin behind them. The cool spray dashed in the faces of the happy party as the boat danced lightly over the heaving waters, under the strong strokes of the sturdy rowers; and, when they reached the other side, after a short passage, they all felt as if the exciting pleasure had been quite too brief. On landing they ascended in the elevator to the bank above, and at once took their way to Prospect Point, where they stood for some time lost in the fascination of the scene before them—the majestic American Fall rushing down in snowy foam from the slope of furious white-crested rapids just above the headlong torrent. The thundering sheet filled their ears with its mighty music, and as they could now see its outline curved inwards almost as much as that of the "Horse-shoe" itself, for, of course, the action of falling water is the same on both sides of the river. But the fact that the rapids are here compressed by scattered islands seems to add to the force and fury with which they dash themselves wildly over the stony ledges with a resistless strength which makes us realize the power of the one spiritual force which is described as stronger than "many waters." After they had stood silently watching the

ceaseless progress of the waters, until all their senses had seemed to be filled with its mighty rush and roar, they joined Mrs. Sandford in the carriage, and were speedily driven across the bridge leading over the rapids to Goat Island, which seemed to May like a little tranquil paradise nestling amid the wild fury of the raging floods. Here, indeed, they could have all varieties of scenery. The whole party left the carriage, so that they might feel at liberty to enjoy all the charming nooks of the island at their own sweet will; Aunt Bella, however, preferring to make a leisurely circuit in the carriage, and take them up again at the end of it.

"Only see that Hugh doesn't tire himself out," she called out as they left her behind, and Kate, who noticed the young man's rising color and expression of repressed annoyance at the allusion to them, hurried into a lively talk about the natural history of the island, explaining that it was fast wearing away under the force of the torrent; that it had been gradually growing smaller during the last hundred years, and that probably, in the course of another century, it would have almost entirely disappeared.

"Now, come round this way," she said, "and soon you will almost forget that you are on the edge of the biggest waterfall in the world."

They followed her lead, taking the woodland path to the left, catching charming glimpses of the fleecy rapids between the overhanging boughs of the trees, on which birds sang sweetly and merry squirrels frisked and chattered, as if in a solitary wilderness far from the busy haunts of men. As they came out presently on the open ground at the head of the island, they found themselves beside "still waters," the shoal water rippling gently over the gravel, as if it were a quiet reach of woodland stream; while, above them, lay a smooth stretch of Lake Erie, with Grand Island in the distance, its apparent placidity concealing the fierce undercurrent which no power of man could stem.

"One might 'moralize the spectacle' to any extent," said Hugh Macnab, as Kate told some stories of the deadly strength of that hidden current—that delusively peaceful expanse of water.

"But we haven't time for moralizing," retorted Kate. "Now for a change of scene."

A change of scene it was, when they came out on one of the light rustic bridges which lead across the foaming rapids to the nearest small island, and from one to another of these fairy islets, so tiny that it only seems strange that they are not swept bodily over the Falls, with their wave-worn rocks and trees, gnarled and twisted by the prevailing winds. Under the bridges they saw pretty silver cascades, and swift rushing streams, looking innocent enough, but all charged with a portion of the same overpowering force. On the outer verge of the farthest one they stood, gazing across the boiling sea of rapids that extends unbroken from the Canada shore. Kate pointed out the column of spray which rose at one point, produced by the collision of cross-currents, driving the water forcibly upwards. Then, recrossing the little bridges, they slowly walked along the road leading by the edge of the island overlooking the rapids, till they found themselves standing on the verge of the great Horse-shoe Fall.

"Our Canadian Fall is the grandest, after all," said May.

"Yes," replied Kate, "only it isn't all Canadian, you see, for the boundary-line runs somewhere about the middle of the river. The Americans have more than their own share—all their own, and nearly half of ours."

"I shouldn't think it mattered much," observed Hugh, "as they certainly can't take it away, or fence it in, and forbid trespassers."

Their eyes followed the long, irregular curve, more like the figure *five* than like a horse-shoe, and so deeply indented in the center that they could scarcely mark the center of the abyss, whose almost apple-green tint was every moment hidden by the perpetually ascending clouds of milky spray, sometimes touched by the tinted bow, and always descending into the cloudy veil that eternally conceals the seething abyss below.

"This is Terrapin Rock," said Kate, after they had looked in silence for a time; "and there used to be a tower here from which you could look down on all this wild raging commotion, feeling the strong stone structure tremble beneath you. It came down at last—or was pulled down, because it was thought dangerous, I forget which."

"Well, *this* is fearful enough for me," said Flora, turning away, at last, with Kate, while May still stood lost in the fascination of the scene, till roused by Kate's call, when she discovered that Hugh Macnab had lingered also, absorbed in the same fascination, and was now waiting to help her back across the little bridge which joined the rocky point to the island.

"It seems like waking up to one's own identity again, after having lost it in a vague sense of 'the Immensities,'" remarked Hugh, as they joined the others; and May felt that the words exactly expressed her own feeling.

"But we *must* wake up in earnest," said Kate, "and hurry on, or Aunt Bella will be certainly imagining that we have all gone over the Falls."

They hurried along the smooth, broad road till they at last came up with Aunt Bella, seated on a

rustic bench, with a large basket beside her.

"Oh, my dears! what have—" she began, but Kate playfully laid her finger on her lips, saying: "We are all here, Auntie, quite safe, and now we are going to look at the Fall from Luna Island."

"My dear, not I! I never could go there since that dreadful thing happened there, years ago. It makes me faint, just to think of it! If you go, do be careful! Don't go and stand near the brink!"

"No; we'll be careful, I assure you. Now don't worry about us! We'll be back soon, and then we'll have our luncheon." And she led the way down the stair that leads from Goat Island to the charming bit of bosky green which cuts off the small "Central Fall" from the great "American Fall." May and Flora both exclaimed with delight over its wonderful combination of beauty and terror, its glancing, silvery sheen and terrible velocity, as it rushed past them at headlong speed, on to the misty depths below. And while they stood fascinated by the sight, Kate told them the tale of the tragedy which had happened there on one bright summer day like this, when a young man thoughtlessly caught up a little child and sportingly held her over the brink,—when the struggling little one somehow escaped from his grasp, and the horror-stricken young man madly leaped after her, both being instantly lost to sight in the wild rush of the torrent.

Hugh Macnab turned away with a blanched face. "What a penalty for a momentary thoughtlessness!" he said, in a scarcely audible tone.

And a hush seemed to steal over the little party, as they turned silently away from the fateful spot.

"Yes," remarked Kate, as they reascended the stairway to Goat Island, "the old Indian legend was not so far wrong—that the deity of the Falls demanded a victim yearly. There is scarcely a year in which more than one victim is not secured by these insatiable waters, though it is not always a young maiden—as the legend has it."

When they reached Mrs. Sandford, they found that she had spread the contents of the basket on a white cloth on the grass, and they were all hungry enough to enjoy their luncheon in the midst of such romantic surroundings. After the lunch was finished, and they had all rested for awhile, they made their way to the little staircase close by, down which they were all to go in order to get the wonderful view from below. Mrs. Sandford chose to descend in the elevator, and insisted that Hugh should accompany her, while the three girls ran merrily down the long stair, Flora counting the steps on the way. Hugh was determined, in spite of all his aunt's persuasive eloquence, to don a waterproof suit in order to go under the Falls and explore the Cave of the Winds; and Kate agreed to be his companion, the rest preferring to venture along the rocky pathway, only so far as they could safely do, under cover of their umbrellas. Mrs. Sandford took her seat on a mass of black rock, declaring that she would remain there, in fear and trembling, until they all returned in safety from their expedition. May and Flora strolled about the surrounding rocks, looking up, with some dread, at the precipices towering above them, and at the tremendous columns of falling water, which filled in the view in every direction. Presently, three frightful figures in bulky garments of yellow oilskin emerged from the building at the foot of the stairs, from two of which they presently, to their great amusement, recognized the voices of Hugh and Kate, accompanied by the guide. Allowing these extraordinary figures to precede them, May and Flora clung closely together, holding an umbrella between them, and following, as closely as they could, along the narrow pathway, where the spray rained down perpetually on the shining black rocks below. As they left the American Fall farther behind them, skirting the rugged brown cliffs that support Goat Island high overhead, the pathway became comparatively dry, and they could see more clearly before them the great Fall they were approaching from beneath—its tremendous wall of fleecy foam rising high above them into the deep blue sky, and losing itself below in the floating clouds of spray, which they soon began to feel again in a renewal of the light shower. The two girls had to stop, at last, and stood spellbound, watching the mighty expanse of eternally falling water, its fleecy, flashing masses of milk-white foam, and its gray impalpable billows of ever-ascending spray—through the rifts in which they could ever and anon catch glimpses of that seemingly solid gray wall of water behind. Strange sensations of awe at its solemn grandeur alternating with the sense of the exquisite beauty of the scene absorbed their consciousness, while they mechanically observed, also, the yellow figures—so infinitesimally small beside the mighty cataract—as they passed onward, and were for a few moments, to their momentary terror, lost to view among the clouds of spray that hid their farther progress. Very soon, however, they emerged again, and soon regained the point where the girls were standing, breathless and dripping, but in overflowing spirits.

"And what did you see, when you got in behind the Falls?" asked Flora.

"We certainly did not *see* much," replied her brother. "Everything visible seemed swallowed up in a gray mist, but the whole experience was a wonderful one! I wouldn't have missed it for anything."

"Well, I'm quite contented with what I've had!" said Flora.

May had for a moment a little wistful sense of having missed something, but, after all, intense satisfaction preponderated.

Returning again to the starting-point, they gave Mrs. Sandford reassuring evidence of their safety, so far, and promising a quick return, they pursued their way to the entrance of the "Cave of the Winds," the name given to the hollow arched over by the concave rock and the falling sheet of the lovely little Central Fall. May and Flora again followed under their umbrella, as far as they dared, and there waited, enjoying the wonder and novelty of the sight. May gazed into the mysterious cavern before her, veiled by the clouds of milky spray, as if it were indeed the veritable Cave of Æolus, in which were confined the wailing winds which clamored to be let loose on their mission of destruction, and also, it might be, of blessing; whose hollow roar seemed blended with the full soft "thunder of waters."

May had lost all count of time, absorbed in the scene before her, when Flora's relieved exclamation, "Oh, here they are at last!" recalled her absorbed senses, and she perceived the dripping figures of what might have been disguised river-gods, scrambling back along the wet, rocky pathway.

"Oh, it was *grand!*" Kate declared. "I'll never forget it! To stand, just between those two lovely falls, till you felt as if you were actually a part of them! And then we went on a little way behind the American sheet, too."

"Well, Hugh, are you satisfied *now?*" asked Flora. Hugh's eyes were shining through the dripping moisture, and his face, so far as it was visible, was glowing with exercise and excitement.

"Satisfied? No!—delighted? Yes. But when is the eye satisfied with seeing? The grandest sights only seem to quicken our aspirations towards the Infinite."

But Aunt Bella was now beckoning to the party to hasten back, and, as soon as they were within speaking distance, she hurried Hugh off to change his clothes as speedily as possible. Kate and he were soon out of their grotesque disguise, and in a few minutes they were all ascending, in the elevator, to the upper bank. Here they found the carriage awaiting them, which had been ordered to come back to meet them, and discovered, to their surprise, that they would have to drive home as rapidly as possible if they wished to be at the Clifton in time for the hotel dinner. It was a quiet drive across the suspension bridge, with the Falls to their left, and the deep green gorge of the winding river to their right. Each felt the silent enjoyment of the scenes they had just left, and of the fair evening view around them—with the wonderful Falls always in the distance,—quite enough for the present, without trying to talk about it. Even Mrs. Sandford, usually discursive, was too much fatigued with the day's outing to do her usual part in the matter of conversation.

They made up for it later, however, when, too tired for further roaming, they all sat on the balcony watching the sunset tints fade into those of the brightening moonlight, whose whiteness seemed to harmonize so well with the snowy sheen of the Falls. Kate got out her guidebook, and, with occasional appeals to May to fill up her outlines, gave the strangers a few particulars as to the historical associations of the locality. "You see," she said, "all this frontier was the natural scene of hostilities when the two countries were at war. This is one of the points at which New York troops could most easily make their entrance into Canada." And then Hugh Macnab, by dint of cross-questioning, drew from the two girls, in turn, the main outlines of the war of 1812, concluding with the battle of Lundy's Lane. As they at last said good-night to each other, and to the beauty of the moonlit Falls, they noticed regretfully that a yellowish halo had formed round the moon.

"Yes," said Mrs. Sandford, "it's quite likely we shall have a rainy day to-morrow, and, when it once begins, I shouldn't wonder if we had two or three days of it, after such a dry time!"

"Well, we won't believe anything quite so dreadful just now," said Kate. "We'll go to sleep now, and hope for the best."

Mrs. Sandford was somewhat triumphant in the justification of her weather wisdom, when they heard, next morning, the sound of the rain pattering down on the veranda without. The morning *did*, indeed, look gray, dull, unpromising, as even a July day can sometimes look. May was rather mournful over the loss of the light and color, and the general change that had come over the landscape. But Kate persisted in her optimistic declaration that she believed it would soon clear up, and then everything would be even more lovely than before. Meantime they would have the chance of seeing how the Falls looked in bad weather!

And, indeed, they were by no means without beauty, even now. The purity of the central green was gone, but the soft gray tones melting away into gray mist, under a gray sky, gave the effect of a sketch rather than a finished picture, with suggestions of sublimity far beyond the visible.

As they wistfully scanned the sky after breakfast, watching for a promising gleam of blue, Kate proposed a programme to be carried out as soon as it should clear.

"You see it will be too wet for much walking and scrambling about, which would never do for Hugh, at any rate. Now, let us order a carriage and take a nice leisurely drive all about the country. We've seen the Falls pretty well now, and we can do the battle-grounds—Lundy's Lane and Queenston Heights, and take the Whirlpool on the way."

"Well, we'll see," said Mrs. Sandford resignedly, "if it *does* clear." So she settled down to her knitting. Hugh Macnab sat scribbling in his note-book; Flora amused herself at the piano, and

May hovered about the veranda, still enthralled by the spell of the "Thunder of Waters," even in a washed-out sketch, as Kate styled it. But by and by, a warm, soft gleam stole through the mist-laden atmosphere, small patches of blue sky appeared, and, in a very short time, the color had, as if by magic, come back to the scene; the foliage stood out greener than before, and the emerald once more gemmed the center of the Horse-shoe Falls, though somewhat less than it had previously appeared.

The carriage was quickly summoned, and they were soon rolling smoothly along the road that led away from the river, through the quiet little village of Drummondville—back to Lundy's Lane.

"You see we are really beginning at the end," said Kate. "Lundy's Lane came at the close of the war, in 1814, and it began in October, 1812, at Queenston Heights, which we are going to see this afternoon. For, you see, the American troops kept harassing this border for a couple of years."

"Just as your English forefathers used to harass my Scotch ones long ago," said Hugh.

"Oh, and I suppose the Scotch never did likewise! Indeed, I rather think they were a good deal the worst," laughed Kate. "But, at any rate, this sort of thing had been going on for nearly two years, keeping the poor people in a state of constant dread, and I think Sir Gordon Drummond and his sixteen hundred men, part of them British troops and part Canadian volunteers, must have been pretty tired of it. He made up his mind, however, that, come what might, he wouldn't retire before even five thousand Americans. That hill there was where he stationed his troops, and, as the guidebook says, they *stayed* there, though the Americans did their best to drive them off. At last they tired out the American general, who fell off with his defeated army to their camp, away up there beyond Chippewa—in the direction we walked the first afternoon—and I believe they never halted till they got back to Fort Erie, from whence they had come."

"Your Canadian volunteers must have been a plucky lot of fellows; no disgrace to the British flag they bore," Hugh observed.

"Yes, and it wasn't only the *men* who were plucky," May remarked, somewhat shyly. "The summer before Lundy's Lane, a woman did one of the bravest deeds of the whole war. Her name was Laura Secord, and she was the wife of a militiaman who had been crippled in the war. She found out that the American troops were on the march from Fort George, down at the mouth of the river, with the object of cutting off a little garrison of volunteers entrenched at a place called Beaver Dam. If the Americans could have managed this it would have been a great blow to the Canadians; and, as there was no one to warn them, this brave young woman determined to walk all the way—and a very lonely way it was—through the woods, to warn Fitzgibbon, the British commander. She succeeded in getting through the Yankee lines, and arrived safely at the little Canadian garrison; and when the American troops arrived they met so hot a reception from sharpshooters concealed in the woods, with a few British soldiers in front, that the commander thought he was trapped into an encounter with the whole British force, and precipitately surrendered his six hundred men, guns and all, to a Canadian force of much less than half his own numbers."

"Well," exclaimed Hugh, his eye lighting, and his cheek flushing, "that *was* a brave woman. Such an exploit as that, in our old border wars would have been immortalized in a ballad."

"It has been the subject of two or three Canadian poems," Kate replied. "May knows all about them, and I have no doubt she could recite some of the verses about Laura Secord."

And May, on being pressed, recited a portion of a ballad rather shyly, but still with a good deal of spirit, and seeming to feel more at home with the formidable Hugh, through their fellow-feeling about such traditionary tales. They looked at the little hill and tried to imagine the scene, when, at sunset, the guns mingled their ominous roar with the majestic thunder of the Falls, until recalled by Mrs. Sandford to the recollection that it was nearly lunch-time. They drove some distance further along the pretty shady lane, with its bordering gardens and orchards on either side, and then rapidly returned to the hotel.

In the afternoon they set out again to drive down the river,—the afternoon being a lovely one,—the air fragrant with wandering scents from the woods, and the roads freed from dust by the recent rain. They drove past the little town of Niagara Falls, or Clifton, as it is still sometimes called, at the point where the railway crosses the river on its great suspension bridge, and whose chief center of life is the great railway station for the whole vicinity. Leaving that behind, they followed the road along the river bank till they turned in at the gate leading to the descent to the Whirlpool. A steep, wooded incline descended the abrupt and densely wooded cliffs, down which, at intervals, ran a car, drawn up and down by a chain that passed over a wheel at the top. The fatigue of a descent in any other way was not to be thought of; so, although this way looked rather formidable, they all committed themselves to the car, except Mrs. Sandford, who preferred to remain at the top until their return—remarking that she had no fancy for tobogganing, especially on dry land! And, indeed, the dizzy speed at which they descended was not altogether unlike tobogganing—at least, according to Kate—which, Hugh said, was some satisfaction, since he should not be able to enjoy the thing itself. At the foot of the rapid descent they had only to follow a woodland path for a short distance in order to get a full view of the boiling and raging torrent; the waters, to a depth of more than two hundred feet, being

compressed into a narrow channel of about a hundred yards between the high precipitous banks, till the confined and chafing stream seemed to rise into a ridge of great seething, foaming waves, tossing their heads up like small geysers, or waterspouts, some twenty feet high, as they dashed furiously against each other with all the force of the strong hidden currents. Just here, where the river swerved suddenly to the right, the sweep of the river round the American cliff made a sort of back-eddy in the bay formed by the receding heights above them—where, under a surface of apparently still water, its solemn depths, dark and somber, like a mountain tarn set in the midst of dusky pines, lay concealed, save for a few whirling eddies, a fierce vortex, which nothing that approached it could resist. Looking only on the placid surface, it was difficult to realize the hidden power beneath, until Hugh Macnab threw a large piece of stick near the center, where they saw it continue to gyrate with tremendous speed as long as they cared to watch it. Kate said there were gruesome stories of bodies which had been carried over the Falls, reappearing here for a horrible dance of death, which it made them shudder to imagine. Hugh enthusiastically declared that the dark and savage grandeur of this lonely gorge, with its steep overhanging heights, rising in their dusky green against the sky, like prison walls about the little Maëlstrom, was the finest bit of scenery he had yet seen about the Falls, and seemed just the place in which to imagine any tragedy.

“Can’t you invent one for it?” asked Flora.

“Nothing worthy of the scene, I am afraid,” he replied. “It recalls Schiller’s ‘Diver,’ though, which has been haunting me constantly during the last few days. Do you remember it?”

Kate did not, but May had read Lord Lytton’s translation of it, and remembered it, though not distinctly.

“Couldn’t you repeat a verse or two of your own translation?” said Flora.

“I should *have* to repeat my own, if I did any,” he said, smiling, “for it’s the only one I could manage to remember.”

“Well, give us a bit of it, do,” commanded Kate.

Hugh thought for a moment. “I’ll give you the two stanzas that might do for a description of the present scene,” he said, and went on to recite, with great spirit:

“And it boils and it seethes, and it hisses and roars,
As if fire struggled fierce with the wave,
And a misty spray-cloud from its bosom outpours,
And the chasing floods endlessly rave;
And, like thunder remote, with its low distant rumbles,
The foam-crested stream from the dark cañon tumbles!

But at last comes a lull in the turbulent war,
And black in the midst of white foam
A yawning rift gapes in the center, that far
Leads downwards to bottomless gloom;
And lo! all the surges, swift, rushing and roaring,
Down into the whirlpool are endlessly pouring!”

“It has the merit of being pretty literal, at any rate,” he added, as they all thanked him, while Flora whispered to May that the whole translation was in the new book that was nearly ready. “But it is so strong and terse in the original that it is extremely difficult to render with any justice in a translation.”

“It would do for a description of *this* whirlpool, at any rate,” said Kate. And then she told them of a real tragedy, not unlike that of “The Diver,” which had been recently enacted there, the feat of a bold swimmer, who had ventured to oppose his own strength and skill to that resistless force of the flood, with a similar result.

“Poor fellow!” said Hugh, “that’s tragedy enough for the place without inventing one. But why will man be so foolhardy?”

“I can tell you of another daring feat, that *succeeded* though,” replied Kate, “though *that* might have seemed foolhardy, too.” And she went on to tell them how a little steamboat called the “Maid of the Mist,” which used to ply up and down, just below the Falls, in order to give visitors the same view they now had from the ferry boat, had finally been taken down the river to Niagara, at its mouth, piloted through these fierce rapids and that greedy whirlpool; and how, when at last the pilot had successfully accomplished his anxious task, and left the boat at its dock, he looked at least ten years older than he had done only an hour or two before.

While they talked Flora was trying to make a rapid sketch of the view had from where they sat on the bank—just as a help to remember it by, she said, for there was far too much to attempt in a hasty sketch, and the others were not sorry for an excuse to linger a little longer in so striking and picturesque a spot; but at last they felt compelled to bid it farewell, and tore themselves away, ascending in the same way in which they had come down, not without some tremor on the part of the girls, lest the stout chain should part while they were on the way. Rejoining Mrs.

Sandford, who had grown very impatient, they were soon in the carriage again, but before pursuing their onward way they made a little *détour*, driving through a charming glen which led gradually downwards, under embowering trees and among mossy rocks and ferny glades, to where a pretty little bay lay, cut off from the raving stream by a beach of weather-worn pebbles. At the other extremity of the picturesque glen lay a little placid pool formed by an eddy of the river, at which Hugh declared he should like to stand all day with his fishing-rod, taking in leisurely all the influences of the tranquil scene. Flora, also, went into raptures over the place, which she said reminded her so much of a Scottish glen, and she and her brother eagerly discussed its points of similarity and contrast with several glens well known to them at home.

Returning once more to the high-road they continued their drive in the slanting afternoon light, with rich farms and orchards on either side of them and lovely glimpses of the river and the opposite bank, till they found themselves among the picturesque dingles that lie round Queenston Heights, ascending the noble eminence, crowned by a stately shaft, which had been for some time looming before them in the distance. This height, Kate declared, was a natural monument, marking the Thermopylæ of Canada. But when they came out at last on its brow, close to the base of the shaft, they all exclaimed with delight at the exquisite beauty of the view that lay at their feet, which for the time made them forget that such things as historical associations had any existence.

Just below them lay a fair, broad bay, into which the narrow, precipitous gorge had suddenly expanded; while away to their left they could trace, as on a map, the windings of the now placid river, round point after point, between banks that in the nearer distance looked like escarpments crowned with foliage, and, as they receded, gradually fell away in height until they descended almost to the level of the great Lake Ontario, which stretched—a blue, sea-like expanse—to the horizon line. Across the river, before them, the eye traveled over miles on miles of woodland and fertile farming country, dotted with villages and homesteads; the pretty little town of Lewiston, close to the river, just below. Immediately beneath them the rugged heights fell away abruptly to the river beach, and they looked down on the picturesque little village of Queenston, nestling among its graceful weeping willows, while, from its dock, a small ferry steamer was just leaving the quiet river, on its way to the nearly opposite dock at Lewiston. One or two sailing vessels and skiffs added animation to the charming foreground, and the whole seemed an embodiment of tranquil beauty.

“Who would ever dream,” said Flora, “that this was the same river we saw raging away up there?” though May, listening attentively, could still hear the soft, distant murmur of the “Thunder of Waters.”

“War and Peace,” said Hugh. “But are we not going to ascend the monument?”

“Of course,” said Kate, when they had all read the commemorative inscription, and duly admired the graceful shaft, crowned by the figure of General Wolfe, with one hand resting on his sword and the other extended as if to cheer on his men. They climbed the winding stair within to the summit, from whence they could command still more extensive and varied panorama on all sides of them. Kate eagerly pointed out on the last headland at the mouth of the river the little Canadian town of Niagara, which, she informed her Scotch cousins, was almost the oldest town in Ontario, and had even enjoyed the dignity of being its first constitutional capital. Close beside it they could trace just through an opera glass the ramparts of old Fort George, which had played an important part in stormy days gone by. On the opposite point rose the white walls of the American Fort Niagara. Landward, Kate pointed out the spires of St. Catherine’s, fourteen miles off, and the silver streak of the Welland Canal, winding its devious way from Lake Erie to Port Dalhousie, on Lake Ontario. And, “if they only had a good spy-glass,” she added, “they could catch a glimpse of Toronto, just across a blue stretch of lake.”

After feasting their eyes on the lovely landscape, lighted by the warm afternoon sun, they were not sorry to descend from their lofty perch and sit down a while in a shady spot on the verge of the height, looking down over its dense foliage of oak and maple, birch and sumach, to the blue-green river that flowed beneath, half concealed by the rocky ledges. And as they sat there and Flora sketched, Kate described—helped out by May—how, early in one October morning of 1812, a line of boats filled with American troops had stolen silently across the stream, until the gallant “forlorn hope” had made a landing on the Canadian shore; and how the fire of the guns that greeted their passage had roused General Wolfe at Fort George, and brought him galloping up at the head of his suite to take command of the gallant little British and Canadian force, of only about eight hundred men, all told. But this little force had opposed the progress of the invaders every inch of ground with such desperate valor as speedily to change the attack into a rout, in which numbers of the brave American soldiers, fighting gallantly, even after all was lost, fell victims to the uncontrollable ferocity of the Indians, determined to avenge the death of the brave Wolfe, who had fallen while fighting like one of his own men, and cheering on the “York Volunteers.” Many of the invaders who escaped the pursuing Indians were killed in trying to descend the rocky height or drowned in attempting to swim across the river.

“A well-fought fight it must have been,” exclaimed Hugh, “worthy to take its place beside any of our historical battlefields. Why don’t we know more about these affairs at home? Then we might feel more as if Canada were indeed a ‘Greater Britain!’ And so these heights had *their* dead hero, too, as well as the ‘Heights of Abraham?’”

"Yes, indeed," said May; "General Brock was indeed a hero, just as much as Wolfe, though he only helped to *keep* Canada, instead of conquering it."

"But," said Kate, "to go back to ancient history, do you know that this ridge here is said to have been once the shore of an ocean, and, at a later time, the boundary of the lake; and that here the Falls are supposed to have made their first plunge. The geologists have traced it all the way—its gradually receding front all the way back to where it is now."

"I'm sure I'm much obliged to them," said Hugh, "but somehow these vast blank periods of geological history don't touch me half so much as a little bit of human interest. That battle you have been describing is far more interesting than æons of conflict between water and shale."

"If it interests you so much," Kate rejoined, "you can read more about it when we get home, in a Canadian story I have, called 'For King and Country,' which ends with the battle of Queenston Heights."

And now Flora had finished her little sketch, and Mrs. Sandford warned the lingering party that the afternoon was waning fast, in which undoubted fact they acquiesced with a general sigh of regret. They descended by the steep winding road on the other side of the height, through thickets of aromatic red cedar, down to the scattered little village, embowered among its orchards below, and drove some distance farther on along the road in order that they might enjoy, in returning, the charming view of the Heights, approached from the Niagara side. They followed, for a mile or two, the undulating road which, after leaving the village behind, was skirted with white villas, surrounded by wide stretches of soft green sward, flecked by the shadows of fine old trees, looking like a bit of an English park; and then, turning at last, enjoyed the charming view of the now distant bay, with wooded point after point intervening, and the bold eminence of Queenston Heights always fitly closing in the picturesque vista.

They all thought the drive such an enchanting one that there was not a dissenting voice when Kate proposed that, since they were going to take the daily steamer to Toronto from Niagara, on their onward route, by far the pleasantest plan would be to *drive* thither, when at last they must leave the Falls.

Leaving the Falls seemed a sad prospect to all of them, but more especially so to May, over whom the Falls had thrown such a spell of fascination that she would have liked nothing better than to stay there all summer, feasting eyes and ears on their grandeur. But Hugh Macnab, who owned to the same feeling, added the consoling reflection that "a thing of beauty is a joy forever," and May felt convinced that the memory of the Falls would indeed be "a joy forever" to *her* as long as she lived.

They could only spare three days more to Niagara, and as they sat that evening as usual on the piazza, regretting the lateness of the already waning moon, they agreed that now, having taken a general survey of the main points of view, they should not attempt any plans for the remaining days, but should spend them in those leisurely, unpremeditated loiterings, which are always the pleasantest way of absorbing all the more subtle and indefinite influences of noble scenery.

So the remaining days turned out to be, perhaps, the most delightful of the sojourn, spent in charming desultory strolls, as the fancy of the moment dictated, revisiting all the points which had most impressed them, taking in new beauties which they had not observed before, while they talked or were silent, as the mood suggested, and Flora filled her sketch-book with pretty "bits," and Hugh occasionally withdrew to a little distance and scribbled in his note-book, and Mrs. Sandford, sitting near while the others discursively rambled, accomplished yards on yards of her endless knitting.

Their last day was Sunday, when they walked down to the pretty little church at Clifton, and enjoyed the quiet service, and sat most of the afternoon on the piazza, of the view from whence they never tired. It was a lovely sunset, and they walked as far as Table Rock to have a last lingering look at the superb view from there in the rich evening glow. As they watched the two magnificent Falls into which the stream divides, to re-unite below, Kate told her cousin Hugh of a beautiful simile which she had seen in a new Canadian book called "The New Empire," in which the author suggests that though the stream of the British race in America had divided like that sweeping river into two magnificent sections, so, like it, they might re-unite in the future citizenship of a world-wide Britain.

"And then, perhaps, we shall go on to our laureate's dream of the federation of the world! It is at all events a pleasant thought to finish this glorious visit with; and I suppose this is our farewell look?"

"I am afraid so," said Kate. "We shall not have much time in the morning for loitering. Let us be glad we have such a glorious sight of it—for the last!"

And they sat silently gazing, as if they would fain have prolonged the sunset light. But at length its last vestige had vanished, and they slowly walked back to the hotel in the starlight, while the grand music of the "Thunder of Waters" still filled their ears, and sounded even through their dreams.

CHAPTER II—ON THE LAKE.

"Dreaming again, May! Are you saying a last fond good-bye to the Falls? I'm afraid you've left your heart up there," said Mrs. Sandford, as she smilingly laid her hand on the shoulder of her niece, who stood alone at the stern of the steamboat, silently gazing in the direction of the faint, distant cloud of spray that rose, just traceable against the clear blue sky, with a wistful regret in her soft gray eyes—regret at parting from that wonderful revelation of the sublime which had so powerfully impressed her imagination, and which, just at present, overpowered even the happy anticipations of the further revelations of beauty and grandeur that still lay in the future progress of this wonderful voyage down the glorious river to the sea.

They had a delightful morning drive through the long stretch of charming rural scenery that lies between the Falls and Niagara, studded with pretty bowery old homesteads, long green lawns flecked with the long shadows of spreading walnut and tulip trees, and dark stately pines, through which they could catch glimpses of old-fashioned, pillared piazzas, or of old gray farm buildings, till at last they reached the picturesque suburbs of the quiet little town of "Niagara-on-the-Lake." As they drove through the grove of fine oaks that skirts the edge of the town, and admired the pretty little church of St. Mark's, making a charming picture in the foreground, Mrs. Sandford, who in her youth had often sojourned in the vicinity, pointed out the spot where she remembered having seen the "hollow beech-tree,"—long since gone,—commemorated by Moore in his poem of "The Woodpecker," though, it must be added, that this same beech-tree has been also located in the neighborhood of Kingston. Beyond the oak grove lay a broad green or "common" stretching away to the wide blue lake, on which the Iroquois used to hold an annual encampment to receive their yearly gifts and allowances. To the right of the road, just above the river, Mrs. Sandford pointed out the grassy mound and bit of massive masonry, which is all that is left of old Fort George, with its eventful history, and a little further on the tower of Fort Mississauga, built after the final retreat of the American troops in 1813, out of the ruins of the original town, burned by the American soldiers on a dreary December day. No traces of these old conflicts can now be seen, being long since smoothed over by the gentle yet strong hand of time, and a beneficent Nature. Just opposite them, across the broad blue-green river, which has now lost all traces of its turbulent passion, and subsided into a most peaceful and easy-going stream, they could see the white walls of the American Fort Niagara, which had exchanged so many rounds of cannonade with its opposite neighbor. May, fresh from reading Parkman, was eager to fix the exact spot where her special hero, LaSalle, had built his ill-fated "Griffin," the first sailing vessel that ever floated on these waters; but here her aunt could give her no information. *Her* interest was entirely in later history, and she pointed out the place where Governor Simcoe had opened the first Parliament of Upper Canada and delivered his first speech, with all the usual formalities, to an assembly of eight members and two Legislative Councilors; after which the Governor, with his two Secretaries, departed in due pomp attended by a guard of honor of fifty soldiers from the old fort; and also, how, with less ceremonial, during the warm summer days, the Governor and his Council met on the green sward, under the spreading trees, and arranged the affairs of the Provinces, passing, among other useful measures, the memorable one which put an end forever to all possibilities of negro slavery in the young colony, thereby saving it from much future difficulty and dishonor.

The mention of this last subject had brought on a discussion of the history of slavery in the American Republic, which much interested Hugh Macnab, whose Celtic sympathies had been rather with the South in the great struggle, while Kate was a warm partisan of the North, and argued their cause so well that her cousin had at last to confess himself mistaken on several important points. The argument lasted until they found themselves on board the Cibola, getting up her steam to carry them from Niagara and its glories. While Mrs. Sandford had been dilating on the attractions of Niagara-on-the-Lake as a delightful and quiet health resort, May, who had been very quiet during the drive, had stolen off to a quiet corner in the stern, where the others found her at last, sitting very still and trying to fix the glorious Falls in her memory by calling up once again the picture of them as she had seen them last.

"So this is Lake Ontario!" said Hugh Macnab, looking around with keen enjoyment. "How well I remember stumbling over the name at school in my geography lessons, and reading with awe that line of Campbell's about the tiger roaming along Ontario's shores!"

"Oh, did he really say that?" said Kate. "Who would have thought a great poet would have made such a mistake in his zoology?"

"Oh, as for that," said Hugh, smiling, "poets, especially when they are city-bred—are very apt to make mistakes about natural facts. And Ruskin had not written then, you know. But what a magnificent lake!" he exclaimed again, inhaling the fresh, bracing breeze, and surveying with delight the turquoise-blue expanse of water, whose horizon-line blended softly with a pale azure sky, banked here and there by delicate violet clouds which might have passed for distant mountains. "Over there," he added, "one could imagine it the ocean, at least on one of the rare days when the ocean sleeps at peace!"

"It can be stormy enough, too," remarked Mrs. Sandford, with a grimace, called forth by some vivid remembrance of it in that aspect. "I've been on it when even good sailors at sea have had to give in. For, you see, the short, chopping waves are more trying than the big ocean rollers."

"And how long shall we be on it, after leaving Toronto?" asked Hugh, with some anxiety, for he was by no means a good sailor in such circumstances.

"Oh, you can have fourteen or fifteen hours of it, if you wish," replied Kate, mischievously, suspecting the reason for his question. "But I've been planning a little variation that, because, of course, you see nothing of the country in traveling by lake, and I want you to see some of our really pretty places by the way; and besides, the Armstrongs, our Port Hope cousins, want to have a glimpse of you, of course, and would like us all to give them a day, at least, *en route*. And my plan is, that we take the lake steamer to Port Hope, which we reach in a lovely hour,—just in the gloaming, as Flora would say. We can all stay with the Armstrongs, for they have a good large house and some of the family are away; and we can have some very pretty drives about Port Hope next day. And then, the following morning, we can take the train, and go by the 'Grand Trunk' to a pretty little town called Belleville, on a charming bay called the Bay of Quinte, on which we can have a lovely sail down to Kingston. That will be better than spending the night on the lake—seeing nothing of the scenery and having to turn out of our berths at the unearthly hour of four o'clock in the morning, which is about the time the steamboat from Toronto arrives at that good old city."

"That's a splendid plan, Cousin Kate," exclaimed both Hugh and Flora at once. "What a schemer you are, to be sure," continued Hugh. "I don't know how we should ever get on without you."

May had been sitting by, silently watching the little group, as she had rather a way of doing; Kate's bright face, Hugh's more reserved and sensitive one,—yet seeming so much more animated and healthful than when she had first met him, only a few days ago,—and Flora's sweet, rosy, good-humored countenance,—they made a pleasant picture. How much better Hugh seemed already, and how much he seemed to depend on Kate! May was much addicted to weaving little romances for the people about her,—often on very slender foundation,—and she had already begun to weave one for her cousin. How well they would supplement each other, she thought,—Kate's quick, practical sense and Hugh's more contemplative tendencies. From which it will be seen that May was somewhat given to theories, as well as to modern fiction.

Meantime, they had been swiftly steaming across the azure surface of the lake, and, even by straining her eyes, May could barely discern the faint cloud of mist that represented so much to her inward eye. Indeed they had all begun to look onward for Toronto, and could dimly trace the long succession of buildings and spires that had begun to separate itself from the blue line of distant shore towards which they were approaching.

"We shall be there very soon now," said Mrs. Sandford, rising to collect her numerous satchels, wraps, etc., long before there was any occasion for it. It was a sort of occupation, and she had relinquished, for the time, the sedative of her knitting. While she was thus busied, Kate pointed out, as they drew nearer, the principal landmarks, and the strangers were surprised to find so extensive and imposing a city.

"That low bar of land, there," she said, somewhat slightly, "is what they call their Island, though it really is only a sandbar cut through. I suppose it's better than nothing, for at least they get the fresh lake breezes; but no one who has seen our beautiful 'Thousand Islands' in the St. Lawrence could be content with that for an island. But it is the Coney Island, the Nantasket Beach, the Saratoga, of Toronto!"

"Toronto is an Indian name, I suppose," said Hugh. "Do you know what it means?"

"I do," said May, when Kate had confessed her ignorance. "At least I have read somewhere that it means 'The Place of Meeting,' from having been the point where the roving bands of Indians and the French traders used to meet in the old French time. At first it was only a little stockaded fort, called Fort Kouilly, after a French Colonial Minister, I think, and there the traders and Indians used to make their bargains."

"And after that," said Mrs. Sandford, "it was never known at all until Governor Simcoe made it the first capital, instead of Niagara, which was too near the frontier, and called it York, after the then Duke of York."

"What a pity!" exclaimed Hugh. "But they went back to the Indian name, after all!"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Sandford, "they got tired of hearing it called 'muddy little York,' and changed back to Toronto about fifty years ago; and Toronto it has remained ever since. My father has often told me about the first Parliament buildings here, and the Vice-Regal residence, which the 'Queen City' would not think good enough now for a school building. At the time when it was made the capital, the woods clothed the shore down to the water's edge, and there were only two wigwams here, in which lived two families of Mississauga Indians, from whom the whole site of the city is said to have been bought for *ten shillings sterling*, with some beads, blankets, and, I'm afraid, a little fire-water thrown in."

"Well," said Hugh, "everything is relative; I suppose that represented a small fortune to them, and it has taken a good while to get the 'unearned increment' up to its present value."

"I don't understand your new-fangled terms," said Mrs. Sandford. "There weren't any of them in my day. Now, make haste and get your traps together, for we'll be at the dock in two minutes."

Look for the Arlington carriage, Hugh, that's where we're going; I think you will find it there."

And in a few minutes they were all stowed into the carriage, and driven rapidly away from the noisy dock to the quiet family hotel on King Street, which seemed an inviting resting place in the very warm afternoon. They felt the heat all the more after the cool lake breeze they had been enjoying; and they were all tired enough with their early start to enjoy a *siesta* before their luncheon, which was also much appreciated in its turn. The afternoon was to be devoted to seeing Toronto, and a large double hack was soon at the door, in which the whole party ensconced themselves for a leisurely drive about the busy and beautiful city. Kate, as usual, directed the route, and Hugh sat on the box beside the driver, where he could hear all the information given behind, as well as secure some more on his own account from the communicative charioteer.

They drove first eastward, along the fine stretch of King Street, admiring on their way the pretty, shady grounds of Government House, and the massive Norman architecture of St. Andrew's Church opposite, in which Hugh, as a Scotchman, took a special interest. Passing on, along the favorite resort of Toronto promenaders, they admired the stately rows of buildings, though Hugh and Flora protested against the monotonous white brick, so new to their English eyes. They turned up the busy thoroughfare of Yonge Street, and, after a few blocks, left the region of shops and turned aside into the cool shadiness of Jarvis and Sherbourne Streets, with their handsome residences, surrounded by well-kept grounds; and so up to the rural quiet of Bloor Street. They crossed the fine bridge over the ravine at Rosedale, and admired the picturesque bits of scenery lying about that romantic spot. Then, after following Bloor Street into the new section of the city that has grown up so rapidly about Spadina Avenue, they turned into the beautiful "Queen's Park," and drove through its shady precincts, the Scottish strangers surveying with great interest the new academic buildings that are springing up about the University as a center. At the University, of course, they halted for a closer inspection of the beautiful building, which, as Kate remarked, had just risen, Phoenix-like, from the conflagration that had, a short time ago, left it a mass of magnificent ruins.

"You see they are building the library quite separate, over there, now," Kate said, pointing to where the graceful library building was beginning to show its beauty of design. "It is really wonderful," she added, "how generous people everywhere have been in restoring the loss of the books."

"Yes," replied Hugh. "And I have no doubt the University will be the gainer in the end, as the *trash* will have been all disposed of, and the scientific books will be all new and up to date. But I can imagine what a catastrophe it must have been at the time. It made quite a sensation, even among us students in Edinburgh. Though, apart from the associations, I'm afraid some of us wouldn't have been sorry to have had our old building and old books renewed in the same way! It's too bad for a Scotch university to be eclipsed, architecturally, by a Canadian one!"

"Ah, well, you see, we had the improved taste of this age to guide us," remarked Kate.

"And the taste of a Scotchman, at that, if I am not mistaken," added Hugh.

"Oh, yes, we must grant you the credit of Sir Daniel Wilson and his Edinburgh training. But look at this fine gateway. Fortunately it was not injured by the fire, and is just as it was. I think it's the finest bit of the building."

Hugh admired it all so enthusiastically that May, who had of course seen very little of fine architecture, was glad to have her own admiration endorsed by one who had seen so much more. And, happily, they encountered a stray professor, well known to Mrs. Sandford, who insisted on looking up the janitor, and personally conducting them through the interior of the building, which the tourists were very anxious to see, and which Hugh inspected with the critical eye of a student, approving of the various improvements everywhere introduced, and only regretting the lost glories of the Convocation Hall, on which the professor regretfully descanted.

"But we must wait for some Canadian millionaire to give us a Canadian Christ's Church," he said, smiling.

"Indeed, I think it is wonderful, as it *is*, for a new country," said Hugh, as they exchanged a cordial adieu, Hugh promising in return to show him Edinburgh University if he would look him up over there.

From the University they drove down the fine shady avenue, to show the strangers, a little way from the University, on a little knoll in its picturesque grounds, a monument to the young volunteers who fell at Ridgeway. Hugh and Flora had already heard the story of the Fenian *émeute* that caused so much temporary excitement, and they looked with respectful sympathy at the monument so justly raised to these gallant young men, as true patriots as if the field on which they fell had been one of the historic battle-grounds of the world. The monument to George Brown also claimed their attention for a few moments, and Hugh triumphantly declared to Kate, that, so far as he could see, all the great leaders of Canada had been his fellow-countrymen.

Then they continued their drive down the fine avenue, past the School of Technology, and the great, new Parliament buildings, fast rising to completion, and down the alley of chestnuts on to

which, under the spreading horse-chestnuts, leads down Queen Street, where they duly admired the classic stateliness of Osgoode Hall,—the law center of Ontario. Then they returned to King Street once more, and followed its coarse westward for some miles, to see the former site of the Old Fort near the Exhibition buildings, and the various great institutions of Toronto along its line. The old red brick building of Upper Canada College,—one of the oldest grammar schools in Canada; the handsome front of Trinity College, farther on, in its beautiful park, the grounds and buildings of which Hugh would fain have stopped to explore; the great gloomy-looking, high-walled inclosure of the Lunatic Asylum, with its saddening associations; and then, still sadder sight, the grim Central Prison and the Mercer Reformatory for women. A somewhat more cheerful object of contemplation was the large pile of buildings that form the beautiful Home for Incurables, which Kate declared was quite an ideal institution, at least so far as its plan and appointments were concerned. "But it is a rather melancholy place too," she admitted, "though, if people *are* incurable, it is nice to know that they will be comfortably provided for!"

"I don't believe much in institutions," said Flora, in her soft voice and pretty Scotch accent; "I would rather have one of the plainest little rooms, in a wee, real home, than the most luxurious one in these great institutions!" and May warmly endorsed the sentiment.

"Still, if people can't have even that," said Hugh, "it's well there *are* institutions. I must say myself, that I don't care much for doing things by wholesale, so I for one could never be a socialist. Things were better planned originally. 'He setteth the solitary in families.'"

"That was long ago, my dear boy," remarked Mrs. Sandford. "It's getting to be an old world, and a cold world, too, I fear."

"Oh, I hope not, Aunt Bella. The old order faileth, giving place to new, only the new hasn't got well worked out yet."

On their way back they took a look at the Old Fort Barracks, and at the site of the old French Fort, near which the exhibition buildings, or "Fair grounds," yearly present such a striking contrast to what must have been the silence and loneliness of the spot when it first became a British settlement. And the cool lake breeze was most refreshing after the heat of the July day, and sent them back to the hotel, reinforced for dinner, after which they were not disposed to do more than sit quietly on one of the balconies of the hotel, Mrs. Sandford knitting with great satisfaction, and the others amusing themselves with observing the ever-varying line of pedestrians constantly passing to and fro on their way from places of evening entertainment.

Next morning all the junior members of the party started for a ramble on foot, going first along King Street and looking in a more leisurely fashion at the various handsome public buildings, the banks, the great newspaper offices, a little off King Street, the fine post-office on Adelaide Street, the attractive picture and bookstores, and then turning up Church Street, pursued their way to the Normal School buildings, where Kate exhibited to her companions with some pride, the various educational appliances of that center of the public school education of the province, the handsome, and even luxurious lecture-rooms, class-rooms, library, and last, but not least, the spacious and delightful Kindergarten, a paradise of infantine education, which was Kate's especial delight, and which to Hugh and Flora was a charming novelty in "school-keeping." After that they continued their walk in a desultory fashion along the shady streets of that quarter of the city, admiring the handsome churches and villa-like residences which there abound. Then they crossed the Park to take one more look at the beautiful University buildings, and came back to the Arlington by the way of St. George Street with its fine residences, and Spadina Avenue, just in time for an early luncheon before preparing for their departure by the good steamer *Corsican*.

The early afternoon found them all on the deck of the steamer, gliding swiftly out of Toronto Bay, leaving in the distance the long mass of fine buildings that extends along Front Street and gives the stranger some idea of the wealth and business of Toronto; past the long sandbar, which at once protects Toronto Harbor and serves as a "health resort" and "*villegiature*" for so many Torontonians. Very soon, as the steamer ploughed her way through the blue lake, calm as a millpond, Toronto had become invisible, and the high land of Scarboro Heights rose to the left, while to the right the blue horizon line again reminded the travelers of the sea. Presently, there arose the fresh, bracing afternoon breeze, most grateful to the strangers especially, who had felt the heat at Toronto rather oppressive. It was a delicious afternoon, and as the sparkling and quivering golden pathway thrown on the waters by the westering sun showed them that it was passing away all too soon, Hugh declared that if he lived in Canada he should want to spend most of the summer on a yacht on such halcyon waters.

"Yes," said Mrs. Sandford, "yachting is very well in summer weather, when it is calm like this, but it's dangerous at best on these great lakes where sudden squalls are apt to rise at any moment. Don't you remember, Kate——"

"Oh, yes, Auntie," Kate interposed, hurriedly, "don't talk about it now. It's too sad. But, Hugh, how would you like to 'paddle your own canoe' all the way down from Toronto to the foot of the lake, as they used to do in the brave days of old?"

"I shouldn't fancy any one would try such an experiment in these days of rapid locomotion," said Flora.

"Indeed, some people *would*, and think it great fun," replied Kate. "A friend of ours, with his wife and little girl, paddled down the whole way to the St. Lawrence one summer, just for the pleasure of it. And his wife—just as the squaws used to do—helped him with the paddling."

"And how long did it take them?" asked Hugh.

"About ten or eleven days. And they kept a log, or at least a diary of each day's events, for future edification. Of course, they stopped over night at some place where they could sleep comfortably and have a good breakfast to start with."

"Oh, I should think *that* might be very pleasant. But, in 'the brave days of old,' they had not any of these conveniences, and I suppose they did not take it so leisurely."

"Poor LaSalle had many a hard paddle up and down the lakes in all sorts of weather," said May. "It makes one shudder to think of some of his voyages, and with so many hardships, too!"

"Well," said Hugh, "I think I prefer the more expeditious way, where there's no particular scenery to tempt one."

"Oh, of course, there isn't *much* of what you would call scenery along this coast," said Kate. "Nothing like what there is along Lake Superior or Lake Huron. But still, if you were to keep close along shore, there are many pretty little 'bits' to enjoy; and just think what a delicious lotus-eating life it would be."

"Except for the paddler," interposed Hugh.

"Oh, indeed, you don't know how the paddlers get to love it! There seems a sort of fascination about it, and it gets to be a passion with them. There is much more interest and variety about it than about rowing. Do you know, there's a great American Canoe Association to which many Canadians belong, which has its 'meets' every summer, at some pleasant spot, with good boating. They have all sorts of exercises, races, canoe-gymnastics, prize contests, and a splendid time generally. And ladies belong to it as well as men. This year it is to be held at one of the 'Thousand Islands'; and, by the way, I shouldn't wonder if you might have a glimpse of it. You know we are all invited to spend a few days at the summer cottage of a friend there, with whom I have often stayed, and it isn't very far from where they have the Canoe Camp; so we may just manage to have a look at it."

"That would be charming! I should like that," exclaimed Hugh and Flora both together; while May began to think that too many delights were clustering about this wonderful expedition, and that she should suddenly awake to find it all a dream; and Cinderella at home again, amid her dusters and her stocking-mending—as if there were no Niagara and no "Thousand Islands" in the world.

Meantime, they were ploughing their way through the gleaming blue and gold waves, with water and sky meeting at the horizon line, all around them, save for a blue strip of shore to their left, while the steering was done by compass, a new experience for the strangers, on an inland lake.

"I don't wonder," Hugh remarked, "now that I've seen this lake for myself, I don't wonder that the British Foreign Office, long ago, should have sent out water-casks for the frigates here, as you were telling me. It is hard to realize that this great blue expanse is really *fresh* water." And May felt delighted that she now could the better picture to herself what the *sea* was actually like.

But the soft shadows of evening were falling on the woods and hills before them, as the steamer glided into the beautiful harbor of Port Hope—a noted harbor even in the old Indian times, under the name of Ganeraské. The placid water, afire with rich sunset tints, and smooth as a mirror, was dotted with the skiffs of pleasure seekers, and the pretty little town looked most attractive, as, half in shadow, it nestled in its picturesque valley and straggled up the sides of its protecting hills. The long railway viaduct seemed to lend it an additional charm, and Flora McNab appealed to her brother whether it were not more like one of their old-country towns, than any they had yet seen. On the pier were a number of strollers, who had come out to catch the evening breeze, or to see the arrival of the daily boat; and, among them, Kate's quick eye easily recognized Nellie Armstrong and her brother, who gave them all a warm welcome, and speedily packed them into a dog-cart and a light-covered carriage, in which they were driven through the shady, sloping streets to the pretty bowery home of the Armstrongs, where another kind welcome awaited them from the host and hostess, and where an inviting supper was laid out in a cool, pleasant dining-room, opening on a velvety lawn overshadowed by a great "bass-wood" or linden tree. To May it all seemed like a delightful romance, nor did she mind a bit the soft rain, which, during the night, she heard through her dreams, pattering on the great leafy bough with that peculiarly tranquilizing effect which a soft summer rain has on the sleepy listener at night.

The morning was wet and misty, but their host declared the latter to be a good sign. And so it proved, for by the time the carriages, ordered for a long drive, were at the door, the mists were rolling gently up the sides of the hills, giving to the charming landscape just the touch of poetry that could best enhance its charm. It was a delightful drive, taking in most of the hills around the town, and the fine view from the one called "Fort Orton" was particularly enjoyed by the travelers.

"It's very like a pretty English or Scotch view," said Flora. "Not what one is apt to imagine *Canadian* scenery."

"Well, you see, this is one of the oldest settled parts of Canada," said Mr. Armstrong. "The whole vicinity is associated with the early French Missions to the Indians, and with some of the early French and Indian wars. There was an old Sulpician Mission at the Indian village on the very site of Port Hope—a mission whose director was the Abbé Fénelon, the first explorer of this lake shore, and no other than a brother of the celebrated Fénelon, who was the distinguished Archbishop of Cambrai, and instructor of the Dauphin of France."

"And who wrote 'Télémaque?'" said Kate.

"Precisely. And while he was writing it for his royal pupil, his brother, devoted to the spiritual good of the poor ignorant Indians, was trying to teach the Catechism and the Lord's Prayer to the little Indian children, and enduring among the fierce Senecas, hardships far greater than those through which his brother was leading Télémaque. He was a real hero, that Abbé Fénelon."

"I must read up those old French Missions," said Hugh. "They seem to be wonderfully rich in heroic deeds."

"They are, indeed," said Mr. Armstrong, "but I wish you had time to go back to the neighborhood of Rice Lake and Peterboro', with its lovely little lakes. By the way, there is a pretty waterfall thereabout, named after this Abbé Fénelon, and the whole country is full of associations, not only with those old French explorers and missionaries, but also with the almost equally gallant fight of the old U. E. Loyalist settlers, with hardships and privation."

"And what *is* a 'U. E. Loyalist?'" asked Hugh. "I've seen the expression before, but have no idea what it means."

"We should not expect you to understand our Canadian terms, without explanation," said Mr. Armstrong, laughingly. "Well, a U. E. Loyalist means one of those first settlers of Canada who were driven to take refuge here at the time of the American revolution, because they would not give up their allegiance to the British Empire, and so they left their farms and possessions behind, and came to settle in the wilderness under the 'old flag.'"

"Oh, I see," said Hugh. "I have heard that many did so, but did not know that they were called by that particular name."

"Well, they gave good proof of their loyalty," said Mrs. Sandford; "for many of them had pretty hard times. Mrs. Moodie's experiences which she records in her book, 'Roughing it in the Bush,' were endured in this section of the country. I must try to get the book for you to read. You know she was a sister of Miss Agnes Strickland, and she and her sister, Mrs. Traill, may be called our pioneer authoresses, though we can hardly call them Canadians."

"Yes, and this is a neighborhood full of Indian legend, too," said Mr. Armstrong; "we have a village called *Hiawatha*, not many miles from here, and a 'Minnehaha,' 'laughing water,' in the same neighborhood; and not far from either dwelt the magician Megissogwon, who, 'guarded by the black pitch-water, sends fever from the marshes,' as, indeed, many a pale-face victim of fever and ague has known to his cost. And old Indian battlefields have been discovered hereabout, besides the connection of this point with warlike expeditions between white men in later times."

"And so we can never get away from 'old unhappy things and battles long ago,'" said Hugh, moralizingly.

"Well, let us give them the go-by, just now," said Kate and Flora together. "On such a lovely evening, we don't want to think of battles and unhappy things,—old or new."

"Only, somehow, they seem to add the touch of human interest, even if it be a sad one," rejoined Hugh, who was so much interested in all he could learn of the past history of the country that Kate laughingly chaffed him about the book or magazine article he must be going to write when he got home. However, the chaffing had no effect on his thirst for knowledge, and when they returned in the lovely summer twilight,—more than ready for the substantial repast which awaited them, notwithstanding the luncheon they had enjoyed on the way,—Hugh eagerly set to work thereafter, to devour, in addition, all the scraps of information which Mr. Armstrong hunted up for him among the historical works in his library. But his attention was somewhat distracted by the songs which Nellie and Flora and May were singing, sometimes in concert, sometimes separately, at the piano in the adjoining drawing-room. Flora delighted them all with the sweetness and pathos with which she sang some of the "Songs from the North," which the others had not previously heard. They gave her an enthusiastic *encore* for the spirited song "Over the Hills to Skye," and at last, after hearing it two or three times, they all joined in the chorus.

"Speed, bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing,
Onward! the sailors cry.
And carry the lad who was born to be King,
Over the hills to Skye."

And they were almost as much fascinated by the chorus of the other, "The Bonnie, Bonnie Banks

of Loch-Lomond," and sang again and again the mournful refrain:—

"Oh, ye'll tak' the high road, an' I'll tak' the low road,
An' I'll be in Scotland afore ye;
But I'll never, never see my true love again
On the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch-Lomond!"

"You see, you can't get away from the 'old unhappy things,'" said Hugh, at last leaving his books and coming to join the group at the piano. "It's always the same two minor chords we have in every pathetic song or story—love and war—in some form!"

"Yes," said Mr. Armstrong, "see how the American war struck into life the latent possibilities of pathos and poetry in the practical American people."

"Oh, by the way, Kate," said Nellie, "don't you remember that Mr. Winthrop we met at Old Orchard last summer, with whom you used to have so many arguments about the North and South, and all the rest of it? I think he made a convert of you."

"Nonsense!" said Kate; "but what of him?"

"Oh, he called here two or three weeks ago in the course of a tour he was making, and he asked most particularly for you. I really believe he was going to look you up; and you were away from home. What a pity!"

"Indeed, I think it very unlikely that he would do anything of the kind. It would be quite out of his way," said Kate, nonchalantly.

"Well, I do think he meant to do so," returned Nellie. "He made most particular inquiries about just how to get there."

"I shall certainly be very much surprised to hear that he took any such trouble. Was he as argumentative as ever?"

"No, for most of his time here was spent in making the inquiries I referred to!" retorted Nellie, rather mischievously. "I only wonder you have not stumbled across him in the course of your travels."

Hugh had looked up with a sudden air of interest. "I noticed the name of Winthrop in the register of the *Clifton*, only a few days before we arrived."

"Then we just missed him," said Kate, in an indifferent tone, though with a somewhat heightened color. "You would have enjoyed meeting him, Hugh. He would have given you the American side of everything at first hand. What I have given you is only a very faint echo."

"But haven't you any Canadian songs to give me?" asked Hugh, as the girls were about leaving the piano.

"There's the old 'Canadian Boat-song,'" said Nellie, doubtfully.

"No, no," said Kate, "that's all very well for singing on the river. We'll have it *there*, by and by. Give Hugh something that has more of a native flavor about it. Sing him one or two of those French Canadian songs you used to be so fond of—'La Claire Fontaine,' you know, or 'En Roulant Ma Boule.'"

"But they are so silly," objected Nellie.

"Dear me! who expects songs to be sensible nowadays, especially songs of that sort? And Hugh can enjoy a little nonsense to a pretty air, as well as anybody, I'm quite sure. Remember how much Mr. Winthrop used to like them," said Mrs. Sandford.

"Well, I'll sing them," said Nellie; "only, as the air is so simple, you must all of you join in the chorus, after the first time. You can easily catch it up."

And she proceeded to sing, with much spirit and expression, two or three of the lively French-Canadian airs, which have come down from the old times of *voyageurs* and trappers—and the whole party caught the fascination and were soon singing, all together, the rollicking chorus of:—

"*En roulant ma boule roulant,—en roulant ma boule.*"

and the prettier, half-playful, half-serious love ditty, the refrain to "*La Claire Fontaine*":

"*Il y'a longtemps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai,*"

till every one was surprised to find that it was eleven o'clock, and time for the travelers to seek their rest in preparation for an early start.

It was with great regret that the good-byes were said next morning, and the little party separated

at the Grand Trunk station. May thought she could see very well that Jack Armstrong had fallen a victim to the fresh, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed Flora, and, accordingly, was not surprised when something was said about a possibility that he and Nellie might meet them at Quebec, by and by, and go with them down the Saguenay.

"At all events we will live in *Hope*," said Jack, who was too fond of puns. "You know this is a *hopeful* atmosphere."

And so they were off from old *Ganeraské*, as this Port of Good Hope was first called, and on the road once more.

The next stage was not very long, however. At Cobourg they utilized the "twenty minutes for refreshments" by driving rapidly about the principal streets of this old town, commemorating in its name the marriage of the young Queen with the good Albert of Cobourg. They got a distant glimpse of the tower of the Victoria University, soon to be removed to Toronto, where its name will not have the historical significance which it had here. Mrs. Sandford informed Hugh how many factories the little town contained, cloth, cars, leather, and more besides. Then they had a run of some two hours through a fertile farming country, leaving the train at Belleville, where they were to spend the remainder of the day. Taking an early luncheon, they devoted the rest of the afternoon and evening to pleasant drives about the picturesque vicinity of the pretty little city, which, Mrs. Sandford said, was first named *Belleville* in honor of Arabella, the wife of an early governor. That it deserved the added "e" no one doubted, for all admired its fine situation at the head of the noble Bay of Quinte, with two rapid rivers, the Trent and the Moira, running through the town. Everywhere that they drove in the neighborhood they came upon charming glimpses of bay and river, or rich fields of waving grain, thriving orchards and pleasant old homesteads surrounded by their farm-buildings, making many delightful rural pictures to carry away. And again Mrs. Sandford reminded them how all that comfort and prosperity was the late fruit of the hard labors and patiently borne privations of the loyal old settlers, who chose to begin life over again in the wilderness, rather than sacrifice their political principles and disown the flag they loved so well.

"I'm afraid I'm not such a Tory as you are, Aunt Bella," said Hugh; "few of us juniors are in these latter days. But, all the same, it was a noble thing to do—to follow their principles to the bitter end, and go out, like Abraham, into the wilderness."

"But I'm not sure that they were *all* noble," interposed Kate, who always loved to take the other side for argument's sake. "You know some of them, at any rate, never thought that the American 'rebels' would succeed; and when they did, of course, with feeling running so high, they couldn't expect much comfort among *them*, in any case; and many of the Loyalists had their farms confiscated, so that they hadn't much choice but to move out!"

"Yes; and a burning shame it was for those who confiscated them!" rejoined Mrs. Sandford, who had some traditions of the kind in her own family. "And I know well enough you got these Yankee ideas from *that* Mr. Winthrop!"

"Well," said Kate, calmly, "it was all for the best in the end, though, of course, it was hard for the people who were driven from their homes. But you see, if they had not *had* to leave them, we might never have had this glorious 'Canada of ours,' of which we are so proud!"

"Yes," remarked Hugh, "Mr. Armstrong told me that the narrow and mistaken policy of the American leaders at that time was really the foundation of British Canada."

And then he went on give them some of the information he had got out of Mr. Armstrong's books, the preceding evening, in regard to the beautiful valley of the Trent, through which they were driving. He told them how Champlain, three centuries ago, had sung its praises at the Court of the *Grand Monarque*, as "a region very charming and delightful," where the park-like aspect of the trees suggested the previous occupancy of the country in bygone days by some superior race. Then, putting aside this pre-historic period, it was here that Champlain, on his way to his mistaken raid on the Iroquois, which was the beginning of so much strife and trouble, had joined his savage allies in an Indian "Chevy Chase"—in which, by mishap, he wounded one of his dusky friends. But these old stories have long ago been forgotten, in the interest of mines—gold and iron—which, found in the vicinity, have, as usual, somewhat deteriorated the region to which they have given an artificial stimulus. As they drove in from Trenton, a small place at the confluence of the Trent with the bay, in the soft falling dusk, Hugh entertained his companions by repeating some of his favorite passages from "Hiawatha;" and May, who was poetical and patriotic enough to be something of a student of Canadian poetry, repeated a sonnet by one of Canada's earliest singers, Charles Sangster, who, falling on evil days, has not achieved the fame which his genius deserved:—

"My footsteps press, where, centuries ago,
The red man fought and conquered, lost and won;
Where tribes and races, gone like last year's snow,
Have found th' eternal hunting grounds, and run
The fiery gauntlet of their active days,
Till few are left to tell the mournful tale;
And these inspire us with such wild amaze,

They seem like spectres passing down a vale
Steeped in uncertain moonlight on their way
Towards some bourne where darkness blinds the day,
And night is wrapped in mystery profound.
We cannot lift the mantle of the past:
We seem to wander over hallowed ground,
We scan the trail of thought, but all is over-cast."

"Thank you," said Hugh, "I should like to see more of that poet. I like his vein very much."

"Oh, May can give you screeds of any length from his 'St. Lawrence and the Saguenay' as we go along. And I daresay you can get the book in Kingston—he is a Kingstonian, I believe," said Kate, who was not particularly poetical.

And then as the shadows of night drew softly about them, the fireflies flashed in and out of the woods with unusual brilliancy, affording the Scotch cousins a new subject for observation and delight.

"I declare," said Hugh, "one can scarcely get rid of the feeling that they might set the woods on fire!"

"They are not common so late in the season," said Kate. "Only now and then, for some reason best known to themselves, they show themselves, but only in the woods."

"And there is the whip-poor-will!" exclaimed May, eagerly.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" said Flora, after listening attentively. "That is one thing I *did* want to see or hear!"

"You are much more likely to hear it than to see it," said May. "It is very hard to get a good look at one, for it seldom appears in daylight."

But soon the fireflies and the whip-poor-will were left behind, and they were once more rattling over city streets. And then, after a substantial tea, they went to rest, for the steamer for Kingston was to start at six in the morning.

As the scenery of the Bay of Quinte depends very much on the weather, the little party were fortunate in having a lovely changeful morning, with soft mists and cloud-shadows that gave a charming variety of tint and tone to the beautiful bay and its fair, gently sloping shores. The little steamer "Hero" passed in rapid succession one picturesque point after another—the bay sometimes expanding into a broad, wind-rippled expanse; sometimes narrowing into calm reaches or inlets, mirroring the foliage on either side. At the head of the largest reach or arm of the bay, the steamer stopped at the pretty little town of Picton, nestling beneath a noble wooded hill, with gentler slopes rising about it in all directions. Whether Picton or Port Hope possessed the more picturesque site was a question they found it hard to decide. Returning down this long reach Hugh was seized with a desire to see the "Lake of the Mountain," on the high table-land above the bay, of which he had often heard. And Kate, who considered nothing impossible, actually persuaded the obliging captain to keep the boat at the landing below it for half an hour, in order to give them time for a hurried visit. Mrs. Sandford, of course, graciously declined the climb, but the others hastened up the steep ascent, where a mill-race came rushing down the height, amid a lush growth of ferns that grew luxuriously among the dark, wet rocks, between which they picked their way. But, once at the top, what a glorious view! Right below their feet stretched the lovely reach—widening out into the broad bay at the end of a long promontory diversified with fields and farms and wooded shores. Close beside them, on the other hand, lay the lovely little lake they had come to see—calmly sleeping in the sunshine, with as little apparent mystery about it as if its very existence were not an unsolved problem; one supposition being, that, as it is at about the same level as Lake Erie, it may be fed by a secret communication with that distant sheet. But they had only a few minutes to stay beside the beautiful mysterious little tarn, and to enjoy the lovely view spread before their eyes, for the steamer just below was already whistling to recall them, and they hurried down to rejoin her,—somewhat warm and out of breath, but with all the satisfaction one feels in making the best of one's opportunities.

As they left the reach, a sun-shower rolled up, accompanied with distant thunder; but it only seemed to add a bewitching variety to the tones of the distance, and of the water, and, when the sunshine broke out again, conjuring up an exquisite rainbow, and the light and shade chased each other over the golden fields of waving barley—the beauty of the bay with the perspective of the "Long Reach" in the distance, seemed still greater than before. The travelers were content to sit still, passively absorbing the charm of the hour, while they looked on in a dreamy fashion at the various points of interest; at Point Mississauga, named, of course, in honor of the former "lords of the soil," whose "*totem*," a crane, seemed to be appropriately keeping guard over the spot; then at the various villages and townships;—at Deseronto, a busy little lumbering place, named after an Indian chief, whose formidable name signifies "Thunder and Lightning;"—at a forsaken-looking little "Bath," with its ambitious name, and at a long succession of "towns," or rather townships, named, by the overflowing enthusiasm of the U. E. Loyalists, after the numerous olive branches of old George the Third. There is Ernestown and Adolphustown, and Ameliasburg and Marysburgh; and there is Amherst Island, named, like Picton, after an English

general, and said to have been lost by a noble owner at a game of cards! Hugh declared that the loyalty and *Britishness* of everything were rather monotonous, and could not refrain from heartily wishing that these good people had not, in their zeal, undertaken to change to the commonplace name of Kingston the melodious Indian name of Cataraqui! For here they were now coming in sight of this old "limestone city"—the oldest settlement in Ontario, the cradle of British Canada—and, to May, surrounded with a halo of romance from its close association with the history and fortune of her brave but hapless hero, the dauntless explorer, LaSalle.

CHAPTER III—AMONG THE BEAUTIFUL ISLANDS.

And now they were rapidly approaching the gray, "limestone city," which rises picturesquely on its slope behind its line of wharves, and elevators, and masts of vessels, with a certain quiet dignity not unbecoming its antiquity, and derived, partly from its harmonious gray coloring, and partly from the graceful towers and spires that form so prominent a feature in its aspect. And it was by no means easy for May to call up in imagination—as she tried to do—the wild, savage loneliness of the place, with its wooded slopes, as yet untouched by the hand of the settler, as it presented itself to LaSalle, when he first discovered the advantages of making Cataraqui his base of operations; or even as it was seen by the first detachment of U. E. Loyalists, when their *batteaux*, slowly making their way up the St. Lawrence, rounded the long promontory now surmounted by the ramparts of Fort Henry. One tall tower, seen long before any other evidence of a city appeared, belonged, the captain told them, to the Roman Catholic Cathedral. Presently, however, extensive piles of fine public buildings attracted their attention, which they found were unfortunately the shelter of lunacy and crime, Kingston being the seat of the Provincial Penitentiary, as well as of a large asylum. In welcome contrast, they were shown the Gothic tower of Queen's University, rising above an *entourage* of trees, though far from being as imposing in its dimensions as these palaces of gloom. From thence, the eye wandered over other towers and domes and spires, relieved by masses of verdure, which led them easily to believe the captain's report that Kingston is a very attractive city, especially when summer had embowered it in shade. And there were great schooners, under a full spread of canvas, and massive lake steamers and propellers, and little active steam-launches, flitting about, in striking contrast—May thought—to the stillness of the scene, broken only by the Iroquois canoes, when Frontenac's flotilla came in state up the lonely river to found old Fort Frontenac.

"And what a glorious sheet of water around it!" exclaimed Hugh, taking in with an admiring gaze the westward blue expanse of lake and the great wide sweep of river studded with islands, stretching away to eastward, which they told him was the St. Lawrence, at last. And then, as they rounded the curve of the fine harbor, and saw before them, on the one side, the fine cut-stone front of the City Hall and on the other, on a long, green promontory, the Royal Military College, with its smart Norman towers, they observed a long bridge behind which the river Cataraqui winds its way down from the northeast, and forms this beautiful harbor by its confluence with the St. Lawrence. Six miles up its placid stream, they were told, the Rideau Canal had its beginning at a picturesque gorge where are the first massive stone locks, which form one of the finest pieces of masonry on the continent. This Rideau Canal binds together a chain of lovely little lakes, and finally meets the Rideau River, and so makes a convenient water-way to Ottawa,—designed, it is said, by the Duke of Wellington, as a means of intercommunication remote from the frontier.

"And where are the old *Tête-du-pont* barracks?" asked May, who had got that name, by heart, out of Parkman, that she might be able to fix for herself the site of the old French fort which Frontenac had inaugurated and La Salle had commanded. She was shown some gray stone buildings, enclosing a quadrangle, at the nearer end of the long, low bridge crossing the Cataraqui to the opposite plateau with the green slope beyond it, on which stood the main defences of Kingston,—Fort Henry above, and, near the Military College, certain round stone towers, which, scattered about the harbor, gave quite an air of military distinction to the place.

"I'm afraid none of them would be of much good, nowadays," remarked a passenger, and Hugh laughingly assented, adding, "We may trust, I hope, that they will never be needed."

"Not much danger, I think," was the reply. "We may have a tiff with the 'States' once in a while; but there are too many Canadians there now! We can't afford to quarrel."

They went, on landing, to a hotel bearing the appropriate name of "Hotel Frontenac," where they did full justice to an early dinner. And, after that, having a couple of hours or so to spare, before starting for the island, they drove through the pleasant little city, embowered in the shady avenues extending in every direction, its streets striking off at all angles. Of course they went to look at the two cathedrals, the Roman Catholic one being a massive Gothic building with an equally massive tower, and at the graceful Gothic temple of Queen's University, on its fine open *campus*, and then followed the charming drive by the lake shore, till they passed the great, and as they thought, gloomy masses of the Penitentiary and Asylum buildings, and then came out on another unimpeded view of the blue lake. Then returning, they drove back past quiet suburban residences, within spacious and shady grounds, admiring the substantial and comfortable look of the houses, and the tastefully kept surroundings;—and through the pretty little park, stretching on one side, down to the breezy lake shore, with its round stone tower, and, on the other, rising in a gentle slope crowned by a stately Grecian court-house, with picturesque church towers rising

around it in the background. And at one side of this park, they made a little *détour* to look at the Hospital, whose plain central building was the first local habitation of the Parliament of Upper and Lower Canada, when Kingston for a few years occupied the position of capital of the recently united provinces. Then returning to their boat, they passed a handsome post-office and custom-house, of which, with her spacious city hall, Kingston is naturally somewhat vain. The houses they passed were bright with window flowers and baskets of blooming plants, prettily relieving the green sward in front; and they all agreed that Kingston bore worthily enough its *prestige* of being the oldest historical city in Ontario—the present name of western Canada.

But though it was nearly four o'clock, and the beautiful islands were before them—they went to snatch, at May's desire—a peep at the old *Tête-du-pont* barracks, with weather-worn gateway and interior square, in which, when the foundations of the barracks were laid, there were some traces found of old Fort Frontenac, which had therefore evidently stood on that very site. May, at least, looked at it with a sincere reverence, as she thought of how many changing phases of fortune in her hero's history that square had been the scene.

But now it was almost four o'clock, and they must hasten to the boat that was to carry them to the beautiful islands which had been beckoning them so long. As the *Pierrepoint* glided out of the protected harbor, the afternoon sun lighted up the grey mass of the city, and the Norman towers of the Royal Military College, standing on its strip of *campus*, to their left, as they entered the real St. Lawrence, while beyond it rose above them the green hill-slope which forms the *glacis* of the low, long-stretching ramparts of Fort Henry, with its fortified water-way, and the round grey towers at its base. And as they rounded its long promontory, leaving the distant city behind it, May once more tried to picture the solitude of the scene as La Salle first knew it, broken only by his own canoe and those of the ferocious Iroquois. Meantime Hugh, not less interested in the historical associations of the place, drew from her, by cross-questioning, an outline of some of the tragic events of which Fort Frontenac had been the scene. But gradually the charm of the present hour asserted itself and all else was forgotten in watching the changing beauty of the scenery around them. A slight thunder-shower seemed to have purified the air, and the brightly shining sun lighted up the rich green of the woods, the golden tones of the harvest fields on the shores they were passing, and the grey rocks and shaggy foliage of some scattered islets on their course, one of which, Cedar island, was crowned by a round tower,—islets which were, they were told, really the outrunners of the great archipelago farther down the river. As they passed the water-rampart of the fort, Hugh observed that it seemed to be falling to pieces, and remarked that the government might look better after its property.

"It may just as well go to pieces," said a voice behind them. "It would be of very little use if we did go in for conquest, and I hope there is no likelihood of any serious hostilities between the two countries."

—"Well, Mrs. Sandford, have you forgotten me?" the voice continued. "How do you do, Miss Severne? I am delighted to meet you again."

Kate had looked up with a start as the first tones of the stranger's voice caught her ear, and perhaps there was just a tinge of heightened colour on her cheek as she greeted the speaker with her usual frank ease.

"Why, Mr. Winthrop! I never thought of encountering you in this quiet corner of the world. What accident brings you this way?"

"It was not quite an accident," he replied, smiling. "I met Jack Armstrong yesterday on the train between Port Hope and Cobourg, and he told me of your arrangements; and as I just got in an hour or two ago, and found out that this was the speediest way of getting over to Clayton, where I am bound for a few days' fishing, I thought I would waylay you—and here I am, as you see."

"As we are very glad to see," Kate replied, gracefully. "Let me introduce my cousin, Miss Thorburn, and my Scotch cousins, Mr. and Miss Macnab."

May eyed the newcomer critically, and a little jealously, for in the interests of the incipient romance that she had begun to weave for Kate and Hugh, she did not relish his appearance—especially taken in connection with the remarks she had heard from Nellie Armstrong. He was, however, as she could not help admitting, a very pleasant-looking man, not very young, in fact, a good deal older than Hugh Macnab, with keen, scrutinizing gray eyes and mobile face, full of intelligence and expression. To May, Hugh's was much the finer face, but she could not help feeling that Mr. Winthrop's was decidedly attractive, and she inwardly trembled for the prospects of the younger man. She felt that Mr. Winthrop's quick glance took in the whole *personnel* of the little party, as the introductions were made.

"Well, Mrs. Sandford," he resumed, when he had courteously greeted each in turn, his eye resting for a moment, with evident admiration upon the rosy, fresh-faced Scotch lassie,— "I hope you are prepared in the goodness of your heart, to extend a little toleration to a reprobate Republican like me. I'll try not to wound your sensibilities quite so much, this time!"

"Oh, you didn't hurt me at all!" said that lady, good-humoredly. "I know you don't mean any harm; it's the way you were brought up. But you must not put traitorous ideas into these young people's heads. There's Kate, now——"

But here that young woman hastily interposed: "Would you mind getting us another seat, Mr. Winthrop?" said she, "Miss Macnab is quite in the sun."

Mr. Winthrop at once performed the suggested service, and then, the previous topic having been shunted off, the whole party surrendered themselves to the dreamy charm of the afternoon—of the golden sunshine and dappling shade, that threw such a spell of beauty over the undulating shore, with its yellow harvest-fields and deep, green woods, country houses gleaming white through trees, and comfortable farmhouses nestling amid bowery orchards, beginning to be weighed down with their load of fruit.

The real width of the river, here about eight miles, is at some points narrowed down to apparently two or three miles and sometimes much less, by the large islands that divide it and extend for some twenty miles below Kingston. One of these—Howe Island, named after a British general—cuts off a very picturesque channel down which lay the course of their boat. At intervals of a few miles, the boat stopped at primitive wharves, where the country folk, who had been to market, landed with their innumerable parcels and baskets, of all shapes and sizes, farming implements, perambulators, etcetera. At one landing they put ashore a pile of dressed lumber—at another, a horse; at still another, the heterogeneous mass of luggage belonging to a family "going into *villegiatura*"—as Mrs. Sandford put it—including a great box containing a parlor organ. For the farmer-folk their horses and conveyances were patiently waiting, and very soon they might be seen driving slowly homewards along the country roads that followed the curve of the shore, or struck back among the fields and woods. A beautiful, new, varnished boat that had excited Hugh's rather envious admiration from the time he came on board, was at last unshipped and rowed away by its happy owner, whose camping outfit proclaimed that he was bound on a delightful holiday. Here and there they caught glimpses of white tents and gay flags, where lived a little community of campers, who waved their handkerchiefs as the boat went by; and cheered as if a steamboat were a new and unheard-of triumph of inventive skill. At one point, the shore of the island to their right, rose picturesquely into high banks clothed with a rich growth of light, fluttering birch and sombre cedar, the contrast of which delighted the travelers. There was quite a romantic-looking landing here, beside an old ruined lime-kiln, and the road wound picturesquely up the wooded height, the two or three figures seen walking up the winding path, as the boat receded, looking—May declared—"just like people in the beginning of a story."

"And so they are—or in the middle of it," said Mr. Winthrop. "Each of us is living in a story of our own, after all, and I suppose each would have its own interest if it could only be read just as it is."

"Only some stories are more interesting than others," suggested Hugh.

"And those people evidently think theirs is particularly interesting just now," remarked Kate, for they were just passing a little cluster of tiny cottages and tents, where a large and merry party were summering, with much display of bright bunting and many skiffs; and where young and old alike seemed to get into a state of wild excitement as the boat passed, saluting her with horns and a white flutter of handkerchiefs that might have passed for a flight of pigeons. The captain of the steamboat courteously returned the salute with his steam whistle, with the laconic remark: "Makes them feel happy," which seemed true, for the demonstrations were renewed with fresh vigor and continued till the little encampment was out of sight.

But the dark thunder-clouds had been again stealing up behind them, and now the lights on the shore and the foliage disappeared, the cedars looking especially sombre in the growing gloom.

"There's a squall coming down the river," said Hugh Macnab, who had been watching from the stern the pretty grouping of the small islands that here studded the channel.

"Yes, indeed," said Kate. "They often come up here suddenly. Look how one point after another is sponged out by the gray mist. See there, how the rain is driving down over there already."

"And it will be here in a minute," said Mr. Winthrop, rising hastily. "Come, you must all get into the centre of the boat, well under the awning, if you won't go down stairs."

Mrs. Sandford thought it best to retreat to the cabin below, being afraid of thunder, but all the others protested that it was much too interesting to watch the arrival of the storm. At a suggestion from Mr. Winthrop, however, he and Hugh made a dash down to the cabin for wraps and umbrella, returning in a second or two with an armful of waterproofs, in which the ladies were all carefully wrapped before the first heavy rain-drops came pattering down on deck. And then, for a minute, how they *did* come down, lashing the deck till it was flooded;—even where they sat the drops flew, into their faces, and, but for the waterproofs, would have drenched their garments. Kate, who loved a storm, was looking brilliantly handsome, and so—May was sure—thought Mr. Winthrop, who kept his position near her, so as to shelter a little from the onslaught of the rain. And how—she inwardly wondered—would Hugh Macnab like the sudden invasion from this stranger and foreigner, who seemed to make himself so very much at home? She fancied that his somewhat sensitive face looked clouded, but perhaps it was only the reflection of the clouds without, for, presently when the rain-drops gradually ceased, and the sun shone out again, brighter, as it seemed, than ever, his face brightened, too, and he watched eagerly for the first appearance of what might properly be called the real Thousand Island group.

"There they are!" Kate exclaimed, at length, as some soft, cloud-like forms loomed up against the

distant horizon, still somewhat misty with the receding rain. "See how they cluster there together! And do you see those tiny white specks? Those are the lighthouses that mark the channel. And there, if you can catch a glimpse of some white houses beyond those islands—, those are part of the poetically named town of Gananoque, '*Rocks in Deep Water*,' as the Indian name signifies. And it is a good enough description, if only they would have added '*Rocks in Shallow Water*' as well; for there is certainly no lack of rocks in either the depths or the shallows!"

And now the little steamer began to wind in and out among the clustered islets, some of them little more than rough granite crags, bristling with wind-tossed pines, others masses of tangled foliage, and others still, partially cleared, with fanciful little cottages embowered in trees and clustering vines. At some of these cottages the inhabitants, like the campers, amused themselves by blowing a horn as a salute, to which the steamer amiably responded, after which there would be another flutter of handkerchiefs from the loungers on the verandas or by the shore.

"Well," said Hugh, "though we know it really means nothing, it does seem pleasant to be waved at, as if one were coming home!"

"And yet the same people would only stare critically at you if they met you in the street."

"It's the air of these charming islands," laughed Kate. "It makes every one so genial and overflowing with the milk of human kindness that they can't help expressing it all round!"

"Or so idle that even this mild excitement is entertaining," said Mr. Winthrop.

"Wait till you have tried it a little while!" said Kate. "Perhaps even you may grow less cynical there. But where are you going now?"

"I believe this little steamer will take me to Clayton to-night. My friends are there fishing, and are expecting me to join them."

"And that is how far from here?" asked Hugh.

"About eight miles," Kate replied—"on the American side of the river."

"Oh, then, we shall meet again, I hope, and improve our acquaintance," said Hugh, as he rose in response to Mrs. Sandford's commands, for now they had rounded the last island and were rapidly approaching the pretty little town of Gananoque, while the slanting rays of the westering sun threw out the foliage of the islands and the shore into the richest green, and gave the whole scene its brightest aspect.

Close by the wharf lay a tiny steam-yacht, on whose floating pennon Kate speedily recognized the name "*Oneida*," and in a moment more the waving of white handkerchiefs announced the presence of the friends who were waiting them there. To May it seemed like a fairy tale to be received into a private steam-yacht as an expected guest, instead of the open skiff she had been looking for. It was more than ever like a dream;—the little cabin, the dainty furnishings, the miniature engine with its polished brass fittings—everything seemed new, beautiful, delightful. Flora Macnab was equally delighted, declaring she had "never seen such a dear wee vessel before;" and Hugh, though quiet as usual, mentally noted everything with much satisfaction. Mr. Winthrop accompanied them on board, carrying Kate's wraps, and was just hurrying off back to the steamer when their host, Mr. Leslie, after a brief introduction, urged that he should accompany the others as his guest.—"For I can assure you we can always make room for one guest more,"—he said with cheery hospitality.

But Mr. Winthrop declined the invitation with many thanks, on the ground that his friends were expecting him, adding that if he might be allowed to come a little later, for a day or two, he should be delighted to do so.

"Any time you will," said Mr. Leslie, and he hurried off to catch his boat, which was on the point of starting again, while the others were duly introduced to the members of Mr. Leslie's family who had come to meet them. The little steam-yacht only waited for a supply of baskets, containing supplies, to be stowed away on board, and then it, too, uttered its shrill little parting whistle, and darted off on its way to the island, some miles distant, which was Mr. Leslie's summer home. To May it seemed like fairyland—this little evening sail among these lovely islands, in a yacht so low as to bring the eye on a level with their base, and not going too fast to enable her to enjoy in detail the beauty of lichen-crested rocks festooned with creepers and wild roses, and of still, placid reaches, dyed crimson and purple by the sunset hues, where clusters of snowy water-lilies were shining like stars amid the dark leaves. In the subdued evening light, the nearer islands were so soft a green—the distant ones looked softly purple in the light haze that helped to idealize the scene,—that May, for one, would have liked to wind in and out in this dreamy, leisurely fashion for hours, and was almost sorry when she was startled from her dream by the shrill whistle of the yacht, and found they were nearing a little rustic pier flanked by dusky pines and cedars.

The party were soon disembarked amid the lively little group that stood awaiting them on the pier—young men in boating flannels, lively children, young girls in cool, light blouses and dark blue skirts. Ready hands seized packages and baskets, and then they all followed an ascending,

fragrant, sloping path that led between lichened rocks and nodding ferns to an open glade higher up, where stood their pretty summer cottage, with its wide verandas, looking capacious enough to accommodate two or three city houses. Mr. and Mrs. Leslie were excellent hosts; and, in a few minutes, every one was conducted to a room, and May found herself installed in what she mentally styled the dearest little nest, up under the eaves, commanding what seemed, in the transfiguring evening light, the most enchanting view of the island-studded channel. It reminded her of her room and window at the *Clifton*;—both views so beautiful, and yet so altogether different.

But she was not long left to her dreaming, for a peremptory horn sounded, and Kate and Flora were calling to her to hasten down to tea. Downstairs, in a simply-furnished room, with large French windows opening on a wide piazza, they found a long tea-table spread for the recent arrivals—the rest of the party having already finished their evening meal, being, indeed, too hungry to wait for anybody.

“For we’re all as hungry as hawks here!” declared one of the merry girls in a boating-dress. “Between boating and fishing and running about, we’re out all day long, and that gives one no end of an appetite.”

After tea there was a delicious hour or two on the veranda, the only alloy being the visits of a few mosquitoes. “Nothing like what we have had, however,” Mrs. Leslie observed. “We’ve often been obliged to retreat within the shelter of our mosquito-blinds in the evening. But to-morrow will be the first of August, and we are not likely to be troubled with them much longer.”

“That is a comfort!” exclaimed Flora, who seemed to be a favorite victim of the troublesome little insects. “But how startlingly bright the fireflies are,” she said presently, as it grew darker, and the scintillating living sparks of fire—as they seemed—flashed in and out of the trees, giving the impression—as Hugh remarked—that they might really set fire to them. And presently she joyously descried, faintly visible near the horizon, a silver thread of crescent moon, the promiser of much additional enjoyment during the weeks of their stay.

Next morning was as charming a morning as any one could have desired to see. The river lay still and calm, and blue as a dream, sleeping, as it seemed, in the embrace of the clustering green islands, which looked so fresh and so cool in the early morning light. May was so excited that she could not sleep a moment after the first rosy gleams of sunshine stole into her casement, which she had left wide open, that she might not lose a moment of the view which had so delighted her the evening before. As she dressed, she feasted her eyes on the delicious freshness of the early morning, on the exquisite tint of the water here and there, just rippled by the faintest breeze, the soft, distant, blue islands that seemed to float on the placid stream like “purple isles of Eden,” the rich contrast of dark evergreen and rich deciduous foliage, on the nearer shores, till it all seemed too exquisite for a reality, and in the stillness of the morning she felt as if she were still in a dream.

She was soon dressed, however, and hastened down, eager to explore, all alone, the island where she was. She had only to go a few steps from the piazza to find herself among the primitive rocks, crusted with gray lichen and cushioned with soft, velvet moss, or overhung with the glossy foliage of the bear-berry or the vines of the whortle-berry, from which the dark blue fruit was dropping as she raised them. She followed a winding pathway leading under a fragrant archway of overhanging foliage, which wound its way in a rambling fashion about the island, giving, now and then, lovely glimpses, vistas between mossy banks of rock, or pretty little vignettes framed in by an overhanging hemlock. At length, after making pretty nearly the tour of the island, wending her way among thickets of feathery sumach and broad-leaved rubus, bearing deep crimson flowers, with long festoons of partridge-berry, and its white, star-like flowers amid the pine-needles under her feet, and finding, to her great delight, some specimens of the exquisite, snowy Indian-pipe, looking—in the early morning light—more ghostly than ever—she found herself at the little landing beside the boat-house, where they had disembarked on the previous evening. There she sat down to rest on a rustic seat, placed so as to command a charming vista, with a tiny island in the foreground, which she was absorbed in contemplating, when the plash of oars broke in upon her reverie, and she turned to see who might be the early oars-man. It was Hugh Macnab, arrayed in white flannels, with a lovely cluster of wild roses in his hand. He greeted her with a smile and came up at once, holding out the roses as he approached.

“I scarcely expected to find any one up yet,” he said, laughing. “I came out just about dawn, to have the full enjoyment of this exquisite morning, and thought I would try a little cruise by myself to see whether I had forgotten the rowing I learned in my Oxford summer. And I found a little island out yonder, so inviting for a swim that I couldn’t resist it. I should like to show you that same little island,”—he added. “It’s only a little way; won’t you come? But what is that you have got in your hand?” he said, looking at the waxen flowers she held.

May explained what the ghostly little plant was, and he eagerly took it in order to examine it. “Oh, yes, I’ve read of this curious plant,”—he said. “I am so glad to actually see one! Now, suppose we exchange bouquets, if you will take my roses for your spectral flowers. I brought them over from that island, intending to give them to the first lady I met. Please take them;—it’s a case of the early bird getting the worm, you know.”

For May at first hesitated a little. She felt as if the roses ought by right to go to Kate, but then

she could not say so. So she ended by thanking him as gracefully as her embarrassment would let her, and putting the roses carefully in her belt. They were lovely roses, too, of a peculiarly deep crimson, as the late wild roses are, and glistening still with the early dew. Hugh placed his "Pipes" carefully in his hat, for the present, and then led the way to the pretty cedar skiff, with its luxurious cane east chair at the stern, in which she took her seat, with a little inward wonder whether she were doing quite right, and the skiff was soon rapidly cleaving its way through the glassy water under the quick strokes of Hugh's oar. It was wonderful, she thought, how much he seemed to have improved in health and spirits during the fortnight which had passed since she had first met him; and how much more color and animation he now had. Surely, she thought, Kate would never be so blind as to prefer *that* Mr. Winthrop, who, to her eye, was so much less attractive-looking than Hugh! She was too much preoccupied in thinking out this problem to say much, though she could silently take in the loveliness of the scene. Rounding a rocky point covered with wild roses, from which Hugh had picked his bouquet, they found themselves in a tiny bay, where the limpid wavelets lapped gently upon a beach of silver sand, while the rocks of rosy granite which formed the bay were draped in part with a tangle of luxuriant creepers and crested with sweeping pine-boughs. Presently the boat grated on the sandy beach, and Hugh handed her out of the boat and led the way to a granite ledge commanding an exquisite view of sleeping river and clustering islets. The river lay almost absolutely still, only barred here and there with long streaks of ripple that betokened an incipient breeze. The heavy masses of verdure on the opposite shore and the surrounding islands seemed also asleep; only an occasional carol of a bird broke the charmed silence. May and her companion were very silent also, for ordinary talk in such a spot, at such an hour, seemed well-nigh profane, and both were too reserved to express the deeper feelings the scene awakened. After a silent interval, May turned to call Hugh's attention to a distant sail just catching the still slanting rays of the sun, when she noticed that he had taken a slip of paper which had been lying in the boat and was writing rapidly. She refrained from disturbing him, for how could she tell that he might not be writing *poetry*? But he had caught her movement, and presently stopped writing and turned towards her, when the slip of paper, which he was holding carelessly, was caught by the freshening breeze and carried close to her feet. She naturally stooped to pick it up, and involuntarily glancing at it, could see that it *was* poetry; but Hugh caught it from her, with so much apparent discomposure, coloring vividly, that May felt sure he was annoyed by her intervention, and felt a little uncomfortable; the more so because she could not say anything about it. She wondered whether the verses had any reference to Kate, since he seemed so much afraid of their being seen. They rowed back as silently as they had come, and the momentary annoyance soon cleared off the faces of both under the potent charm of the exquisite beauty around them. They found only the children astir; but Kate and Flora, when they came down soon after to breakfast, were very curious to know what May had been doing with herself—out all alone "almost before daylight," they declared—and especially curious to know from whence she had got the lovely little bouquet of wild roses that looked so charming in her belt. But May laughingly declared that she did not intend to tell where she got it; and Hugh, of course, said nothing about it. She did not, however, wear it long. The roses were carefully put away before they withered, and eventually some of them were pressed to serve as a memento of the loveliest morning, May thought, that she had ever seen. She told Kate, however, that Hugh had given her a row to a neighboring island, feeling a little guilty as she did so. But Kate only remarked, as if the thing were a matter of course: "Well, I'm glad Hugh has gained so much in energy! Since he can row so well, I shall make him row me about everywhere!"

Both she and Flora, however, soon found that they had an *embarras des richesses* in the matter of rowing, for there were half a dozen youthful oarsmen ready and eager to row or paddle them wherever they desired to go, so that Hugh's services were not so much in demand, and it happened, not infrequently, that May found herself his companion in their boating expeditions, and as she had not had much opportunity for rowing, he undertook to teach her to use the oars in a more artistic manner than she had as yet attained, which proved a very interesting occupation to both; though May sometimes regretted that Kate so often declined to accompany them, fancying that it really hurt Hugh.

That day and several others glided away only too swiftly. No one could imagine where the hours had gone. There were evening rows, and sails in a good-sized sailboat, always at the disposal of any of the party who cared to use it, and aimless meanderings through the tangled paths of the island, sometimes with the ostensible object of berry-picking, for the wild raspberries were still found in great abundance, and were in great request for breakfast and tea. In the forenoon there was always a general bathing party, when the young men took themselves to one end of the island, in order to practise their aquatic feats by themselves, and the girls, in their loose, short bathing suits, disported themselves to their hearts' content in the limpid tide, in a pretty little sandy bay, lined to the water's edge with luxuriant foliage, which almost concealed the little rustic bathing box. Then there was the luxurious lounge, with a pleasant book, before the early dinner, in a shady corner of the veranda, for these August days were pretty warm. For a while after dinner there was a suspiciously quiet air about Sumach Lodge, as it was called; but when the heat of the day began to give place to the cool afternoon breeze, the little party began to wake up from its *siesta*, and skiffs and canoes were hauled out and filled, as little groups departed on various expeditions, some simply to explore island nooks, some to fish, and some to gather the water-lilies which grew in a secluded bay not far off, or, on a breezy afternoon, to try a sailing cruise in a pretty "butterfly" sailboat belonging to one of the young men, who was always glad to muster a crew. In the cool of the evening the "boys" often tried their canoe races, sometimes playfully wrestling as they passed each other, for they never minded an upset, but were back in their canoes again almost as soon as they were out of them. And now that the moon

was rapidly growing in size and light, no one wanted to do anything in the evening, but sit on the veranda or the shore, and enjoy the charming moonlight effects. May, of course, was never tired of watching the tremulous path of silver stretching from island to island, or the exquisite effect when some picturesque cluster of islets stood out in dark relief on what seemed a silver sea, and—a very unusual phenomenon—when the shadow of the island was thrown across its reflection in the scarcely rippled river. Hugh Macnab, like herself, seemed fascinated with the mysterious beauty of the moonlit scene, and was frequently suspected of endeavoring to reproduce its charm in verse.

These seemed truly enchanted evenings, which no one wished to cut short, so that May found that the late hours she kept at night came a good deal in the way of the enjoyment of those early morning hours which she had at first thought so delightful. But, with such moonlight pictures spread around them for their delectation, it seemed a waste of privileges to spend any of these wonderful hours in sleep; and as the moon grew later and later so did the hours of the junior members of the party.

One of the favorite spots which May, for one, was never tired of visiting, either under the idealizing influence of moonlight or in the rich glow of sunset, was a charming little land-locked bay which wound its way for some distance into one of the larger islands in the vicinity. The entrance looked like any other curving recess of the shore, but, once within, it was a surprise to find the bay continuing its course like a tiny river, between banks of high jagged crags, partially draped with nodding birch, shaggy hemlock, and spreading oak and maple. And however rough the waves might be outside of this charmed spot, the water within was always calm and glassy in its stillness. In its innermost recess, where further progress was stayed by the increasing shallowness of its bed, reeds and water-plants grew and clustered, water-lily leaves lay floating as if asleep, and here the little basin was walled in on one side by a sheer, bare granite cliff, concave towards the basin, and evidently worn smooth, in the long past, by the action of grinding ice, though its bareness was relieved, here and there, by a drooping birch or a cluster of shaggy ferns. At the top of the wall of scarred, lichen-crusting rock, were some of the curious natural perforations known as “pot-holes,” apparently formed by the action of a stone revolving in a crevice under glacial action. The opposite bank was more sloping and densely wooded, and the effect in the moonlight, under a rich sunset sky, was peculiarly striking and impressive. This secluded spot was sometimes used by the summer residents of the neighborhood as a natural chapel, where a little congregation assembled in their boats for a short service, with a shorter address, in circumstances which might well recall the divinest sermon ever preached; and made Hugh Macnab think of secret services attended by his covenanting ancestors in the secluded Highland glens which hid them from their persecutors. Very different, however, were *these* happy meetings. The songs of praise seemed to gain a peculiar sweetness from the tranquil quietude of the spot, while the vesper carol of a bird occasionally blended with the human melody. Every part of the service was just as solemn as in any church built with hands, and the very novelty of the surroundings tended to carry some of the “winged words” into hearts which might have heard them unheeding under ordinary circumstances.

On the cooler and more breezy afternoons the “butterfly sailboat” set out with a merry crew for a more extended voyage, flying hither and thither, as the wind suited and inclination prompted. Or the little steam-yacht was called into service, and a large party would start for a prolonged cruise, winding in and out of the many Channels, as the fancy guided, steering down the broad, breezy reach that lay between the main shore and the clustering islands, with the cool, sparkling waves within touch of their hands, as the little screw turned them up in showers of sparkling diamonds on the azure behind, while one lovely channel after another spread itself before them in fascinating vista. Now they were passing thickly wooded islands, cool with billowy foliage—now a great granite fortress rising from a fringe of foliage, with battlements and barbican, escarpment and buttress, festooned with creepers and evergreens, like some hoary medieval ruin. Anon, they were gliding through some glassy strait, with snowy water lilies gleaming amid the dark green floating leaves that lined the sheltered bays. Again their course lay under a line of frowning cliffs, crusted with moss and lichen, and tufted with ferns; and presently another broad channel opened before them, through which they could catch distant glimpses of clustered tents, or summer hotels, or a pleasant country house peeping out from embowering trees. And, ever and anon, they passed graceful light varnished skiffs, laden with fishing parties, or canoes paddled swiftly by skillful hands, with a fair maiden reclining luxuriously among her cushions; and to each the little yacht addressed a shrill cheery salutation, responded to by waving handkerchiefs and hats, as each party desired to convey an expression of what a pleasant time they were enjoying, combined with good wishes for the enjoyment of every one else.

As these delightful excursions were apt to be prolonged for some hours, their hospitable hostess, knowing that people are apt to be hungry under such circumstances, had “afternoon tea” set out on the little table in the stern, and the guests thought that nowhere did coffee and cake seem so delicious, while merry talk and travelers’ tales, and some of Flora’s Scotch songs enhanced the enjoyment of the happy hours. Hugh, who had a good tenor voice, would sometimes join his sister in the old-fashioned Jacobite airs which had been familiar to both from childhood, such as “A Wee Bird Came to Our Ha’ Door,” or “Bonny Charlie’s Now Awa’.” May thought she had heard few songs so sweet as the refrain “*Will ye no come back again?*” One verse in particular, seemed to catch her and haunt her:

“Sweet the lev’rock’s note, and lang,

Lilting wildly down the glen,
Still to me he sings ae song,
Will ye no come back again?

And sometimes their talk would drift to graver subjects, as they returned homewards through lovely vistas of "purple isles of Eden," under a sky flushed with the rich glow of sunset, making the calm river burn with crimson and gold, while the rich claret lines of shadow made it seem as if the water were indeed turned into wine, and the peace of the purple twilight gradually faded into the silvery moonlight, and the whole lovely scene seemed hushed into a gentle slumber.

Sometimes, after such an excursion, when a few neighbors had joined their party, at Sumach Lodge, the young folks would beg for a "camp fire," and a pile of brushwood, set ready on the rocks, would be lighted, and the party would sit round it, telling stories and cracking jokes, and singing songs, till the red glare of the fire at length gave way to the still pale moonlight, and at last they reluctantly broke up, scarcely able to tear themselves away from the fascinations of the hour.

A still longer excursion they made one day, in the swift steamer "Island Wanderer," which they took at Gananoque, and which carried them by much the same route for a longer distance, down the turns and twists of the "Lost Channel" to the little hamlet of Rockport; then—crossing swiftly to the quiet shady resort of Westminster Park on Well's Island—carried them around its bold wooded headland to the villa-studded archipelago that teems with island-paradises, turrets, pagodas, fairy bridges, till it almost reminds the visitor of a willow pattern plate, and on to the little town of Alexandria Bay, with its monster hotels. Here Kate showed them a spot most interesting to May—the pretty mansion of "Bonniecastle," for years the summer home of Dr. Holland, the first editor of the *Century* magazine, and author of "Arthur Bonniecastle," after which he named this pleasant home. Kate told them how he had once landed in his steam-yacht at an island on which she had been picnicking at the time, and how charmed she and her friends had been with his genial personality and talk. Then they steamed swiftly through the bewildering succession of castles and cottages of every conceivable variety, which make the American channel here seem like a long water-way or street, lined by suburban villas. May did not much like the extent to which the islands had been trimmed and smoothed out of the shaggy individuality of their primitive state; and Hugh and Flora emphatically agreed with her, in preferring the comparative wildness of the Canadian channel, where the islands still retain their wild sylvan charm.

They scanned with interest the great caravanserai of Thousand Island Park, with its streets and avenues of tents and cottages and crowds of tourists; and then, just as they were leaving the little cluster of country houses at Round Island, a gentleman in a light-gray suit, carrying a valise and overcoat, came briskly on board, speedily recognized by May as Mr. Winthrop, who, coming up to greet the party, declared himself bound for Sumach Lodge. It was curious, May thought, how he seemed to have a faculty for joining them at the most opportune moments, and she wondered much whether he had any private means of tracing the movements of the party. On this occasion, Kate, at all events, took his appearance with a coolness in keeping with the nonchalance of his manner. In fact, Flora declared privately to May that they were both "refreshingly cool for a warm day," a remark which May thought a trifle heartless, considering that this addition to the party must be a "thorn in the flesh" to her brother. However, he betrayed no visible annoyance, but talked very pleasantly with Mr. Winthrop, all the way home, discussing politics, British and American and Canadian, including the "Behring Sea" difficulty, which last they had not settled, even when they had arrived at Sumach Lodge, and the discussion was finally terminated by the ringing of the tea-bell.

After tea, such of the party as were not tired out by the long day's outing, dispersed in various directions to enjoy the cool air and the moonlight on the river. Mr. Winthrop and Kate had mysteriously disappeared, and so had one of the skiffs. Hugh Macnab, who had become quite expert at managing a canoe, asked his sister and May to let him paddle them both as far as the favorite nook already referred to, and both willingly agreed. But Flora, just at starting, was claimed by one of the boys, who was her special slave, and not liking to disappoint him, she good-naturedly consented to go in *his* boat instead. Flora and her cavalier followed in the wake of some of the other young people, and her fresh Scotch voice was soon heard warbling her favorite refrain:—

"And carry the lad that was born to be king
the hills to Skye!"

"That sounds out of place *here*, somehow," said Hugh. "This new world has nothing to do with our old Jacobite struggles. It ought to be one of those pretty French Canadian airs, at least." And he hummed "*La Claire Fontaine*," which had greatly taken his fancy, with its pretty chorus,—

*"Il y'a longtemps que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai."*

which certainly seemed much more in harmony with the exquisite summer evening and the light, gliding motion of the little canoe, as it bounded forward so noiselessly under the ashen paddle, over the purple and crimson tide.

Neither seemed disposed to talk. The beauty of the evening, for one thing, was too absorbing to encourage much conversation. Moreover, May was still worrying a little over the three-cornered problem of Kate and Hugh and Mr. Winthrop, and thought that Hugh's meditations were possibly wandering in a somewhat similar direction. They entered the "Lonely Bay" very quietly, as was their wont. The spot seemed like a church, in which loud tones or careless words were a desecration. As the canoe glided noiselessly into the deep shadow of the high crags, they both became aware that another boat had come in before them, and was lying motionless in the inmost recess of the little basin. The occupants were unconscious of any intrusion on their solitude, and, as Hugh paused, irresolute whether to proceed or not, a few low spoken words reached their ears in Mr. Winthrop's very distinct enunciation—words that both thought were: "Then I need not altogether despair!"

May colored to the very roots of her hair, feeling by proxy the "pang" which she believed Hugh must experience, as he silently but swiftly rowed away, lest they should involuntarily hear any more of so very confidential a conversation. Whether the other pair heard the sound of the light dip of the retreating paddle they could not tell; and not a word was exchanged between them concerning the unexpected *rencontre*, both feeling the subject too delicate to touch.

But as they were rowing slowly homeward, by a circuitous route, the other boat overtook them, and they rowed side by side for the remainder of the way, Mr. Winthrop evidently exerting himself to talk, while Kate remained unusually silent. The moon—rather more than half full, flooded the air and river with her silvery light; and on one side of them lay a glittering expanse, studded with the dark silhouettes of islands. Mr. Winthrop quoted some of the well-known lines from the Merchant of Venice, "On such a night," etc., Hugh helping him out when he halted for a line. And then Kate asked Hugh whether he could not recite something appropriate to the scene.

"Original, if possible; if not, then quoted. And we won't even ask you whether it is original, or not," she added. "You know, we can't *hear* the quotation marks."

"On that condition, I will," said Hugh, and, after a few moments' thought, he began:—

"Never a ripple on all the river
As it lies like a mirror beneath the moon,
Only the shadows tremble and quiver,
With the balmy breath of a night in June;
All dark and silent, each shadowy island
Like a silhouette lies on the silver ground,
While, just above us, a rocky highland
Towers grim and dusk, with its pine trees crowned.

Never a sound, save the oar's soft splashing,
As the boat drifts idly the shore along,
And the arrowy fireflies, silently flashing,
Gleam, living diamonds, the woods among!
And the night-hawk darts o'er the bay's broad bosom,
And the loon's laugh breaks on the midnight calm,
And the luscious breath of the wild vine's blossom,
Wafts from the rocks, like a tide of balm!

Drifting, why cannot we drift forever
Let all the world and its worries go!—
Let us float and float on the flowing river,
Whither,—we neither care nor know;—
Dreaming a dream, might we ne'er awaken!
There's joy enough in this passive bliss;
The wrestling crowd and its cares forsaken
Was ever Nirvana more blest than this?

Nay! but our hearts are forever lifting
The screen of the present,—however fair,—
Not long, not long, may we go on drifting,—
Not long enjoy surcease from care!
Ours is a nobler task and guerdon
Than aimless, drifting, however blest;
Only the heart that can bear the burden
Can share the joy of the victor's rest!"

"Well, I appreciate the poetry, of course," said Mr. Winthrop, when Kate had duly thanked the reciter, "but, I am glad *that* did not come from *me*! We Americans are always getting the credit of being too restless for repose,—for enjoying anything in a leisurely manner. But it seems there are other people who, like Faust, cannot say to the present moment, 'Stay, thou art fair!'"

"I'm afraid that's a trait of the age," replied Hugh. "But I rather think it is nobler, on the whole, to be always 'pressing on to the things that are before.'"

"We look before and after

And pine for what is not!"

quoted Mr. Winthrop—"even in the beauty of this exquisite night."

And after that no words were spoken till the two canoes grated, almost at the same moment, on the pebbly beach.

The sojourn at Sumach Lodge was now nearly at an end, for our party had still far to go, and much to see. The next day was to be devoted to an excursion in the steam-yacht to a bit of very picturesque scenery some few miles down the main shore of the river—"a miniature Saguenay," as Mr. Leslie described it, and, at the same time, they were to get a glimpse of the Canoe Camp which had been just opened, and which was to have an illumination in the evening that they all wanted to see.

They started early next morning for Halstead Bay, where the picturesque little "rift" or *cañon* began. The *Oneida* carried them swiftly down the few miles of river, till within the curve of the bay which was hemmed in by high wooded hills, where they disembarked from the yacht, in which they could not proceed much further, and had recourse to the skiffs which they had brought in tow. As they rowed farther up, the hills drew nearer to the bay or creek until they became almost sheer precipices, rising up, weather-worn and splintered, from the narrowing channel, which was full of reeds and water plants and fleets of water-lilies, from which they supplied themselves to their hearts' content. Here and there the stern rugged crags were festooned with trailing plants and delicate harebells, in what May declared were natural hanging baskets. Cranes and water-hens flew up from the tall sedges, and Kate pointed out to Mr. Winthrop a fine loon diving for his food. "Very likely you will hear him laugh, by and by,"—said Kate, for he had been expressing some curiosity as to the loon's laugh in the verses Hugh had recited. "We often hear its 'laugh' at Sumach Lodge," she said, "and very weird it sounds at night. I don't know whether its elfin 'laugh' or its cry seems the most uncanny. It has interested Hugh so much, and so has the old legend of Clote-scarp and the loon."

And as Mr. Winthrop had never heard this legend, Hugh told the Indian story, how Clote-scarp, or Glooscap—the Micmac Hiawatha, had at length, wearied with the cruelty and wickedness of man and the savage warfare of the brute creation, departed from the land until the reign of peace should be re-established; and that the loon awaits his return, and laments his absence in the melancholy cry which it utters from time to time. "Curious," he added, "how that idea of the Deliverer, temporarily departed, seems to have taken root in all lands, from Arthur and Barbaroosa to Hiawatha and Clote-scarp. But what a magnificent cliff that is!" for now they had nearly reached the head of the little *cañon*, and the higher bluffs seemed to grow grander and more picturesque as the channel narrowed.

"It is really a very good reduction of the Saguenay," said Mr. Winthrop, "and the scale of proportion is very well carried out. That, for instance, would do very well for a miniature Cape Eternity. But it is as well to see *this first!*"

At the head of the *cañon* the crags closed up, leaving only a narrow channel, through which a tiny stream struggled through the great rugged boulders in a miniature cascade. They all landed and amused themselves for some time in scrambling about among the rocks, trying to thread the course of the streamlet, or climbing the neighboring hill, from which some of the young men, including Hugh and Mr. Winthrop, reported a magnificent view. The less ambitious of the party strolled about at the lower level, plucking raspberries which grew in great abundance among the rocks, while Flora tried to sketch roughly the charming view from the high ground above the little waterfall. Too soon, as it seemed, the order was given to re-embark and descend the *cañon* to the bay, where the steam-yacht had been left, and where their lunch was also awaiting them. Mrs. Leslie with Mrs. Sandford and one or two ladies who had visited the place before, had remained near the steam-yacht, and when the party in the skiffs returned,—a little hot and very hungry,—they found a most attractive-looking luncheon, with fresh fruit, iced milk and various other luxuries most tempting to tired sight-seers on a warm day, spread on a charming point, with glimpses of still waters and beds of snowy water lilies on both sides of its wooded slope.

After thoroughly enjoying their luncheon, they all had a long rest under the softly waving trees, through which a light breeze was whispering, cooling the noontide heat of the August day. Then they re-embarked on the steam-yacht and directed their course across the river towards the Canoe Camp, which was pitched on a picturesque island most admirably adapted for its purposes. They soon encountered token of its presence, in the light canoes which darted gracefully hither and thither, some of them winged by the daintiest little snowy sails, looking like white butterflies as they danced over the sparkling blue waves rippled by the freshening afternoon breeze. The steam launch soon glided up to the landing pier, in a sheltered bay overlooked by charming wooded slopes, on which gleamed the white tents which dotted the island. It abounded in pretty sheltered coves, each of which formed the harbor for a little fleet of canoes belonging to some particular club—all nearly uniform in pattern. Some of the clubs used "Rob Roy" canoes, which were marvels of beauty, with their finely polished wood, and paddles, and luxurious silver mountings. Each club had its tents near its harbor, and a large marquee did duty as a common dining-hall. The lady members of the association had their own particular little settlement, which was called the "Squaw's Point." Camp fires were lighted here and there, carrying out the primitive Indian character of the whole. The party had just time for a hasty stroll about the island before the beginning of the races, which they had the best opportunity of

witnessing from their steam-yacht, carrying them from point to point, in order to extend their view at will.

Some of the races were so-called "hurdle races," in which the racer went through a variety of performances, swimming a few hundred yards, then getting into his canoe, paddling it for a certain distance, and in returning, upsetting it, righting it again and paddling to shore. These last manoeuvres caused great fun and excitement. The party in the steam launch had a number of acquaintances at the camp, and Kate was soon discovered by various youths in parti-colored flannels, who gathered around her for a chat in the intervals of the races; Hugh being eager to hear all he could concerning the art of paddling, which he had been practising on every available opportunity during his stay among the islands. The afternoon flew swiftly by, and, when tea-time came, the yacht party had invitations to tea in several tents, and distributed themselves accordingly. After tea, a visiting band discoursed music as the evening shades grew on; and then came the great sight of the evening.

Suddenly the clusters of tents gleamed out like brilliant constellations amid the dark foliage, while the canoes, which had been formed into a long snake-like coil were decked from stem to stern with flambeaux and Chinese lanterns, some of these being curiously arranged so as to imitate the forms of animals. The swan was the favorite design, and the most easily managed, but there were elephants, camels and other still more curious imitations. At short intervals, rockets and Roman candles went up with a rush and roar, and some Greek fire on the beach threw a rich roseate light over the wonderful scene. The steam-yacht darted about hither and thither, the better to command the whole view. Hugh and Flora were enchanted, and declared that they could almost imagine themselves in a gondola in Venice, so brilliant was the effect of the procession of illuminated boats, and the *cordon* of lights which studded the sombre background of the island. As the fiery serpent began to coil and uncoil itself on the dark river, while the rockets sparkled against the sky, and the moon—partially obscured—threw fitful gleams between slow-moving clouds upon the distant islands, it seemed more like a transformation scene on the stage than one of actual reality, the contrast of the blaze of artificial light with the calm serenity of the moonbeams being singularly striking.

But our friends had had a long day of it, and were beginning to feel its fatiguing effects, so that no one felt inclined to object when Mr. Leslie gave the order for departing, and, in a few minutes, they found themselves far away from the brilliant scene, steaming quietly through lonely channels where the moonlit waves broke softly on pebbly shores, under dark overhanging boughs of hemlock and pine.

May awoke next morning with the regretful thought that it was her last day at Sumach Lodge. It was mainly devoted to farewell visits to all the favorite haunts which would remain graven on her mind—at least for years to come. In the afternoon Mr. Winthrop announced that he must go to Gananoque in order to telegraph to New York, for he had been recently talking—to May's inward consternation—of joining their party on the trip to the Saguenay. She felt sure it would spoil Hugh's pleasure, at any rate. But Kate showed no desire to veto the plan; on the contrary, May had misgivings that her cousin had no objection to it. Their good-natured host at once ordered the steam-yacht for Mr. Winthrop, and a few of the guests willingly accompanied them, including Flora, who lost no opportunity of gliding about in that delightful little vessel,—Kate and May preferring not to lose an hour of their now short stay on the island. One of her youthful admirers, however, the youth who owned the "butterfly sailboat," coaxed Kate to take a last short sail with him in the invitingly freshening breeze. No one noticed, however, that the sky had gradually clouded over and become grey instead of blue, while, despite the breeze, the air had grown very sultry. Hugh noticed it at last from the quiet nook where he sat reading, and came slowly back towards the house, where he found May reclining in a hammock on the veranda, professedly reading, but in reality half asleep, while Mrs. Sandford, close by, was complacently nodding over her knitting.

"Where are all the rest of you?" he inquired; "the place seems deserted!"

May explained that Flora had gone with the party in the steam-yacht, while most of the boys had gone off with their boats to the other end of the island for a swim, and that Kate had gone out with Dick Morris in his "butterfly sailboat."

"I hope they haven't gone far," he said. "We are going to have a tremendous storm. I'll go and signal them back."

May sprang out of her hammock and looked about her, while Mrs. Sandford got into a flurry of alarm at once. Certainly the sky had a rather alarming appearance. A great black cloud had swept down from the southwest, flanked by another that seemed to extend over the whole river in two great curves or scollops of dark slate color, edged with a strange light bluish gray that had a lurid and terrible effect. The river, usually so softly blue, had darkened in the distance to an inky blackness, while somewhat nearer it assumed an angry grey. As yet the stretch of water in front of the island seemed comparatively calm, but, two or three miles away, sails were flying at full speed before a strong gale. The squall was evidently coming up fast, and the "butterfly sailboat" was some distance out and would certainly feel it very soon. The steam-yacht was swiftly approaching the pier from a different direction.

Hugh said not a word, but began to unmoor the lightest of the only two skiffs that lay at the

landing, to which they had hurried, while May watched the sailboat through an opera-glass.

"The squall has caught it now!" she said, as Hugh was busy with the boat. "Oh, I'm afraid it is upsetting!"

"*What!*" exclaimed Hugh, anxiously watching the little craft as the sail dipped lower, and lower, and lower, and finally lay flat on the waves. Hugh in the meantime had hastily pulled off his boots and jumped into the skiff, and now threw his watch into May's hands, seized the oars and pushed out in hot haste. Meantime the steam-yacht had arrived at the pier, a little way off, and Mr. Winthrop, coming up, took in the situation at a glance. He almost snatched the opera-glass from May, looked through it, and then rushed out on the landing-stage, from which Hugh's boat was swiftly receding.

"Stop!" he shouted, "and let *me* go, too!" The voice scarcely seemed like Mr. Winthrop's usually suave and even tones. It had a ring not only of anxiety, but of passion and command. But it had no effect on Hugh. He only shook his head as he called out, "No time to delay!" and rowed on, at a pace that frightened May, into the teeth of the waves, which were now dashing themselves into snowy wreaths of foam, while the trees were lashing their branches about, as if in agony. Meantime she had caught up the opera-glass which Mr. Winthrop had thrown down, and could see that the boat had partially righted itself, and that Kate and her young cavalier were clinging to its side, helplessly drifting before the wind. Mrs. Sandford, who had now reached the landing, stood crying and wringing her hands in a way that intensified May's own terror.

Meantime Mr. Winthrop had hurriedly looked round for the only skiff left, which was a heavy and awkward one, but seldom used. He did not hesitate, however, but jumped in and made what speed he could towards the craft in distress, towards which Hugh by this time was half-way out. May breathlessly watched him as he rapidly covered the remaining distance. Then she could see him help Kate from her perilous hold into the skiff, and the young man into the sailboat, which the efforts of the two men had soon righted, after which Hugh rapidly rowed back, leaving to poor Mr. Winthrop, who was following, the comparatively uninteresting task of picking up the floating oars and other traps which had been cast adrift in the upset, and of towing the unlucky mariner and his boat back to the island.

As all the boys had by this time returned, half a dozen hands were outstretched to draw the skiff ashore and help out the pale but laughing Kate, with her dripping garments clinging about her feet. Mrs. Leslie took possession of her at once, and she and Mrs. Sandford hurried her up to the house to be put to bed and dosed with hot brandy and every other restorative that her ingenuity could devise, while Hugh also came in for a large share of her anxiety, as well as of her pharmacopeia.

Meantime poor Dick Morris had managed, with Mr. Winthrop's assistance, to get his water-logged boat back to shore, somewhat crestfallen as well as wet, under the heavy downpour of rain which followed the squall. Dick came in for his share of the coddling, but Mr. Winthrop became invisible for an hour or two, and it was only after all were gathered round the tea-table that he reappeared, looking paler and graver than they had ever yet seen him. Kate was, of course, still under orders to remain in bed for the rest of the evening, but Hugh disclaimed any need for such precautions, and had evidently by no means lost *his* appetite, at least. He greeted Mr. Winthrop pleasantly, as usual, saying apologetically: "I was sorry I couldn't wait for you, Winthrop, but I saw there was no time to be lost."

"Oh, it was of no consequence; you were quite right," he replied coolly, but very curtly, and May inwardly wondered why it was that people always said things were "of no consequence," just when they evidently cared most.

The incident seemed to have cast a damper—figuratively as well as literally—over the last evening among the islands. The squall had gone down as rapidly as it had come up, and the rain cleared off by degrees; but the sunset cast only a few golden gleams through the parting clouds, and the moonlight was fitful and disappointing; and it seemed to May that the sadness of the parting colored the external scene as well as her own feelings.

It had been arranged that the steam launch should take them all across to Clayton, to catch the river steamboat there about seven A. M., thus necessitating a very early start. It was an exquisite August morning, very like the first one after their arrival, but there was little time to enjoy its charming pictures. An early breakfast was hurried over by the time the little yacht blew her whistle for departure, and, before any one could realize that the moment for departure had come, the travellers had passed through an avalanche of good-byes, and were steaming swiftly away from the enchanted island, as May then thought it, and will always continue to dream of it hereafter.

Kate treated Mr. Winthrop very coolly during the sail across, as May observed, and this inconsistent young woman began forthwith to feel sorry for him, especially when he announced, with apparent indifference, that he should have to say good-bye to them all at Clayton, as he feared, from the news he had received the previous day, that he should not be able to rejoin them at Quebec, as he had hoped to do. May thought that Kate looked somewhat startled, but she said little, and they parted with cool civility. And as they left him behind, with a sense of something unsatisfactory about it, Mr. Winthrop seemed to have left more of a blank in the little party than

might have been expected from his short stay among them. Hugh missed his clear-cut criticism and incisive talk. May felt as if she ought to be glad that this rival of Hugh's—as she regarded him—was out of the way, and yet she was conscious of a feeling of regret that surprised herself. For, after all, undoubtedly Mr. Winthrop had been very pleasant and courteous, and it certainly was not *his* fault that he had not had the honor of rescuing Kate. And now they were fairly embarked on the steamer, which turned out to be their old friend, the *Corsican*, and were soon rapidly losing sight of the charming "Admiralty Group,"—the fairyland amid which she had, for the past ten days, enjoyed so delightful a resting-place.

CHAPTER IV—THE RIVER OF HOCHELAGA.

It was about three hours before the *Corsican* emerged from the last labyrinth of foliage-clad, pine-crested islands, and came in sight of the little town of Brockville. The banks of the river, as they approached, varying from a high table-land to a low, rocky shore, were lined with summer cottages, where holiday makers were evidently enjoying themselves with a prodigality of hunting and an ample supply of skiffs. Here and there, they came upon a little flotilla of boats, setting out for an all-day excursion, whose passengers waved their hats and cheered, as if they had been the first Indians who beheld the white man's "winged canoes." A ferry boat was busily plying up and down, embarking and disembarking passengers at the little piers that fringed the shore, and an air of holiday brightness seemed to pervade the scene. There was a short stoppage at Brockville, and then the *Corsican* was off again, and the last of the "Thousand Islands" were soon left far behind.

It was a still, soft, dreamy August day, and the sail down the calm, broad stretch succeeding was almost sleepy in its tranquillity. Prescott and its neighboring windmill elicited some historic reminiscences from Mrs. Sandford concerning the time when poor rash Von Schultz held his extemporized fortress against an unequal force, only to be overpowered at last, and to expiate his reckless credulity on a scaffold at Fort Henry, which they had so recently seen.

Then there were the *Galops* Rapids, and a little later the small Rapid Du Plat, and then the historic associations of Chrysler's Farm. Afterwards the steamer began to heave and plunge as the snowy crests of the great white coursers of the *Long Sault* gleamed before them, rising like ocean breakers to meet the gallant vessel, which plunged in upon them with almost conscious pride, and rode triumphantly over them with an exultant swaying movement, more like the bounding of a spirited steed than of a piece of inanimate matter. Hugh was delighted beyond expression, and so were May and Flora. It was even grander than either had anticipated, and both breathed a deep sigh of regret when the last buoyant leap was over, and the steamer floated, with her ordinary motion, into the calm expanse in front of the town of Cornwall. And now there were blue hills to be seen on the horizon to their right, as they passed down the quiet sweep of river, with a few green islands dotting the channel, on which they could catch, here and there, glimpses of summer cottages and camping parties that reminded them of the "Thousand Islands," though with a considerable difference, for here was nothing like the same scope for boating or variety of scenery as in that enchanted region. Then there was the long, sleepy afternoon sail across the wide Lake St. Francis, during which Mrs. Sandford retired to her stateroom to make up for her lost morning slumber, and the three girls drowsed over the books they were professing to read. May had brought out her cherished copy of "The Chance Acquaintance," which she had with her, but had kept in reserve till now, that she might revive her recollections of its fascinating pictures, and enjoy in advance the grey old city, which she had already seen so often in imagination; and was now, at length, to behold with her bodily eyes. As she dropped the book at last, overcome by the sleepy influence of the afternoon, Hugh took it up, and had become much interested in its fascinating pages, when the whistle of the steamer, on arriving at Coteau Du Lac, startled the girls out of their nap, and woke them up, laughing over the oblivion which had swallowed up the last two hours. The little French village of "The Coteau," with its long pier, and the little brown houses and big church, gave the travellers a first glimpse into French Canada, quite in keeping with the spirit of the little book; and the succeeding scenery, growing every moment more picturesque, was to May idealized with a touch of poetry reflected from Mr. Howells' charming little romance. After leaving the Coteau village, they passed the short Coteau Rapids, and then the drowsy old village of Beauharnois, with a pastoral landscape of green uplands and bowery orchards behind it,—after which they saw before them, beneath a richly wooded shore, a glittering stretch of interwoven blue and silver. And soon the steamer began to pitch herself forward, as she was swiftly hurried down the rapid incline, past cedar-covered points and islets,—so swiftly that it seemed as if they could scarcely take in the striking beauty of the scene till it had been left behind and the rapid was past. And thus in quick succession they passed "The Cascades" with its white breakers glittering in the sun, and the "Split Rock" with its great black jagged boulders, past which they flew like a flash; after which, as the afternoon sunshine began to slant softly on the water, they glided out on the great placid reach of Lake St. Louis. The distant blue range of the Adirondacks had remained on their right for a considerable portion of their way, but now, before them, rose the soft, cloud-like vision,—apparently triple in its conformation, which Kate announced was Cartier's "Mont Royal," at the feet of which lay the city of Montreal. It held their eyes with a spell of fascination as they crossed the lake, growing more and more distinct until they could distinguish its various divisions and the masses of woodland that clothed it, and even the large buildings which here and there gleamed out from its darker mass.

And now they were passing the Indian village of Caughnawaga, with its long line of little French-looking houses fringing the shore, while on their left lay Lachine, with the glorious green mountain—a mass of verdure from top to bottom, rising behind the straggling white village, flanked by its grey stone church and *Presbytère*, while the western sun shed a flood of golden glory over the shining lake. Then came the descent of the Lachine Rapids, the most exciting of all, and the three travellers who saw it for the first time, held their breath as the steamer rushed on, within a hair-breadth, as it seemed, of striking the jagged rocks, that raised their rough black heads above the white breakers. There was not the mass and the thunder of water of the Long Sault, nor the silvery beauty and rush of the Cedars and Cascades, but the black rocks and ledges that seemed lying in wait, like black monsters, to crush the vessel between their cruel teeth, recalled to Hugh the old fable of Scylla and Charybdis. It was grandly exciting to see the steamer, like a living thing, dart shuddering by them, and rush at headlong speed through the boiling surges, with the long wooded stretch of Nun's Island nestling, as it seemed, amid the tossing waves, while the long spans of the Lachine and Victoria bridges loomed up in front of them, and the bold mountain summits of Belœil and Boucherville assumed exquisite violet hues under the magic touch of the rapidly setting sun, which also lighted up the massive city before them. There was hardly time to take in the full beauty of the *coup d'œil* before the steamer was under Victoria Bridge, the height of which they could not realize till they saw that the tall masts could pass under it without being lowered. Presently they were in the Canal Basin, amid what seemed a forest of masts and shipping, and May, to her delight, could distinguish the great black hulls of some ocean steamers lying in port. The long lines of massive grey store-houses and docks also much impressed her unaccustomed eye; but these were soon left behind as they drove rapidly up to the Windsor Hotel, where they were to spend the next day. They were all hungry enough, after their long afternoon in the open air, to enjoy heartily the late dinner in the spacious dining-room of the Windsor, with its glittering lights, its long rows of tables and lively groups of guests. After dinner, the girls wandered through the long corridors and sumptuous drawing-rooms, till May, at least, who had never been in so large a hotel in her life, was quite bewildered by all the grandeur. Then they sat on a balcony looking out on the long twinkling ranks of electric lights, contrasting with the silvery radiance of the moonlight, while Kate described to them vividly the glories of a winter carnival she had seen, and the pure white, translucent beauty of the wondrous Ice Palace which had silently risen in the Square before them, and had afterwards, as it seemed, dissolved like a dream, under the gentle touch of approaching spring.

Next morning they were all assembled at breakfast so early that they had the dining-hall pretty much to themselves. A carriage had been ordered for nine o'clock, as they did not wish to lose any of the bright morning, and they drove for some hours—first, through the old-fashioned French streets, past Notre Dame and the old Gray Nunnery and the Bonsecours market, and the point where the first settlement of Ville Marie was inaugurated, as Parkman has so graphically described it. They looked at the old Bonsecours church, which recalled to Hugh and Flora similar old churches in Normandy, then drove up St. Denis street, past Our Lady of Lourdes and the other ecclesiastical buildings which cluster around it, and finished their morning with a glimpse at the pretty Art Gallery.

After luncheon they again set off, and drove along Sherbrooke Street and through McGill College grounds, inspecting its groups of fine buildings, and through the bosky avenues that run upward to "the mountain," and then up to "the mountain" itself, enjoying the magnificent views, from the Mountain Park drive, of plain and river and distant hills, quite as much as did Champlain, who could not see, even in a vision, the stately city that now replaces the Indian wigwams and maize-fields, which then bore the name of Hochelaga. They ascended to the very brow of the noble hill, taking in, as they went, the whole sweep of view, from the winding course towards Quebec on the left, to the extreme right, where they could catch a glimpse of the Lachine Rapids, flashing white in the sunshine.

The day passed only too swiftly in this pleasant sight-seeing, and they had to be at their hotel for a six o'clock dinner, in order to be ready to leave for Quebec at seven. When at last they drove off, Kate gave the order, "to the Quebec boat!" May heaved a deep sigh of pleasure. It seemed as if her cup was now indeed full.

They found the large double-decked steamer filling up rapidly with parties of tourists, some of them evidently—from their piles of luggage—*en route* for Murray Bay, or Métis, or some other watering-place on the Gulf. Quebec was to them an everyday affair, and they talked of it in a careless and cursory fashion which to May, with her enthusiastic veneration for its associations, seemed little less than sacrilege.

As they passed down the smooth winding river, while the twilight was falling, silvered by the brightening moon, Flora began to talk of Mr. Winthrop, and to express her regret at his inability to come on with them. "It was too bad," she added, "that Hugh forestalled him, in going to Kate's rescue, was it not? I'm afraid he will hardly forgive Hugh in a hurry."

"But Hugh couldn't have waited for him," said May.

"What are you two talking about?" asked Kate, whose ear had been caught by the words, while talking to her aunt and Hugh.

"Oh, we were only talking about poor Mr. Winthrop," replied Flora, "and his vexation with Hugh for getting before him in rescuing you."

"Why should he have *let* Hugh get before him, then?" she asked.

Hugh looked up with a half-puzzled air; then it seemed as if something had dawned upon him—previously unthought of—and, in a few explicit words, he explained the whole situation, doing ample justice to Mr. Winthrop. Kate listened attentively, and though she was very quiet all the rest of the evening, May fancied that her face was cleared of a shadow that had clouded it before. She took up May's "Chance Acquaintance" and soon became absorbed in it,—not laying it down till she had rushed through it to the last page.

"Wasn't it too bad," said Flora, "that Kitty sent off Mr. Arbuton like that?"

"I think it was too bad that Mr. Arbuton didn't *come back*," retorted Kate. "If he only had done *that*, a few days after, Kitty would have forgiven him and he could have made a fresh start."

"I feel sure that he *did*, in the end," asserted May, dogmatically. "I mean to write a sequel to it some day!" and then they all went off to their berths.

The three girls were up almost by daylight in the morning, watching the brightening sunshine flush the red rock of Cap Rouge, and then the gradual unfolding of the river panoramas as they passed headland after headland, each opening a fair, new vista beyond. Soon a glittering church steeple gleamed out from the southern shore, rising protectingly over white villages nestling at their feet. Curving recesses of the wooded bank, outlined by one long, picturesque French village street, followed the bend of the shore to the left. "That is Sillery," said Kate, in reply to May's eager enquiries.

"Oh," said May, "that is the place where the old Jesuit residence was,—that Kitty and Mr. Arbuton went to see."

After the point of Sillery was rounded, there rose, at last, before their delighted eyes, the historic grey rock of Quebec, with its mural-crowned rampart and bastions, and the houses and convents and great churches of the old city climbing up its sides or rambling along the plateau at its foot.

"Oh, that is the citadel!" exclaimed May, breathless with delight.

"And that is Dufferin Terrace, with the straight line of railing and the little pavilions," explained Kate, while the grim old grey houses above them recalled to Hugh and Flora memories of the old French towns they had seen abroad. As soon as they could disengage themselves from the bustle and confusion of the crowded quay, Kate, who had declared that a *calèche* was as much "the thing" in Quebec as a gondola in Venice, signalled to two *calèche* drivers, and the junior members of the party were soon perched on their high seats, while Mrs. Sandford and the luggage went up more comfortably in a commonplace cab. As they rattled over the rough pavements and through the tortuous narrow streets, which—as Kate remarked to Flora—"are just like Europe, I'm sure," they drove up Mountain Hill, passing the spot where Prescott Gate used to be of old, and catching a glimpse of the Basilica, or cathedral, *en route*. They clattered rapidly over the hard paved streets of the upper town, and drove, to May's delight, through a massive old gate with deep, round arches, which the smiling driver announced as "Porte St. Jean." Just outside it they passed a little French marketplace, and then, after passing one or two crowded streets, they were finally set down in front of a tall, three-story stone house with a red door.

The travelers were, of course, expected, and received with kind courtesy by their hostess, Mrs. Dale, who took them at once up two flights of stairs. "If they *are* high, they have the better view," she said, smiling. And so they had. The girls broke out into exclamations of delight, as they gazed from the old-fashioned open windows. In front they looked across streets and houses to the *glacis* of the Citadel, crowned by its line of ramparts, and could follow, for some distance, the city wall without. The back window commanded a glorious picture. Across a dusky mass of brown, steep-roofed houses, only half lighted up yet by the morning sun, they looked out on a green, undulating champaign country, flecked with patches of deep green woodland, and little white villages clustering here and there round their great church spires; while, for background, rose a grand range of hills, stretching far away in interminable blue vista—all grey and violet in shadow and silvery blue in the sunlight, as the morning mists drifted away, and a wandering sunbeam caught and glorified a tiny white hamlet nestling in the folds of a wooded hill. Just where the sunbeams straggled away into the green country a silver stream wound glittering in the sun, making a bright loop round a point, on which, amid some trees, stood a large stone building.

"That is the St. Charles, you know," explained Kate, "and there, where you see it twisted like a silver loop, is the place where stood the first mission house of the Recollets, and the Jesuits afterwards."

"Oh!" said May quickly, "I know! Notre Dame des Anges, was it not? So *that* was the place where they had their thatched log cabin and where they used to be half frozen in winter, when they were trying to learn the Indian language from their interpreter, while their biggest wood fires could not keep them warm, or their ink from freezing!"

"And, just a little farther down is the place where they suppose Jacques Cartier laid up his ships, when he first came; as you were reading to us the other day, Hugh."

"Ah, and so that is the place where they went through so much suffering, that terrible winter,

when the ships and masts and rigging were all cased in ice, like ghostly ships at the North Pole, and when the cold and the scurvy were killing them off so fast, that it seemed as if none of them would be left to see the spring. How they must have welcomed its coming at last!"

Then Kate pointed out the green, low-lying meadow beyond the St. Charles, called *La Canardière*, because wild ducks used there to abound, and their eyes followed the long white line of the village of Beauport, running between the grand Laurentian hills and the green slopes that edged the blue St. Lawrence, studded with white sails, and winding away between the Island of Orleans and the northern shore; while, far down the high river bank, they could just distinguish the dark purple cleft of the Montmorency Falls. But they were presently reminded that breakfast was waiting, and, after their early start they were quite ready thoroughly to enjoy the fresh rolls and eggs and delicious raspberries and cream, while they planned their day's sight-seeing, so as to accomplish the utmost that could be done in the hours before them.

They determined first of all to scale the Citadel, taking Dufferin Terrace on their way. They went round by the new Parliament buildings, entering the city by the St. Louis gate, with its new Norman towers and embrasures. Kate, to whom the place was familiar of old, grew indignant over the ravages made in the solid old fortifications just outside the walls, and thought the fine new Parliament buildings did not by any means make up for it. "One could see new buildings any day, but that wasn't what one came to Quebec for," she remarked. They passed by the Esplanade and the winding ascent to the Citadel, and the sedate old-fashioned houses of St. Louis Street, and the little steep-roofed wooden cottage near the hotel, now a saloon, where once lay the body of the brave Montcalm. Presently they came to the "Ring," as the old *Place d'Armes* is often called—the scene, as May reminded them, of so many interesting events in the old French *régime*.

"For there, you know," she said, "the gate of the old Chateau St. Louis fronted the square, and here there used to be state receptions of the Indians, when treaties were concluded; and here, too, they let the poor Hurons build a fort when they had been almost exterminated by the Iroquois."

Hugh was much interested, as they passed on, in the sight of the old Chateau near the shady walks of the Governor's Gardens, and in the monument erected to the joint memory of the two brave heroes, Wolfe and Montcalm. And then they came out on the long promenade, now known as Dufferin Terrace, and stopped to take in the magnificent panorama, the wide river, with the picturesque heights of Lévis immediately opposite, and the crowded shipping below; and then, immediately beneath them, they looked down into the depths of the Lower Town at their feet, in which May was eager to discover the site of the old "*Abitation*" of Champlain.

"I think it was just about where the Champlain Market is now," Kate replied—"that open space with all the market-carts of the *habitans*, and all the people doing their marketing."

Then they gazed down into the narrow alleys of Little Champlain Street, with the tall, grimy houses that rose up just below them, which, as Flora said, reminded her so much of some of the old "wynds" of Edinburgh; and were shown the little old church, "*Notre Dame des Victoires*," which played so important a part in the early history of Quebec. May could have remained all day dreaming over these old historic associations, nor did Hugh Macnab seem much inclined to tear himself away from the fascinating scene. But Kate was determined to keep them up to "schedule time," and she and her watch were relentless, so they reluctantly tore themselves away, being promised a still finer view from above, and mounted a long steep stair rising from the end of the Terrace. They could not resist the temptation of looking around from time to time as the view widened at every step, till at last, drawing a deep breath, they stood at the top of the *glacis* and gazed at the superb view around them, the closely built Lower Town, the forest of shipping, the steamboats darting to and fro, the opposite heights, fringed with steep-roofed, balconied houses and sprinkled with distant white villages creeping up their receding sides, and large, stately convents peeping out of clustered and embosoming trees; while just beneath their feet a black ocean steamer was getting up her steam to sail away down the great river to the sea.

Walking back along the *glacis*, they reached the winding ascent to the Citadel, which they followed, between its high stone-faced banks, till they reached the ancient, curiously-woven chain gates, said to be impregnable, and leading into the wide green ditch. Then they passed through the massive portals of Dalhousie Gate, with its guardrooms and casemates built into the solid walls on either side, where the warlike-looking sentries politely saluted the ladies and put them under the charge of a soldier guide. He led them first across the wide court-yard to the King's Bastion by the flagstaff, from whence they could feast their eyes on such a view as May, at least, had never seen before. All about them lay the city, mapped out with its walls and ramparts, its church towers and steeples; at their feet, far below them, the Terrace on which they had been recently standing; and below that again, the grim old town, the docks and shipping and flitting boats diminished to the size of playthings; then the green heights opposite, and the bold blue outline of the Isle of Orleans, and the calm broad river stealing silently away through the vista of distant hills. It seemed like a dream that held them in its spell, till the French soldier, to whom the view was an every-day affair, shrugged his shoulders and said, "*allons*."

They continued their walk past the Officers' Quarters, in one of which was the Governor General's summer residence;—past the magazine and stables, where many little dogs were playing about, and came out at last on what they thought the most glorious view of all,—that from

the Prince's Bastion, so called, because a Prince's feather, carved in stone on the wall, marks the spot where the Prince of Wales once laid his hand when visiting Quebec. From it they could see, far away to the south, rank after rank of distant blue hills, some of them in Maine and Vermont. To westward they could follow the river till it was hidden behind a green projecting point which shut in the Bay of Sillery, while away to the west and north stretched a long succession of blue hills, with white villages gleaming among their wooded sides, amidst which, too, they could trace the silvery ribbon of the St. Charles, winding its way down out of the shadowy recesses of the distant mountains.

The travellers found no words adequate to express the delight awakened by the glorious picture, and gazed on in silence, while light mists floated away from the summits of the hills, and sudden glints of sunshine gave them an added touch of glorious beauty.

But they could not stay there all day, and all too soon they turned away from the beautiful picture, which they would often hereafter see before the inner eye; and returned along the walls, past little piles of cannon balls and gun-mounted embrasures, till they came down again into the court-yard and the wide, green ditch, on the slope of which sleek cows were peacefully grazing, close to the now harmless guns.

Whither should they go next? They would just have time, Kate said, to take in the Basilica and the Ursuline convent before luncheon. Thither, accordingly, they went, meeting long-robed ecclesiastics and bright-eyed academy boys in their trim gray uniforms;—pretty French nurse-maids and British orderlies, hurrying along laden with packages of official papers, all just as it had been described in "A Chance Acquaintance." The Basilica, or great French Cathedral, they found rather disappointing within, for the impression of massiveness made by the exterior seemed incongruous with the gaudy white and gold of the interior decorations.

"It seems rather out of keeping," said Hugh, a little discontentedly, "with what one reads of its history, in those stormy old times, when the French colonists used to come here to pray for deliverance from Iroquois raids, or to offer up thanksgiving for some timely succor."

"But you know, it has been rebuilt more than once since those old times," said Kate; and May tried to recall in imagination the great bare-raftered building of those old days, and found much satisfaction in the high porcelain stoves at the entrance, which gave a "foreign look" to the building at once.

To the Ursuline chapel they went next, and, after application made at a grated window of the convent, a tranquil-faced nun opened the great door, and they passed into the quiet little chapel, so dainty in all its arrangements, and looked at the great picture, by Champlain, of Christ at the house of Simon, the Pharisee,—at the tablet to the memory of Montcalm, whose skull is still preserved there;—and then, with still more interest at the tiny jet of flame in the glass chandelier, kept alight, for a hundred and fifty years, in memory of a young French girl who took the veil all those years ago, and whose brothers made provision to preserve in perpetuity this touching tribute to her memory. But the rosy-faced, contented looking *sœur*, who acted as guide, would by no means let them pass out without special attention to the elaborate flower painting on velvet which adorned the altar, and testified at least to the skill and industry of the present nuns.

Just as they came out, Kate had an unexpected *rencontre* with an old school-mate visiting Quebec on her wedding tour. As they were about to part,—after a hundred rapid questions and answers had been exchanged,—Kate's friend exclaimed:

"And where do you think I am boarding? At the very house where Kitty in 'A Chance Acquaintance,' stayed; and if you will just come with me you shall look from the very window of Kitty's room and see the view of which the book gives such a lively description."

May was enchanted, and the girls were soon looking into the garden of the Ursuline convent from the window at which her favorite heroine was supposed to have stood, looking down at the shady walks below. Kate and Flora declared that it did not look quite so poetical as in Mr. Howell's pages, but May would not entertain the idea of disappointment, and tried to see all Kitty saw, though encroaching buildings have a good deal spoiled the quaint old garden, amid whose lilacs and tall hollyhocks that young lady used, on moonlight nights, to evolve the shades of Madame de la Peltrie and the first heroic tenants of the convent.

After the morning's adventures the early dinner was very welcome, as well as a little rest, with the view from their fascinating windows before them; after which they strolled along the Grand Battery and quiet Esplanade, and penetrated into the quaintly picturesque grounds of the Artillery Barracks, and looked from the weather-beaten old arsenal on the wall, at the beautiful glimpse, across docks and grimy old suburbs, of the fair green valley of the St. Charles, with Charlesbourg opposite, sitting royally on her hilltops.

"And, beyond it, you know," said May, mixing up fact and fiction, "are the ruins of the old Chateau Bigot, where the wicked Intendant had his pleasure-parties and carousals, and where Kitty and Mr. Arbuton went for a picnic,—don't you recollect?"

They did not find time to go to see it, however, but explored the city pretty thoroughly, finding in the name of every street a bit of crystallized history, recalling some name or incident connected

with its past. There was Donnacona Street,—recalling the kidnapped Indian chief, and Breboeuf Street, reminding them of the two heroic Jesuit martyrs,—and Buade Street, associated with the haughty and energetic Governor, Louis Buade de Frontenac, under whom the French *régime* saw its proudest days. They walked along the ramparts as far as the new “improvements,” then in progress, would let them and sighed over the ruthless demolition of the old gates—Prescott Gate and Palace Gate, and the picturesque old Hope Gate, so graphically described by Mr. Howells, and even over the renovation of the others, which had lost all their historic interest. They spent some hours in diving into the recesses of the old town, its marketplace and churches and curious old alleys, dignified by the name of streets, and walked along the Saulx Aux Matelots, trying to fix the very place where Arnold fell, on that miserable December morning of 1775; and looked long at the “Golden Dog”—*Chien d’or*—above the Post Office, whereby hangs a tragic tale. And they had a quiet Sunday for resting, with those lovely glimpses of distant hills meeting their eyes wherever they turned; and attended a service in the quaint old-fashioned English Cathedral, which, with the equally old-fashioned Scottish church and Manse, have such a quaint old-world air, like everything else in Quebec.

But of course they drove to Montmorency Falls, devoting to it a whole delightful afternoon. Their course lay across Dorchester Bridge, and then between meadows of emerald green, stretching down to the river and fringed with graceful elms and beeches, with pretty old-fashioned country houses here and there, which the girls of course called *chateaux*, and then down the long village street of Beauport,—the steep-roofed little houses in bright variety of color succeeding each other for several miles, with their long garden-like strips of farm extending down to the river on one side, and upwards towards the hills on the other. Bright flowers grew in front of the windows, and trim, dark-eyed French girls sat at the doors and on the little balconies, sewing or knitting away busily, while they chattered in their native tongue. In the middle of the village stood the great stone church, with its bright tin-covered steeples, seen ever so many miles off.

After passing Beauport the scenery grew wilder, and soon they rattled over a wooden bridge, below which the foaming Montmorency brawled over the brown rocks, at this late season partially dry. A little farther on stood the inn, where carriages wait, and they had only to pass through a gate and walk along the high river bank to the dizzy stair down the cliff, from whence they could see to the best advantage the beautiful fall, plunging in one avalanche of foam from the giddy height above, crowned by deep green woods that contrasted strongly with the glittering sheet of foam and spray, while a few beautiful little outlying cascades trickled over the dark brown rock in braided threads of silver.

“How delightful it would be,” said May and Flora together, “to stay a whole month at that little inn, and come every day to sit here; and look and look, till one was satisfied!” And the others sighed regretfully as the fast descending sun warned them that it was time to return to the inn where they had left the carriage, and drive home past the bright little gardens and picturesque cottages of Beauport—brighter in the slanting rays of the evening sun,—and rejoiced in the golden glory which the sunset threw over the tin roofs of Quebec, glittering with an intense golden radiance out of the grey setting of rock and misty distance.

But May thought their morning at Sillery the climax of all the delights of Quebec. They went by one of the steamboats which are always darting up and down the river, so that from its deck, they had another fine view of the quaint grey town rising, tier above tier, to the Terrace above, where the people looked like Lilliputian figures out of a doll’s house. Then they steamed slowly past the crowded docks, the great black steamships and stately sailing vessels, some of them bearing strange Swedish or Norwegian names,—past the root of Cape Diamond, crowned by the Citadel, on the rocky side of which they could distinctly read the inscription: “Here Montgomery Fell;” past the long street of French houses that lines the shore below the plains; past fine wooded heights with stately white country houses gleaming through the deep green foliage; till, on turning a point of the leafy cliff, they saw before them the curve of Sillery Bay, with its fringe of many colored cottages and yellow rafts and lumber piles; while opposite, the great stone church with its gleaming steeple towered over the flourishing village of New Liverpool. Stepping out upon the wooden pier, the travellers walked on past the anchored rafts on which men were busy squaring timber with practised strokes, and up to where the gracefully curving village street began. And there May had a delightful surprise. A dilapidated weather-worn old cottage stood before them, and above it, from an overhanging elm, hung a board on which they read the inscription: “*Emplacement du convent des Religieuses Hospitalières.*”

“There!” exclaimed May, “that is the place where the nuns of the Hotel Dieu lived when they first arrived with Madame de la Peltrie, before they could make up their minds to build on the rough rocky site they gave to them in Quebec.” They all stood for a little while, looking at the shabby old cottage, trying to imagine what that first Canadian hospital looked like; and then they walked up the quaint old-fashioned street, with its gambrel-roofed houses, each having its gay little flower-garden in front, till they came to a gray stuccoed, two-story house, standing a little way back from the street, with a square enclosure just opposite, in which stood a plain white monument.

“There it is!” May exclaimed, with breathless delight; “the old Jesuit residence! And that square opposite is the place where their little church stood, just as it was all described.”

They opened the stiff gate with some difficulty, and walked into the little enclosure, where they read the inscription in French and English,—one commemorating the rude little church where

the Jesuits and their Algonquin converts had worshipped, about two hundred and fifty years ago; and the other dedicated to the memory of the first missionary who died there—Père Enemond Massé—the Père utile, as he was called, because he could do anything, from saying mass to ship-building, or even tending the pigs of the establishment, thinking nothing beneath him that needed to be done, and being such a favorite with all that he was always chosen to accompany their expeditions as Father Confessor. Most of this May was able to tell the rest of the party, as they stood beneath the two maples that shaded the enclosure.

Then they took a look at the outside of the old residence, which, however, has been renewed more than once since the substantial inner framework was built, and tried to imagine the strange solitary life that its inmates must have lived, especially in bitter winter weather, shut out from all society, except that of a few Algonquins and trappers.

That afternoon was their last in Quebec. They drove in from Sillery by the pretty St. Louis road, fringed with shady country seats, and commanding, at many points, glorious glimpses of the grand mountain panorama on both sides of the city. As they passed the "Plains of Abraham" they stopped once more to look at the rather forlorn-looking monument which commemorates Wolfe's death, and the victory for Great Britain, which secured half a continent; and tried to trace the lines of advance up the rugged cliffs by which the hero had surprised the unsuspecting French. This was, appropriately enough, their last sight-seeing in Quebec, and the evening following was spent on Dufferin Terrace watching the exquisite sunset tints melt away from the river and the distant hills, with a pathetic touch which seemed to them like the memories they would always cherish of the romantic old town.

CHAPTER V—AMONG THE HILLS.

As the little party went on board the Saguenay boat next morning, a surprise was in store for them, for who should come to meet them, with the most smiling air, but Mr. Winthrop himself, looking very bright, and meeting them all as if it had been the most matter-of-course thing in the world! Kate met him with the same cordial, matter-of-course air, but May observed that they exchanged a few words in a low tone, which seemed to set them on their old footing at once.

"Do you know," said Flora, to her, as they stood apart in the stern, taking a last look at the great frowning rock and the tall, dark houses looming above them,—*"I believe some one wrote to him and explained Kate's misconception, and I have my suspicions as to who it was. I saw Hugh scribbling off a few lines in a great hurry, that evening on the boat, and I shouldn't wonder in the least if it was to Mr. Winthrop! But I'm glad it's all right, for I think he is a very nice fellow, and Kate and he would suit each other very well."*

May was completely taken back. Had Flora no thought of Hugh, then? Or did it not occur to her that *his* happiness might be in some degree involved in this matter? But if Hugh really did what she supposed, how very noble it was of him! He was a real hero, a chivalrous knight! However, she could not, of course, say anything of this to Flora, so she silently determined to put Hugh and his fortunes quite out of her thoughts for the present, as too perplexing a problem, and give herself up entirely to the influence of the glorious scenery and the lovely morning.

They were, by this time, fast losing sight of the grey old fortress about which had raged so many fierce conflicts in the days of old. The Isle of Orleans, along whose southern shore the steamer took her course, quickly hid from them the picturesque old town and its beautiful setting, and even the rocky cleft in which Montmorency was ceaselessly pouring down its masses of snowy foam, and raising its great mist-cloud to the sky. As the Isle of Orleans was itself left behind, the glorious river grew wider and grander, as point after point opened before them in ever-receding vista. The blue, cloud-like masses of Cap Tourmente and Ste. Anne gradually became great dark hills, covered from head to foot with a dense growth of foliage, chiefly birch and fir. One after another of this magnificent range of superb hills rose on their left, wooded from base to summit, and looking almost as lonely and untouched by civilization as when Cartier's "white-winged canoes" first ascended the "great river of Hochelaga." Here and there a white village or two gleamed out from the encompassing verdure, or stood perched on a hill-top beside its protecting church. To May, who had so often dreamed over the voyages of these early explorers, it seemed like an enchanted land. The Isle of Orleans was to her the old "*Ile de Bacchus*," purple with the festoons of wild vines that offered their clusters of grapes to the French adventurers, and the beautiful Ile aux Coudres, which the Captain pointed out, she recalled as in like manner an old acquaintance, surveying it with much interest, as she pictured to herself the hardy explorers regaling themselves on its native filberts.

Then the noble bay of St. Paul's opened out its grand spreading curve, with the pretty village of Les Eboulements nestling in its breast; and by and by they had stopped at the massive lighthouse with its high pier, intended to suit the variations of the tide.

"What a lonely life it must be in these solitudes!" observed Mr. Winthrop, as they watched the great lumbering ferry-boat carrying off the passengers whose homes lay among these hills;—"just think of the contrast between life here and life in the crowded bustle of New York."

"And yet," said Hugh, "I fancy life is, in the main, not so very different here, if we could only see

below the surface. I suppose the main outlines of life are pretty much the same everywhere, after all!"

May had been inwardly following out the same thought, and trying to imagine the sort of life and surroundings to which the pale girl in gray, who had specially excited her interest as a supposed bride, was going in her future home. Then the voyagers dreamily watched for some time in silence the long silent procession of wooded hills, dappled by the shadow of the great fleecy white clouds that swept up across the blue sky, while, ever and anon, snowy sea-gulls darted down to catch from the tossing crests of the sparkling waves, the fragments of food thrown to them by passengers, seeming to spy it unerringly from afar, and now and then white whales or porpoises would toss up a miniature geyser, as they disported themselves in the azure tide.

At length they came in sight of the headland forming the upper end of picturesque Murray Bay, where they were to spend some time on their return from the Saguenay. They all admired the lovely vista opened up by this long and narrow bay with its white church, marking the village from afar, with its grand promontory of Cap à l'Aigle at its lower extremity, and its green valley, hemmed in by rank after rank of billowy blue hills. But they could not see much of the long straggling village of Pointe-au-Pic, or the quaint foreign-looking French hamlet in the centre of the curve of the bay. Indeed, their attention was quickly diverted from examining its details, for, among the people who stood on the high pier awaiting the steamboat, they speedily recognized Jack and Nellie Armstrong, who greeted them with much delight, and were soon beside them on the steamer's deck.

"You see we got here in advance of you," said Jack Armstrong, and Nellie exclaimed: "We've been wondering what could possibly have become of you. We have been watching the last two boats, prepared to join you if you were there, and were beginning to despair of you altogether. You must have been bewitched, either by Quebec or the Thousand Islands, to have been so long on the way."

"And you have very nearly missed the moon," added Jack. "We've been watching it for the last two or three evenings in fear and trembling lest Miss Macnab and Miss Thorburn should miss their cherished desire of seeing Cape Eternity by moonlight."

"Oh, I think there is enough of it left yet," said Kate, while Mrs. Sandford remarked that she thought she never should have been able to tear those people away from the delights of the Thousand Islands.

"Or from Quebec," said Flora and May together. "*That* was almost the loveliest of all."

"Ah, I told you you would enjoy Quebec, Miss Macnab!" said Jack Armstrong. And presently May observed that he had drawn Flora a little aside, and engaged her in an animated description of what she had most enjoyed since they had left Port Hope. And, indeed, she was looking charming enough, in her Inverness cape and deerstalker cap, to draw forth a good deal of admiration, May thought. As for Kate, in her rough ulster and cap to match, with her color heightened by the sharp sea breeze, she was looking brilliantly handsome, so evidently thought Mr. Winthrop, who kept near her, displacing Hugh altogether, as May at last believed. But now they were nearly opposite Les Pèlerins, the strange parallel rocks that stand, silent, stately warders beside the great river, widening into a broad sea-like expanse, with a line of distant hills faintly breaking the horizon to the right, while on the left, the great hills which had been accompanying them all day now receded somewhat into the distance. Then the little red brick town of Rivière-du-Loup gleamed out ruddy on its sloping hill, growing more and more distinct until the steamer had drawn up beside the high pier, on which were a number of summer tourists eager to see who were on the boat, or to get a little fresh news from the outside world. Bidding these farewell, they quickly passed the long, straggling line of white cottages that marked the pleasant watering-place of Cacouna. Our travelers meant to visit it, and also Rivière-du-Loup, with its grand, romantic waterfall, on the homeward way, but at present their thoughts were engrossed with the Saguenay, and May's dreaming imagination was already busy with the blue ridge of rounded hills that, as she was told, marked the entrance and the course of that mysterious river. But, as they crossed over towards the south side of the sea-like river, they had a specimen of the glorious sunsets which form one of the chief charms of Cacouna, shedding over the calm expanse of water a flood of golden glory, and touching the distant hills with the richest amethystine hues, till they seemed to float in a dreamy haze, between the amber sky and the shimmering golden tide below. The sight held the little party fascinated with its entrancing spell, and they remained on deck heedless of the summons of the clamorous tea-bell, until the rich hues and the golden glory had faded at last, not into the "light of common day," but into the soft vagueness of the long northern twilight. Then at last, with a sigh for the brief duration of the beautiful vision, they descended to the lamp-lit cabin to enjoy the appetizing evening meal, which their long afternoon in the bracing air had made them all ready to thoroughly enjoy.

When they again came on deck they were just passing some straggling islets, darkly green in the fast fading light, and rounding Pointe Noire,—the fitly-named dark point of rock that guards the entrance to the strange mysterious dark northern fiord about which have gathered so many a marvelous story. And now May was eagerly looking out for Tadousac, with her heroine Kitty, and the venerable old church and all the little romance that followed, uppermost in her imagination. Then those rounded sand-hills, skirted by rocks and fringed with a scanty vegetation of stunted firs, were, Mr. Winthrop said, the "Mamelons,"^[1] about which cluster strange old Indian legends,

of fierce conflicts between the Algonquins and the Esquimaux—weird tales, too, of a doom or curse on intermarriage of an Algonquin with an alien race, which here overtook the offender with its inevitable Nemesis. In the deepening gloaming, in the shadow of the dusky heights that towered on high, casting long, dark, quivering reflections in the dark mysterious stream, with scattered lights twinkling out here and there, through the clustering foliage, is Tadousac. With its straggling brown dwellings, and the massive timbers of the great pier storehouse looming up in undefined vagueness above them, it was easy to imagine any number of legendary tales of love and conflict; of

“Old unhappy things
And battles long ago.”

as Hugh quoted once more. The steamer was made fast to the pier, with much creaking and groaning, as if shuddering to begin the ascent of the dark, fateful river, which, it is said, one of the earliest explorers attempting with his men, found a fatal enterprise, none of them ever returning to the light of day.

As the steamer was to remain here half an hour, the whole party landed, as did most of the other passengers, to inspect the little rude ancient church, built nearly three hundred years ago for the Indians and the trappers who traded with them—the oldest surviving building north of Mexico. They took the route which May had so often followed in imagination with her shadowy friends of the story, across the ravine and through the village, with its lights twinkling all over its little cove, till they reached the plain, bare old wooden church, beside which they stood for some time almost in silence, reverently regarding the little wilderness-temple which had so long alone met the needs and witnessed the devotions of men rough and rude, but men still with the felt need of Divine help in their strange wild lives. But the visitors could not enter, nor were they indeed anxious to do so, for they felt that this might have broken the spell thrown over them by the bare sombre, weather-beaten exterior and venerable associations. Moreover, the steamer was already whistling its summons, so they set out on their return through the same shadowy, suggestive gloom of dark pine-studded rocks and deep murmuring unseen waterfalls, till they came out suddenly on the clustered lights of the landing and the steamer streaming with light through every crevice, just as May had seen it so often, already, through the eyes of Miss Kitty Ellison.

Well, they had left Tadousac behind now, and had fairly entered into the shadows of the dark and sullen Saguenay, which seems to lie like a prisoner between its stern frowning warders and to have hewn out its difficult passage to unite with the St. Lawrence, through the stern rocks that would have shut it up in its lonely gloom forever. To Hugh, the passage left behind seemed indeed a fortress-gate, strongly flanked by tall overhanging rocks, crags with gnarled *savins*, and white-stemmed birches gleaming even in the deepening dusk, clinging, as if for life, to the jagged precipices. They had lost sight of the twinkling lights of Tadousac, set in its little rocky niche of the “*petite montagne qui est presque coupée par la mer*,” as Champlain had described it long ago, with its “little harbor,” which would hold only nine or ten ships in the *embouchure* of the Saguenay, though many more could find shelter in the bay that fronts the St. Lawrence. The captain of the steamer told the young men about the little lake close at hand, which guards the precious young salmon raised there for the Government’s fish-breeding establishment at Anse de l’eau.

And now the dark, vague forms of Titans seemed to rise up on either hand,—great massive hills and cliffs that seemed almost to shut out the light of the stars; and most of the party, growing tired of the somewhat awesome silent procession, took refuge in the lighted saloon, from whence soon came strains of sweet music, and the tones of Flora’s fresh young voice, in “Over the Sea to Skye,” which seemed not inappropriate to the *genius loci*. Mr. Winthrop and Hugh remained talking with the captain about the more striking features of the scenery and its historical associations; and to May, half listening to them, half dreaming out again the vivid sketches of Parkman, the solitude seemed peopled once more with the old explorers who established ties of commerce between far-away St. Malo and these lonely wilds,—Cartier and Roberval, Pontgravé and Chauvin, and their bands of trappers and *voyageurs*, for whom the Indians paddled their canoes, laden with costly furs, down this dark, fathomless stream. She could realize more vividly the fate of one unfortunate band, left at so lonely a post to starve, through one miserable winter. For, first, by reason of its fabled wealth of gold and silver and precious stones, and afterwards for the sake of its real riches in furs, the Saguenay was even better known to the early pioneers than was the river between Quebec and Montreal. Then, too, May’s thoughts went back to that very different little band of missionaries,—Recollets first, Jesuits afterwards,—who came bearing a Christian message of love to the savages of this wild region. She remembered how the trio of Jesuits who first reached the river Sagne, as it was then called, in their delight at reaching their goal, described it as being “as beautiful as the Seine, almost as rapid as the Rhone, and deeper than many parts of the sea,” and how Père Le Jeune, in particular, felt that they were the forerunners of a host of brave soldiers of the Cross who should subdue the land for the Lord. She remembered how the sight of some poor Indian captives, cruelly tortured by their captors arrayed in all their uncouth adornment of parti-colored paint, had so impressed the good Fathers with pity, that they only longed for an opportunity of preaching to them the gospel of love and peace, although, as Père Le Jeune observed, the same fate might at any time befall themselves. And, indeed, Père Le Jeune’s, observation on that head is well worthy of being recorded:

“In truth, I was cut to the heart. I had thought of coming to Canada, only because I was sent. I felt no particular regard for the savages, but I would have rendered obedience, had they sent me

a thousand times further; but I can truly say, that, even if I should have detested this country, I should have been touched by what I have seen, had my heart been brass. Would to God, that those who can help these poor souls, and do something for their salvation, could be here for three days! I think the desire of saving them would seize their whole souls." Then he proceeds to reflect that in England, in Spain, in Germany, when the Gospel was first carried thither, the barbarism of the people had been as great. (He says nothing about France, evidently considering that the time of *its* barbarism belonged to remote antiquity.) And further, that the Indians do not lack sense, but instruction; and then goes on to speak of his plans for founding schools for the more docile children; thus anticipating the common-sense missionary policy of our own day. And he takes refuge in the end, as all souls yearning for the salvation of their fellows have had to do, in the promise of the Eternal: "*Dabo tibi gentes heridatatem tuam, et possessionem terminos terræ.*"

In that same bay of Tadousac, too, May recollected, the good Fathers had their first experience of what the St. Lawrence could do in the way of a storm, and had reason to be thankful for the measure of shelter which this bay could give them. As another sample of New World experience, they were nearly eaten up by the mosquitoes and a host of other insect persecutors, while the fireflies formed at least one cheering exception as they glittered among the woods "like sparks of fire, by which he could even see to read at night."

But the captain went on to talk about some of the old floating legends that still increase the romantic interest attaching to this strange river of the North,—of the fierce battles between the rival tribes, in the course of one of which is said to have taken place the terrible earthquake which rent asunder these scarped and jagged cliffs, to form this sublime channel of the Saguenay. And he spoke, also, of the romantic story which has been woven out of the old legend that a mixed marriage between the white man and the Indian was followed by the impending doom; and the terrible forest fires which have at times swept over the whole region, scorching and destroying all life, vegetable and animal, that lay in their course, and leaving their melancholy traces in the splintered, seamed crags that raise aloft majestic forms once clothed in a graceful drapery of green, now only crested here and there with a dreary skeleton of their departed forests. It was not difficult to imagine the awfulness of the scene at night, when the billows of red flame and ruddy smoke rolled in dread majesty over those grand hills, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, till they were suddenly checked by the dark, deep waters of the cold and deep river.

But the captain's talk ended, and Mr. Winthrop, who had gone up the Saguenay before, was by and by attracted into the saloon, and only May and Hugh Macnab were left on deck, with a few of the other passengers, who, like themselves, were held by a sort of fascination in the savage and sombre grandeur of the dark, cloud-like shapes that seemed to unroll themselves before them in endless succession. It seemed strange to sit there, as it were in the presence of the Infinities, in their awful, everlasting silence, while lights were streaming from the saloon and from it also were coming,—now snatches of the wild, wailing melody of "Loch-Lomond," now of the gay little French love ditty;

"Il y'a long temps que je t'aime,
Jamais je ne t'oublierai!"

which Hugh absently hummed in concert with the singers within, setting May again at work on her little romance, the ending of which was so perplexing her at present. But this was only for a passing moment; for the presence of these dark hills was too absorbing to admit other thoughts. And now the faintly diffused light of the rising moon, itself still hidden from view, made a pale background for the great bold *silhouettes*, and showed, too, something more of their minor features; and at last the bright silver disk, shorn of something of its roundness, rose clear above the sharply defined edge of a jagged crag, partially clothed with trees. And now the great grooves and seams of the rocks could be distinctly discerned in unrelieved light and shade,—and the dark lines of such vegetation as could here find a foothold, with here and there a cluster of twinkling lights, marking a little centre of human life in the midst of the wilderness. As they advanced, the precipices grew bolder and bolder; one bold profile after another became defined in the moonlight, then opened up new vistas of the sea of hills and precipices which was continually changing its relation to the spectator. And presently Hugh went in to summon the rest of the party to come out, for, far away in the distance, a practised eye could already discern, just touched by the moonlight, the commanding peak and striking triple profile of Cape Trinity. It seemed an impressive and solemn approach to the mighty crag, growing every moment grander and more majestic in the pale radiance of the moonlight. The triple effect, both vertically and laterally, showed more effectively, though less distinctly, the bare-browed cliff looking even more imposing than in daylight,—every scarped crag and splintered pinnacle and barbicon standing out in the sharpest contrast of light and shade. The travellers gazed up at the giant, towering above them to such a height that it made one dizzy to try to follow it with the eye; and so close did it seem impending over the vessel, that they could scarcely realize their real distance from it, till a copper coin, thrown by Mr. Winthrop with all his force, came far short of the rocky wall, and fell into the dark stream below.

Cape Trinity left behind, Cape Eternity began to loom up in lonely majesty beyond—its mighty mass partially clothed with verdure, and, like the other, idealized in the moonlight. The awesomeness of its grandeur oppressed them with an overpowering effect of dread sublimity, and it was almost a relief when the steamer at last glided away from those tremendous

embodiments of nature's savage grandeur, and saw rising before them vistas of a somewhat gentler, though still bold and picturesque type.

But it was now long past midnight, and most of the party, despite interest of the scene, were growing exceedingly sleepy. Mrs. Sandford, indeed, had long ago retired to her state-room, declaring that neither of the two famous cliffs were worth losing the best half of a night's rest for! The rest of the party now followed her example, and as May passed through the ladies' cabin to her state-room, she was startled for a moment by seeing the dark forms of a number of sleeping nuns, who occupied the sofas instead of berths. They were doubtless going out from one of the great nunneries on a missionary expedition, and to May it seemed delightfully in harmony with the spirit of the scene. Nor would it have been at all difficult for her to imagine figures called up from the old days when these dark uniforms were the only civilized female dress in all the region of the Saguenay. She regarded her own simple dark blue travelling dress with a sigh. It certainly was not nearly so picturesque!

May slept soundly enough, notwithstanding the motion of the boat and the creaking of the chains and timbers during the occasional stoppages. But about daybreak she was awakened by the rattling of chains and the confused clatter of voices, and started up in haste, that she might not lose an hour of the wonderful scenery about her. On coming out of her state-room, she was again somewhat startled by the cluster of dark-robed nuns, some of whom were already up, and absorbed in their morning devotions. But she had no time to think much about them just then, for through the cabin window she caught a glimpse of some wonderful granite peaks, touched with the loveliest rose-color by the light of the sun, which had not yet risen above the rugged hills that close in about the crescent curve of Ha-Ha Bay. Calling Flora to make haste to follow her, she stood for a little time at the stern, feasting her eyes on the exquisite solemn beauty of those granite hills thus glorified by the coming day. Then, joined by Flora, to whom the scene recalled her own Highland hills, she hastened on deck to enjoy the full extent of the lovely view around them. They were lying, stranded by the receding tide, near one end of the long bay, which takes its name, according to some, from the surprised laugh of some of the first explorers at finding themselves *cul-de-sac*;—according to others, from their expression of satisfaction at having at last found soundings in this apparently fathomless river. Just above them, now gilded by the level sunlight, rose a rugged height of richly-tinted granite, sprinkled by birch and balsam, at the foot of which clustered the little grey-peaked wooden houses of the tiny hamlet of St. Alphonse. The piazzas of the summer hotel, and the steep-roofed stone church looked down from the hill-slope beyond the pier, and, far along the sweeping curve of the bay, the gleaming village of St. Alexis shone white on the green shore behind it, long sloping uplands of arable land, while near it a black-hulled ship lay at anchor, the first anchorage for the mariner on this dark rock-bound stream.

One by one the little party had collected on deck, with the exception of Mrs. Sandford, keenly enjoying the loveliness of the hour and scene; and already their fellow-passengers were beginning to leave the steamer on various little expeditions, to fill up the hours which they must wait for the turning of the tide—some to drive across the hills or along the shore of the bay; others to stroll along the shining sands and examine the long-stretching weir, composed of interlaced boughs, jutting far out into the stream, which here presents the most fascinating combination of sea-shore and inland river. A little party of long-robed ecclesiastics, whom our travellers had noticed the evening before, in a corner of the saloon, poring over their breviaries, were seen slowly ascending the hill-slope, towards the church, and Hugh suggested a stroll in the same direction, as the hill-slope seemed a good point for observation of the surrounding landscape.

The morning air blew cool and bracing in their faces as they left the pier, the view before them growing grander and wider at every step. They skirted the hotel grounds, where a few early stirring guests on the piazza watched them with great interest, and soon found themselves at the door of the church, from whence they could command a noble panorama of hills and river in their cool, pale northern coloring, somewhat warmed by the slanting rays of the early August sun. But when they presently entered the church, the solemn hush of the scene within carried off their thoughts in an entirely different direction. It seemed a large church for so small a settlement, and the fresh and new look, the white and gold decoration, and the robes of the priests, seemed curiously out of keeping with the primitive wildness of the surroundings. The party of ecclesiastics, who, it now appeared, numbered a bishop among them, were there in full force, and a small congregation, including several officers of the steamboat, were already gathered for early mass. Hugh sat down reverently in the nearest seat, and the others followed his example, and remained there until the short service was completed. It was singularly restful and soothing, and to May and Flora, despite their staunch Protestant preferences, it was a memorable experience. The deep tones of the officiating priest and the solemn chant of the psalms, seemed laden with memories of the days when these same chants first arose in these savage solitudes, from the rude bark chapel or the simpler forest sanctuary, before the wondering eyes of the half-hostile Indians.

As the last chant died away on the ear, it was like awaking from a dream of the remote past, to come out once more on the wide summer landscape lying at their feet, the long line of level sands, the stranded vessel, the still receding tide, the long stretch of gray uplands and dark green hills. But breakfast began to seem a welcome possibility, which quickened the steps of the travellers back to the steamer, where they found Mrs. Sandford in a little flurry of concern about

their long absence, and more than ready, she declared, for her breakfast. And after their early rising and their long stroll, it scarcely needs be said how keenly they enjoyed the excellent breakfast of porridge, smelts, salmon, fresh rolls, and excellent coffee—not forgetting the blueberries for which the region is so famous. After breakfast there was still some time before the steamer could move. Flora hunted up her sketch-book, and went, accompanied by May and Nellie, to make a sketch on shore, while Hugh Macnab and Jack Armstrong, who insisted on coming, too, amused themselves by clambering up the rocky height above them, to see what sorts of plants might be growing among the crevices—for Hugh was something of a naturalist as well as a poet. The others, including Mrs. Sandford, preferred to remain on the deck of the steamer, watching the lumber vessel take in her load, and the swift return of the tide, nearly as remarkable for its speed as is the Scottish Solway, which has furnished the comparison:—

“Love flows like the Solway
And ebbs like its tide.”

As the girls sat there, a young, pleasant-faced *habitant* came up to them, followed by two or three tiny children, glad to exchange a word with the strangers, and to offer for sale tiny canoes, which the inexperienced hands of the children had shaped, in imitation of the pretty toy canoes offered for sale at all the booths of French and Indian wares. They spoke no English, and May was too doubtful of *her* French to try it, but Nellie and Flora opened a conversation with her, to her evident pleasure, for, in so secluded a spot, a talk with a stranger is an event. “Yes,” she said, after telling the names and ages of the children; “yes, the summer *is* very short, and the winter long and cold.” But then her husband stays at home, and in summer he is away, working on boats, and that is evidently compensation—for he is “*un bon garçon*.” And indeed she seemed a happy wife and mother, for the blessings of life, happily, generally counterbalance its privations. The girls gladly bought the tiny canoes, the “prentice work” of the little childish hands, and, after an interested inspection of Flora’s sketch, and many admiring comments thereupon, they parted—the travellers to return to the steamer, the children and their mother to return to their *cabane*, happy in their little store of silver coins. And now the tide has flowed in, up to the end of the weirs, the scattered passengers are collected on board, and the steamer, with screw revolving once more, glides swiftly out of Ha-Ha Bay, leaving behind all its rugged beauty and its primitive, secluded life; and turns up another bend of the fiord, towards the great hill curves that bound the vista. Point after point, bend after bend, succeed each other in bewildering succession, while the travellers feel once more how distinct is the stern sublimity of the Saguenay from the grand beauty of the St. Lawrence. The great, bare splintered crags that rear their grey, furrowed brows to the sky, the endless succession of pine-crested hills, craggy points, dark, deep gorges, and weather-worn and lichen-scarred rocks, contorted by fire and water into every conceivable form, seemed almost oppressive, at last, in their almost unbroken savage wilderness. Here and there green uplands and stretches of softer forest verdure, or sheltered valleys, with little settlements nestling in their laps, or clinging to the sheltering rocks, introduce a gentler tone; but the general impression is one of savage sterility, scarred by the traces of devastation on the fire-swept hills, bristling with dark tree skeletons, and by the sullen darkness of the stream itself. And now and then the sky grew grey, too, as a sudden squall swept down the gorge; and it was easy to associate with the wild mountain fiord the strange tales told to the early explorers, and to see in imagination the fur-laden canoes, with their silent, dusky paddlers wending their way down the rocky *cañon*, which the river seems to have hewn for itself with such difficulty, from the inaccessible solitudes behind, through the sea of rocks between these and the St. Lawrence.

As they steamed onward towards Chicoutimi, however, which is the real head of the bay, the scenery becomes softer in type, and, amid the rolling uplands, cluster little white villages, each with its guardian church. Chicoutimi, with its fine stone church on the hill, and its sawmill and lumber-yard below, comes into view, as they round one of the numberless points, a place of some consequence in this lumbering country. The steamer stops at the pier, and the little band of *religieuses* disembark and wend their way to the convent on the hill, while May and Flora watch their black-robed figures and vainly speculate on their past and their future, wondering what routine of duties awaits them here, and whether they are of the same heroic fibre with those who, two hundred years ago, crossed the stormy ocean into exile in this wilderness, in order to nurse sick Indians and teach Indian children their *Pater-Noster*.

As the steamer left Chicoutimi behind, Hugh Macnab and Mr. Winthrop discovered two or three half-breed *voyageurs*, coming down with the luggage, boats, etc., of a party of gentlemen who had been canoeing among the rocks and rapids of the “Grand Discharge” of the Saguenay, in the comparatively untrodden wilds into which no steamer can penetrate, and tracing the dark waters up to their source in Lake St. John. The swarthy good-humored boatmen were eagerly questioned and cross-questioned by the three young men, till it became clear, to the observant Kate, at least, that they were planning some private excursion of their own, not in the original programme of their party, though at present they all observed an obstinate silence as to any such idea.

Meantime, they all sat dreamily watching the long procession of headland, rock, and hill,—a silver thread of cascade occasionally trickling down the dark precipices, wondering at the variety and effect produced with such apparent sameness of material. But, behold! a great grey Titan looms up behind a distant headland, seeming to pierce the sky; and the passengers, English, American and Canadian, begin to crowd the forward deck, with eager outlook. A little farther, and the vast breadth and height of Cape Eternity uprears its mighty mass overhead,—its summit seeming lost in the sky, across which great clouds are rapidly drifting. May thought it had looked

even grander in the moonlight, which seemed to expand it into infinity; but Hugh and Mr. Winthrop declared that to them it was no less imposing in the clear light of day, which gave it the strength and force of reality. Scarcely had they ceased gazing in fascination at its mighty mass, when Kate, pointing triumphantly before them, drew their attention to the still grander headland, the mighty triple profile of Cape Trinity. And now, just above their heads, as it seemed, that sublime rock was unfolding its triple unity, both vertical and lateral, each way divided into three distinct heads; a far more impressive individuality, they all agreed, than the sister cape. Again came that curious optical illusion of the great precipice towering immediately overhead in close proximity to the boat,—a delusion only dispelled with much difficulty after seeing that the pebbles which the passengers amused themselves by throwing at it, fell invariably a long way short of their aim. And a feeling of soul-subduing awe stole over May, as she threw back her head, and tried to scan the entire face of those lofty summits which seemed to rear their grey, weather-beaten heads into the very empyrean! Here and there, a stray bit of vegetation clung with difficulty to a cleft in the rock, seeming to emphasize its ruggedness and stern majesty. But, as Hugh observed, and all agreed, the white statue of the Virgin, placed, by Roman Catholic piety, in a niche of the crag seemed an impertinence, even from the broadest point of view, for surely they felt that grand Mount Horeb, symbol of Divine Majesty, should have been profaned by no mortal image. Nevertheless, when the steamer slackened speed, just under the precipice, and the sailors in solemn cadence chanted an “Ave Maria,” there was a pathetic earnestness and an antique, old-world air about the proceeding which was very impressive. What Hugh himself thought of the grand, wonderful bit of nature’s architecture, found its way to paper in the course of the afternoon, the lines taking shape in his mind as the too swiftly receding lines of Cape Trinity faded away into dim remoteness, when it seemed to all the party that the central figure, the chief interest of the Saguenay, had passed out of the scene. And, after the long strain of attention,—the effort to lose none of the ever-changing grandeur of the shifting panorama,—it was almost a relief when the showery clouds that had gathered so grandly about Cape Trinity, deepened into a leaden grey; and mist and rain began to blot out all save the nearest hills. As they sat watching in somewhat sombre mood the silent procession of mist-laden hills, with here and there a white thread of waterfall trickling down their sides, and the white whales and porpoises splashing in the dark stream below,—the only sign of life in all the great solitude, while an occasional gleam of sunshine, from an opening cloud, threw a golden gleam to relieve the stern aspect of the scene, Hugh was called on for a reading from a volume into which he had been dipping during the day. It was the copy of Charles Sangster’s poems, which he had procured in Montreal, and he willingly gave them a few stanzas from the poet’s description of the Saguenay;—the following lines, in particular, seeming to express the very spirit of the scenery about them:—

“In golden volumes rolls the blessed light
 Along the sterile mountains. Pile on pile
 The granite masses rise to left and right;—
 Bald, stately bluffs that never wear a smile;
 Where vegetation fails to reconcile
 The parched shrubbery and stunted trees
 To the stern mercies of the flinty soil.
 And we must pass a thousand bluffs like these,
 Within whose breasts are locked a myriad mysteries.

“Dreaming of the old years, before they rose,
 Triumphant from the deep, whose waters rolled
 Above their solemn and unknown repose;
 Dreaming of that bright morning, when, of old,
 Beyond the red man’s memory, they told
 The secrets of the Ages to the sun,
 That smiled upon them from his throne of gold,—
 Dreaming of the bright stars and loving moon,
 That first shone on them from the night’s impressive noon;

“—Dreaming of the long ages that have passed
 Since then, and with them that diminished race
 Whose birchen fleets those inky waters glassed,
 As they swept o’er them with the wind’s swift pace.
 Of their wild legends scarce remains a trace;
 Thou hold’st the myriad secrets in thy brain,
 Oh stately bluffs! as well seek to efface
 The light of the bless’d stars, as to obtain
 From thy sealed, granite lips, tradition or refrain!”

“That is striking poetry,” said Mr. Winthrop. “The author deserves to be better known! But the wild legends of the past have not entirely passed away. Now and then, one comes across an old legend or story among a set of fellows like our *voyageur* friends there.”

“Yes,” said Hugh, “that is one reason why I should like to explore the wilds about Lake St. John! I think one might pick up from our guides some old stories that would be interesting. But I was reading, this morning, a pathetic little legend which is said to be still cherished among the Montagnais Indians, concerning one of the pious Jesuit Fathers, who was wont long ago to

minister in that little grey church at Tadousac.”

“Oh, do tell it to us!” said Kate and Nellie, in a breath; and Hugh readily complied, telling the tale, in substance as follows:

“One of the most benignant and beloved of these pioneer missionaries was Père La Brosse, the last of the old Jesuit Fathers of Tadousac, and the story of his ‘Passing’ reads almost like a French-Indian version of the ‘Passing of Arthur.’ Strange, how that wistful, pathetic interest, clustering round the death of the good and gentle and strong, crops up everywhere, among all sorts and conditions of men!

“Well, the story runs, that, at the close of an April day, spent as usual in fulfilling the duties of his pastoral office among his Indian converts, the venerable Father had spent the evening in cheerful converse with some of the French officers of the post. As he rose to leave them, to their amazement he solemnly bade them a last adieu, telling them that, at midnight, he would be a corpse, and at that hour the chapel bell would toll for his passing soul. He charged them not to touch his body, but to go at once to the lower end of the Ile aux Coudres, which, you know, we passed yesterday, many miles up the St. Lawrence, and bring thence Messire Compain, whom they would find awaiting them, and who would wrap him in his shroud and lay him in his grave. They were to carry out his bidding, regardless of what the weather might be, and he would answer for their safety. The astonished and awe-stricken party of rough traders and Indians kept anxious vigil, till, at midnight, the chapel bell began to toll. Startled by the solemn sound at dead of night, they all rushed tremblingly into the church. There, as he had foretold, they found Père La Brosse, lying prostrate before the altar, his hands joined in prayer, and the seal of death on his tranquil face. With awe-struck sorrow, they watched for dawn, that they might fulfil the father’s last command. With sunrise, arose an April gale, but trusting to the promise of one who had won their unfaltering trust, four brave men set out on their appointed errand, in a fragile canoe, breasting the big rolling waves, which, however, seemed to open a passage for the frail bark, and, in a marvellously short time, they had reached Ile aux Coudres; and there, as Père La Brosse had said, sat Père Compain on the rocks, breviary in hand, ready to accompany them back to do the last offices for the dead. He, too, had received a mysterious warning. The night before, his chapel bell had tolled at midnight for a passing soul, and a voice had told him what had happened and what he was expected to do. And it said, moreover, that in all the Missions where Père La Brosse had served the chapel bells tolled at the moment of his death.”

“Well!” exclaimed Mr. Winthrop, “that is a story that *ought* to be true, *ben trovato*, at least, as the Italians say, if we only had faith enough. One could almost find it in one’s heart to believe it here, in these wild solitudes, even in this degenerate, sceptical age!”

“Now, Hugh,” observed Kate, “why shouldn’t *you* write a ‘*Mort de Père La Brosse*’ à la Tennyson? I’m sure it would make a lovely poem.”

“Perhaps he will, by and by,” said Flora, a little mischievously. “Meantime, I found in a book of his this sonnet on Cape Trinity. I was sure he was composing something of the kind!”

“Oh, that’s not fair!” said Hugh. “That’s not revised yet.”

But there was an unanimous demand for the reading of it, and under protest, Hugh allowed Flora to read it.

“Thou weather-beaten watchman, grim and grey,
Towering majestic, with thy regal brow,
O’er all the thronging hills that seem to bow
In humble homage, near and far away;—
Even thy great consort seems to own thy sway,
In her calm grandeur, scarce less grand than thou
Rising, star-crowned, from the dark world below,
So lonely in thy might and majesty!
Thy rugged, storm-scarred forehead to the blast
Thou barest,—all unscreened thy Titan form,
Radiant in sunset, dark in winter storm,
So thou hast stood, through countless ages past,
What comes or goes, it matters not to thee,
Serene, self-poised in triple unity!”

As she finished reading the lines, a rift in the breaking clouds let a rich gleam of sunset through, and they caught a brief glimpse of a distant lofty summit, probably Cape Trinity, glowing out in crimson glory, like a great garnet, set amid the grey mountain curves.

They all watched it silently, till it passed out of sight in the windings of the stream. It was a sight to carry away as “a joy forever,”—a fitting parting gleam of the grandeur of the Saguenay.

And swiftly it all fades from sight as the veil of twilight falls once more about them, softening the hard outlines of the iron hills into cloud-like phantasms, while the twinkling lights of Tadousac again gleam out from the shaggy cliffs, soon again to be left behind, as they pass out of the rocky *embouchure*, under the starlight, into the wide reach of the St. Lawrence and cross its wide

expanse to the distant shore, where they stop at length at the long-stretching pier of Rivière-du-Loup. This time they disembark, and are soon driving rapidly along the two mile sweep of curving road, with a late gibbous moon rising above the trees, as they approach the straggling environs of Fraserville. They are speedily installed in a comfortable little French inn, with a plain but comfortable supper before them, and a lively group of French Canadians chattering gayly around them in their rapid patois. As it happens, these prove to be a party of musicians, whose music, vocal and instrumental, and gay little French Canadian songs serenade them till irresistible sleep closes eyes more weary with sight-seeing than their owners had before realized.

No one was up very early next morning, for human nature cannot stand perpetual motion. But, as the day was fine, though cool, a carriage was ordered immediately after breakfast and the whole party were once more *en route*, driving over a straight smooth road to the old Rivière-du-Loup, and thence to the noble waterfall, whose wild picturesque beauty seems close to the little town.

Leaving the carriages, they all walked on by a winding path, till they came to a grassy spur of the slope, jutting out, as it seemed, rather more than half down, close to one side of the fall. Here, though they could not see the whole extent of the cascade, they could get an impressive view of its volume and beauty, as it came thundering down the dark grey height, clad with dusky pines; so that, looking up to the crest of foliage above, it seemed to come thundering down in snowy spray and foam, out of the very bosom of the primeval forest. To May it seemed almost as grand as *Montmorency*, though far short of it in height. And, like Montmorency, it vividly brought back the memory of incomparable Niagara. The spell of the falling water,—“falling forever and aye,”—had its usual influence on her, and she sat dreaming there, scarcely conscious of herself or the flight of time, while the rest of the party wandered about, surveying the waterfall from other points of view. But at last she was aroused from her reverie by Hugh, who came, despatched by Kate, in quest of her, to bring her down to the foot of the Fall where the others were resting, and where she could see it, as it were, *en masse*.

She lingered a moment, however, reluctant to leave the charming little nook. “See!” she said to Hugh, as she rose to accompany him down,—“look at those exquisite little harebells, growing so peacefully out of that green moss under the very spray of this rush of foaming water.”

Hugh smiled as he looked down at the fragile flower, cradled, as it were, in the midst of the turbulent commotion. He stooped over and picked two of the drooping blossoms carefully, handing one to May, while he studied the other, in its graceful, delicate beauty. “It is an embodied poem!” he exclaimed, as they turned slowly away.

“Then, won’t you write out the poem it embodies, for the rest of us to read?” said May, somewhat timidly, and surprised at her own temerity.

“If I can, I will,” he replied, frankly. “It doesn’t always follow, because one may *see* an embodied poem, that one can translate it into verse!”

At the foot of the Falls, they all sat for an hour or two, enjoying the comprehensive, though somewhat less impressive view of the whole fall, as it came rushing down the dark gorge, in sheets of silvery foam and clouds of snowy spray. And here, in a grassy nook, under some trees, they sat for some time watching the Falls, Flora declaring that it reminded her of some of their finest Scottish waterfalls and also of one or two she had seen in Switzerland. Before they left their quiet halting place, Hugh, who had been sitting very silent for some time, handed quietly to May, a leaf from his note-book, on which, with much satisfaction, she read the following lines:—

“Where the great, thundering cataract tosses high
Its crest of foam, ‘mid thunders deep and dread,
A tiny harebell, from its mossy bed,
Smiles, softly blue, to the blue summer sky,
And the great roaring flood that rages by,
In sheets of foam on the grey rocks outspread
But sheds a tender dew upon its head.
—Emblem of hearts whose gentle purity,
Seeks only heaven in this rude earth of ours;
Dwelling in safety ‘mid the roar and din
Of human passion, as in sheltered bowers;
Growing in beauty, ‘mid turmoil and sin,
—Keeping the hue of heaven, like the flowers,
Because they keep the hue of heaven within!”

“Oh,” exclaimed May, looking up from its perusal, “*that* is almost just what I was thinking about it, myself, only I couldn’t put it into words like that!”

“I’m glad I happened to catch your thought,” he replied. “Keep the lines for yourself, if you care for them, in memory of this pleasant day.”

“We’ve had so many pleasant days!” said May,—wistfully,—for she felt that they were fast drawing to a close. And if the young men really took that canoe trip up the Saguenay, their party would be divided during the sojourn at Murray Bay,—their last halting place. But she felt that she could never lose the memory of that delightful journey, and all its enjoyments.

After going back to the hotel for an early dinner, they ordered the carriages again and drove in the soft afternoon sunshine,—now beginning to assume a slightly autumnal air, over the low, level stretch of sandy road, leading through skirting spruce and cedar, to the long straggling settlement of Cacouna, mainly composed of summer cottages, with its hotels and little church. Most of the cottages are scattered along a high sloping bank, just above the sea-like river, where the bathing, albeit lacking the surf, is almost as good as in the open sea. The Armstrongs had friends residing in Cacouna for the summer, and the party drove directly to their cottage, where they met with a most cordial welcome, were shown all the sights of the vicinity, and finally regaled with “afternoon tea” on the veranda, from whence they enjoyed one of the grand sunsets for which Cacouna is famous, the bold hills on the north shore, here etherealized by distance,—reflecting the glory of the rich sunset sky in the most exquisite tones of purple and rose.

Next morning, the little party took an early train from Rivière-du-Loup, on the Intercolonial Railway, to see the remainder of the river shore as far as Bic, where the Gulf may almost be said to begin, and the river end. It was a charming ride along the high land a little back from the river, yet still occasionally in sight of it, with the grand hills of the north shore looking cloud-like and remote, as they came into view of the beautiful bay of Bic, surrounded by its noble hills, with its picturesque coves, its level beach, and its wide flats, studded with black rocks. Away in the distance, beyond the tall bluffs which guard the mouth of the bay, and the islands which also protect its harbor, lay the deep blue wooded island of Bic, and beyond that, again, the far distant north shore, looking like a cloud of mist on the horizon. Here they had to stop, for, beyond that, the railway leaves the river to wind its way through the ravines of Métis, and then over the hills to the famous valley of the Matapedia, whose charms, fascinating as they are, were not for the travelers—on this journey at least. They spent a few hours pleasantly at Bic, strolling through its village, set on a plateau high above the beach, or wandering over the flats, where two rivers sluggishly find the end of their journey, and gathering seaweeds among the little pools and rocks, which reminded the Scotch cousins so strongly of their own seaside home. They climbed up some of the gentler slopes of the high rugged hills, to get a still wider view, and to feel the bracing salt breath of the sea come sweeping up the river, while Kate described the beauties of Gaspé, peninsula and basin, and the wonderful Percé rock, which she had once visited on a voyage down the Gulf; and Mr. Winthrop told them of a grim old tradition of the island of Bic,—of a sort of Indian edition of the massacre of Glencoe, when a branch of the fierce Iroquois had caught a comparatively helpless band of Micmacs with many women and children, in a cave, and had smoked them out, to meet death if they escaped it within.

But they had now reached the eastern-most limit of their progress—still leaving, as Hugh said, some “Yarrow unvisited.” They took the returning afternoon train back to Rivière-du-Loup, for their course must now be “Westward-Ho!” At Rivière-du-Loup, they waited for the Saguenay boat, and re-embarked for Murray Bay, which they reached about midnight, landing at the high pier under the pale ghostly light of the waning moon, which gave a strange unreal look to the houses on the shore, and especially to the strangely shapen rock, which, rising solitary near the point, gives it its name of “Point Au Pic” (or Pique). There were an abundance of *calèches* in waiting, and the travellers distributed themselves among these, and were soon driven along the straggling village street to their destination,—the “Central Hotel,” chosen by Kate on account of its delightful view. But the “Central” was too full for so large a party, as the landlord declared with many regrets,—so the ladies were accommodated very comfortably at the “Warren House,” next door, while the young men were put up temporarily at the “Central” as they intended leaving on their canoe trip very early in the week.

May had been feeling that, since this trip began, she had had so many delightful impressions, that she could scarcely find room for any more. But the first sight of the grand vista of noble hills that enfold Murray Bay, as it were, in their embrace, gleaming out under snowy mists, in the fair breezy morning, made her feel that she had by no means lost the receptive power, and that she had much to see and admire yet. It was a peaceful Sunday morning, and a Sabbath rest seemed to enwrap the blue hills that encompassed the long bay, receding in lovely curves and peaks behind each other, till they were lost in a soft vagueness of distance. Just about the middle of the long curve of the bay, and showing whitely against a background of deep green woods, a white church stood out as a sort of centre to the little brown French village that clustered about it on both sides of the Murray River. Below the bridge stretched long brown sands with a strip of blue water in the middle, and a three-masted vessel lying stranded by the receding tide;—while just across the bay, narrowed by the low tide, rose the long bold headland of Cap à l’Aigle, jutting far out into the wide blue expanse of the St. Lawrence, bounded on the southern shore by a wavy line of soft blue and purple hills, glistening with silvery specks, which were, in reality, distant French villages. It was a feast to the eye, a refreshing to the whole being, simply to sit there and take in the lovely vista. May, for one, was glad that it was Sunday, and that, therefore, there could be no excursions, but that she could sit quietly there as long as she liked,—dreaming or thinking, or reading a little of the old Scripture poetry about the “Everlasting hills;”—but ever and anon looking up to see the realization of words which had formerly left on her mind a rather vague impression of their meaning. Nothing which she had seen seemed to her so satisfying to her ideal of beauty. Niagara had its own solitary overpowering grandeur, but no surrounding scenery. The Saguenay hills were too stern in their solemn splendor. At Quebec, the view seemed almost too wide, too complex; but this charming valley, with its brown-beached blue bay, nestling amongst these richly wooded hills, with rank after rank of mountain tops,—as they seemed to her, fading away into the distant blue, seemed to have all the unity and beauty of a well-composed picture, and to satisfy her imagination without her knowing why. Flora was in an ecstasy. The

scene reminded her strongly of some of her own Highland glens; and Hugh and she were soon eagerly comparing it with one after another of their favorite resorts,—tracing its points both of resemblance and of dissimilarity.

The young men of the party had taken an early bath, and pronounced the water very bracing indeed, but also decidedly cold—too cold, they thought, for the girls to attempt; notwithstanding which, however, Kate and Flora announced their intention of trying it next day. At eleven they all went to church at a neat little chapel close by, built for the use of the Protestant visitors, and used alternately for an Episcopalian and a Presbyterian service, an instance of brotherly unity which might be indefinitely extended. To Flora's great satisfaction, (for she was a staunch little Scottish churchwoman,) the service that day happened to be the Presbyterian one—the first time, she observed, that she had had the pleasure of attending her own service since she had left her native land. To Hugh it did not matter, she observed, for he liked one just as well as another, to which he replied that he was by no means so superior to the power of association, which must, in most cases, after all, determine our ecclesiastical preferences.

As there was no evening service, an evening stroll in Nature's great temple around them was proposed instead, for which the young people were ready enough after the long, quiet day of rest. Mrs. Sandford, who had not yet recovered from the fatigue of so incessant travelling, preferring to sit on the veranda with her book,—the latter taking the place of her knitting-needles, which lately had had an unusual respite. Nellie Armstrong, however, who had a headache, elected to stay with her, so the rest started, perhaps all the more satisfied, pairing off naturally—Mr. Winthrop, of course, with Kate; Jack Armstrong with Flora; while Hugh and May were left as inevitable companions. May, as on some similar occasions, felt at first slightly uncomfortable; but this feeling soon wore off, for Hugh and she had become excellent comrades, and now found many subjects for conversation; and she felt that he had by this time accepted Mr. Winthrop as a permanent factor in the situation, and was determined to make the best of it. And May in her heart esteemed him all the more for the cheerfulness with which he had adapted himself to the inevitable!

They walked, by a rambling footpath, along the sandy, reedy shore of the bay, until they had at length to betake themselves to the ordinary road, striking it close to a picturesque old mill, with a little waterfall plashing over the moss-grown old waterwheel, just as she had so often seen it in pictures of English scenery. They reached the French village of Murray Bay, and passed close to the white church which had made the centre of the picture in the distance, and the pretty little *Presbytère*, with its shady garden-walks overlooking the river, on one of which May discerned a black-cassocked figure, in whom she immediately conjured up a modern Père La Brosse. Then on, past the little brown French houses, with their steep roofs and balconies, and tidy, if bare, exteriors,—each one apparently possessing its great wooden cupboard, and large box stove for the cold winter days. Crossing the bridge over the Murray, from which there was a lovely view up the valley, into the heart of the hills, they held on their way up the wooded slope beyond, past a little memorial chapel under the shadowing pines, which interested the girls so much that they declared they must get the key and see the interior some day; and then onward by an open, breezy bit of road, skirting on one side undulating woods, gilded by slanting sunlight, and on the other affording glimpses of pleasant manorial residences between them and the river. And then they came out on the high table-land of the "*Cap*," from whence they could see the wide river expanse, now taking on soft hues of rose, and purple, and opal, and the far distant hills beyond, also glorified by the sunset.

But May's steps had begun to flag a little, and her cheek to grow rather pale, and Hugh said that he was sure she was tired, and proposed that they should go no farther, but take a rest until the others returned. May looked rather wistfully at Kate and Flora, still stepping on, evidently unwearied. But although much stronger than when she had left home, May was not so strong, yet, as the other two, and it was of no use to pretend that she was not very tired.

"Let us walk back to that pine-crested bluff," said Hugh. "There we can sit quite comfortably till the others come back."

They strolled back very slowly, and it occurred to May, *à propos* of her own fatigue, how much more Hugh could stand than he could have done a month ago; and how seldom even "Aunt Bella" now worried him with well-meant exhortations to take extra care. The outdoor life of the past weeks had certainly done wonders for this sunburnt, active young man, with elastic step and firm tread, who seemed so different a being from the pale and somewhat languid stranger to whom she had been first introduced. But she soon forgot everything else in the fair scene that lay at their feet, half screened by the pine boughs that drooped above them; for no fairer view had greeted her during the whole journey. Opposite, across the blue bay below them, lay Point au Pic, with its pier and its monumental rock, its straggling cottages, and the long, hilly, wooded ridge that swept round the corner of the bay on the other side. To their left lay the broad, sunset-flushed river, with the wavy line of delicate hues beyond it. The two watched the lovely glow of color for some time in silence. At last, when the scene was swiftly taking on the grayness of evening, Hugh remarked:

"How many lovely evenings we have seen! And this seems almost the loveliest of all."

"Yes. It almost makes one sad to think that they are nearly all past,"—she replied, with a little wistful sigh.

"I don't know that it *should*, however," replied Hugh. "We can't lose their memories and their influences. *That* seems to become part of our being, and we shall always be the richer for it. You know 'a thing of beauty is a joy forever.' Do you know," he continued, after a pause, as May did not reply, "this great river on which we have been wandering so long, seems to me to present a very fair parable of human life. It comes, like Wordsworth's version of our infancy, out of the mysterious majesty of Niagara, and that great sea-like lake. Then it has its tranquil sunny morning amid the lovely mazes of the Thousand Islands, which, like ourselves, it seems reluctant to forsake, for the more work-a-day rural stretch below. Then comes the strenuous time of conflict,—the '*sturm und drang*' period of the rapids, and then the calm strength, the gradual expansion, the growing dignity of a noble life, till at last we have this exquisite sunset, glorifying a river that is swiftly passing on, to lose itself in the great 'silent sea,' symbolizing the beauty of the same rich and noble life, passing away from its old familiar shores to lose itself in the boundlessness of eternity."

"I think you have got material for another poem there," May observed, smiling, though touched by the emotion which seemed to have carried him on unconsciously. She and Hugh had got into the way of talking about his literary endeavors. There was another pause, and then Hugh looked up from his note-book, into which he had been looking.

"Do you recollect," he asked, "a lovely morning we had, just after coming to Sumach Lodge?"

"Yes," replied May, promptly, "the morning you rowed me over to that pretty little island, when the river was so calm, and it all looked so lovely."

"And I wrote some verses there, which I should like to read to you, to see how you like them. May I?"

May looked a little perplexed, for she had not forgotten that he had seemed anxious that she should *not* see them, *then*, and with her *idée fixe* of his hopeless passion for Kate—she had connected those verses in some way with that imaginary romance. However, she listened with great interest to his low toned reading:

In gleam of pale, translucent amber woke
The perfect August day,
Through rose-flushed bars of pearl and opal broke
The sunlight's golden way.

Serenely the placid river seemed to flow
In tide of amethyst,
Save where it rippled o'er the sands below,
And granite boulders kissed;

The heavy woodland masses hung unstirred
In languorous slumber deep,
While, from their green recesses, one small bird
Piped to her brood—asleep.

The clustering lichens wore a tenderer tint,
The rocks a warmer glow;
The emerald dewdrops, in the sunbeam's glint,
Gemmed the rich moss below.

Our fairy shallop idly stranded lay,
Half mirrored in the stream;
Wild roses drooped above the tiny bay,
Ethereal as a dream.

You sat upon your rock, a woodland queen,
As on a granite throne;
All that still world of loveliness serene
Held but us twain alone.

Nay! But there seemed another presence there
Beneath, around, above;
It breathed a poem through the crystal air,
Its name was *Love!*"

May listened to the poem with a rather bewildered feeling: it was so different from what she had expected. But gradually the images suggested by it took possession of her mind to the exclusion of other thoughts, and she scarcely noticed the closing lines, in the pleasure which it gave her to have that lovely morning so vividly recalled. But Hugh seemed to look for more than the pleasure she frankly expressed. He was silent for a few moments, then said in a very low tone, looking straight into her eyes, "I think that what brought the poem was my finding out, then, *that I loved you!*"

May was utterly taken by surprise, which indeed, overpowered every other feeling. She had not a word to say. Hugh saw how unprepared she had been for his avowal. Presently she managed to

stammer out, "I thought it was—Kate!"

"I *know* you did, at first," he replied, "but I thought you must have known better, *now*! I haven't acted very much like a jealous lover, have I, since Mr. Winthrop appeared on the scene? And any one could see how that was going to turn out. No, May, I'm sure I've tried to make you understand!"

But May still sat silent, in a sort of dazed bewilderment. At last, the ludicrous aspect of the mistake—all her sincere, misplaced sympathy with Hugh in troubles which were entirely of her own imagining, struck her so vividly that she laughed outright, though her laugh had a rather hysterical note in it, and she felt that it was most inappropriate to so serious a crisis. But the personal aspect of the affair, she could not yet at all take in. Hugh laughed a little, too, reading her thoughts; but presently he said gravely enough: "Well, May, now that the mistake is cleared up, you're not going to say you can't care for me! Why should we not travel down the river of life together? I mean down the river to the sea,"—he added pleadingly.

"Oh, Mr. Macnab," she replied, at last, "it is so strange to me! I don't seem able to realize it. And I have never thought of you in that way."

"Well, dear," he said, gently, "I won't hurry you; but you and I are very good friends, I think, which is an excellent beginning, and I don't see why we couldn't be something *more*. But take plenty of time to find out! I'll promise to be patient meantime. Only, as I am going away tomorrow for a few days, I wanted to try my fate, at least, and make sure that you knew my feelings before I left—for one never knows *what* may turn up."

May's face changed when he spoke of the approaching parting, which was only, of course, the prelude to one of much longer duration, since she herself must return home as soon as the party reached Toronto, on its homeward journey. And the thought gave her a sharp pang which she could not ignore. Still, she was not sorry to hear the voices of the others not far off, and to know that this rather embarrassing *tête-à-tête* was nearly over. Hugh detained her a moment, however.

"I won't press you any farther now," he said; "only promise me that you will think about it while I am gone, and perhaps you may be able to answer me as I wish, when I come back."

May readily promised this,—glad to have a little time to grow familiar with an idea which had seemed so strange to her at first. The rest of the walk was very quiet,—Hugh talking about indifferent things, while she found it difficult to keep up conversation at all.

Next morning it was decided that, as it was too fine a morning to lose, where there was so much to see, the whole party should drive down to the Falls of the Fraser, taking luncheon with them, that so they might not have to hurry back until the time when the three young men should have to tear themselves away from the society which, to say the truth, they were all reluctant to leave,—in order to take the steamer down again to Tadousac for the projected canoe trip on the upper Saguenay, and so on to the wilds about Lake St. John. As they were to go in *calèches*, however, Mrs. Sandford begged off, and Nellie Armstrong was packed into a *calèche* with her brother and Flora Macnab—Jack, who was familiar with the vehicle, having volunteered to act as charioteer.

It was a charming drive on such a charming day,—the light cloud-shadows chasing each other over the hills, and causing bewitching effects of light and shade on the distant hills. Their course lay along the Murray River for some distance, past the bridge and village, then back among the hills beyond, up and down short hills, so abrupt that the descent was often like to jerk the riders off the little high seats; but Jack assured them all, in his cheery voice, that the *calèche* was at once the easiest and the safest vehicle for these hills, and that every French-Canadian pony knew just how to behave on such roads, if only his driver gave him fair play. And the French drivers of the other *calèches* smiled and declared that it was "shoost as de shentleman said." Kate and Mr. Winthrop had of course paired off, so that Hugh and May went together, as a matter of course; but Hugh abstained from the slightest reference of any kind to their conversation of the previous evening, for which May felt duly grateful; for as yet his declaration seemed to her an unreal dream, and she did not like to think about it, or what seemed to her, a mortifying mistake.

As they left the road altogether, and struck across fields with the utmost recklessness about taking down fences, and driving over trackless meadows, they could hear the distant murmur of a waterfall, and soon they came in sight of a small river winding its way to the gorge, into which it speedily disappeared. Then they dismounted from their *calèches*, and sought a point of view from which they could best see this lovely waterfall, which rushes down, not in one sheer descent, but in several leaps, over the brown rocks; so that they could stand, as it were, part of the way down, looking up to the topmost fall, and also far down below them, where, at the foot of it, there lay a pretty green, level point, on which cows were browsing under some noble trees—as charming a pastoral picture as could be found.

Flora took out her sketch-book and color-box, and set to work diligently to make a few rough sketches from the most favorable points, Jack willingly offering his services in carrying her appliances from place to place, and watching the progress of the sketches with an intensity of interest which was slightly embarrassing to the artist and somewhat amusing to Nellie, who declared, to Jack's indignation, that she had never known before that he took so much interest in artistic pursuits. Jack, however, was a most amiable critic, ready to admire generously all the

work of Flora's nimble fingers, each sketch being, in his opinion, "awfully pretty;—you'd know it anywhere!" Meantime the rest of the party strolled about, finding out new points of view, and exploring pretty nooks, till it was time to set out the simple luncheon of sandwiches, cold fowl, coffee, and blueberry pie, after the due discussion of which it was necessary to set out at once on the return trip—in the order in which they had come.

When they drove up to the hotel they were met by the intelligence that the Quebec steamer was in sight, and that they must drive down to the pier at once. The young men's valises were quickly thrown into the *calèches*, and they all drove to the pier, to find the big white steamboat just approaching the point. There was a hurried and, truth to tell, a reluctant leave-taking on the part of the intending *voyageurs*, who declared that they would be sure to be back in about a week; and then the steamer gave her parting whistle and they were off, their waving hats and handkerchiefs being soon lost in the distance. Hugh had just said to May, in a low tone, at parting,—keeping her hand for a few seconds closely pressed in his own, "Don't forget your promise—or me—while I am gone," and May had replied only by a smile, from which, perhaps, tears were not very far away. At all events, there was a strange, inexplicable *ache* in her heart, as the four girls walked slowly back to the hotel, a trifle less merrily than was their wont.

It was curious indeed, what a blank there seemed to be, now that three out of their number were gone, though no one except Mrs. Sandford and Nellie were willing to admit it in words. As for May, she could not help feeling that she missed Hugh, in particular, at every turn! His low-toned voice and slightly Celtic accentuation seemed to be perpetually in her ear, and every particular charm of the landscape seemed to recall his always quick appreciation of such beauty. Some occasion on which she wanted to appeal to him for sympathy or appreciation was constantly turning up; and she found herself perpetually laying up a stock of things about which she wanted to talk to him, when he should return. She had no idea how much he had gradually become a part of her life, and how important his ever-ready sympathy had come to be, until the lack of that sympathy made itself so strongly felt. If she had not been so simply and dreamily romantic, so free from egoistic self-consciousness, she would never have made the mistake she had done, and even now there was a constant struggle between the instincts of her heart and the power of the firmly-rooted impression. Kate, who had divined the real state of the case, but had been afraid to enlighten her cousin too suddenly, now ventured on a little good-humored chaffing; but with great and praiseworthy caution. Seeing that May sensitively shrank from the subject, she soon desisted.

Whatever Kate's own sense of loss may have been in the absence of Mr. Winthrop, she was not the sort of girl to let the absence of the three young men take away all the zest of the pleasure of Murray Bay. She constituted herself the leader of the little party, and the four girls and Mrs. Sandford had what they all voted as a "very quiet, pleasant time," in which they took things easily and enjoyed themselves just as the fancy seized them. They strolled about the beach in the sunny mornings, while Flora sketched the vista of distant hills, and a gentle inquisitive French Canadian would come up to look respectfully at the sketch of "Mademoiselle," and to express his admiration of "the *facilité*" with which she accomplished the task of coloring, evidently an inscrutable mystery to him, though he declared that he could draw "in *crayons*." Kate and Flora occasionally tried a dip into the cold waters of the bay, but their experience was not sufficiently encouraging to tempt the other two, and Mrs. Sandford shook her head, and declared that she considered it unsafe for any of them. But they enjoyed watching the sturdy children who daily rushed in for a few moments and then came out with skins as red as lobsters, laughing, and rosy, and ready for any number of races on the beach afterwards. They went to inspect the neighboring "Fresh Air" establishment, originated by a benevolent lady of Montreal, and maintained by private beneficence, where a number of convalescents, old and young, received without cost, the benefit of the pure bracing air and lovely scenery, a true and refreshing instance of Christian charity. They explored over and over again, the road leading past the long strips of farm and pasture land which ran up the hill that overhung it, and the little French farmhouses, with the curious clay ovens which stood near them, but quite detached, and sometimes on the other side of the road, and which Flora was so delighted to see and sketch; and the long straggling French village, and the little chapel on the hill, which was so disappointing on a near acquaintance. They scraped acquaintance with the simple French folk and talked to the polite village children whom they met, so respectful in their address, and whom Flora delighted by including some of them in a sketch from the bridge. They wandered down the road to the pier, between the rows of summer cottages, and roamed about the pretty grounds of the "Lorne House," where some old friends of Kate's were staying, and lounged away an hour or so, inspecting the little Indian huts and booths at the pier, and the various wares therein displayed, and the dark impassive faces of the Indian vendors, and purchased all manner of little souvenirs, toy canoes, snowshoes, toboggans, birch-bark napkin rings and other pretty trifles, as presents for the people at home; while Flora sketched the curiously shaped rock which has so often stood for its picture. Or they strolled up the hillside among the fragrant spruce and cedar, and enjoyed the charming views from thence of Cap-à-l'Aigle and the river and bay, and examined the primitive little wooden aqueducts that led the water from springs on the hill, to the houses down below. Everything was as quaint and primitive as Normandy, Flora declared, except only the manners and dress of the summer visitors!

And sometimes they went on little canoe parties with those friends of Kate's at the "Lorne House,"—up the winding Murray River under the bridge, from which Flora took a pretty sketch, and on for some distance farther, picking their way among the brown shallows and stones which

narrowed the navigable water of the stream. Or they would drive up the solitary Quebec road, among its aromatic pine woods, and past its little clearings, with their patches of tobacco and maize and little log cabins, and the peculiar exhilarating aroma of the mountain air;—or by another pretty road to the picturesque cascade of “Les Trous” beside which they took their luncheon, and spent the best part of an afternoon. And so the days went quickly by—happily enough, and on Saturday, May found herself realizing that the travellers would very soon be back. Half a dozen other expeditions were still reserved for the last few days, after the party should be reunited, before they should leave for the West. But these plans, like many other human projects, were not destined to be realized. For Monday morning brought May a letter, containing an unexpected summons to return home at once, as her father and mother were called away by the illness of a relative, and her presence as eldest daughter was needed at home. Dearly as May loved her home and ready as she was to comply with and obey the summons, this hastening of her departure from Murray Bay was a great disappointment, in more ways than one. There was, however, no boat before Tuesday night, and as Mrs. Sandford had begun to feel anxious herself to return home, and would not hear of letting May go back alone, it was finally decided in a cabinet council, that they should arrange to take their departure by the Tuesday’s boat, and that, in case the young men had not returned by that time, they could follow and overtake them somewhere on the way. May’s heart had sunk more than she could have believed, when she contemplated the possibility that Hugh might return and find her gone! She had not in the least made up her mind as to what she should say to him, when he did return, and, even if she herself cared ever so much, she could not see how she could possibly be ever separated from her home, nor indeed, could she as yet bear to think of that aspect of the affair. But she could not help feeling it no small trial to return without seeing him again; apart from the disappointment that she knew it would be to him should he return only after her departure. And as Mrs. Sandford was always reminding them, so many things might happen to detain the *voyageurs*, for they intended to find their way back somehow, by land, through the wilds that lay between Murray Bay and Lake St. John.

That evening she could not settle down with the others on the veranda, but wandered down alone to the beach and took her seat on one of their favorite rocks. It had been a day of thunder showers with lovely bursts of sunshine between, and some of the glorious rainbows so frequent there; and now, after a golden sunset, breaking through purple clouds, the bright tints were fading out of the sky and from the great gray stretch of water, on whose breast some stately ships were gradually disappearing from view. The scene vividly recalled to her mind Hugh’s parable of human life, and his unexpected application of it. A sense of the evanescence of all beautiful things and all human enjoyments had taken hold of her, and the tears welled up in her soft gray eyes as she said in her heart a mute farewell to the lovely scene around her, which had so fascinated her, and her mind went wistfully back over all the fair scenes she had beheld since the day on which she had set out, full of happy anticipation. How much better it had all been than even her brightest anticipations! A vesper sparrow—our Canadian nightingale—was carolling sweetly close at hand, and its song seemed to bring back to her the sweet refrain of the old song:

—
“Sweet the lev’rock’s note, an’ lang,—
Wildly liltin’ doun the glen;—
But, to me, he sings ae sang
Will ye no come back again?”

The last line seemed to haunt her with an indescribable pathetic intonation. She rose to go back in order to fight off thoughts that were too much for her when lo! a familiar step sounded close to her, and a well-known voice was in her ear, with a low-toned, “Well, May?”

And May, startled and overjoyed, could scarcely exclaim,—“Oh, Hugh! is it really you?” and then, for all answer to his question, she burst into tears. Perhaps this was almost answer enough, but it encouraged Hugh to go on, and to secure a still better and more satisfying one, before they returned together to join the rest, and to exchange quiet congratulations and a little teasing with Kate, whose engagement to Mr. Winthrop was now definitely admitted. Jack Armstrong looked very wistful and rather envious over the two engaged couples, but the merry Flora is inscrutable, and whether his warm admiration will ever be returned is still a matter of conjecture to both Kate and May.

The three *voyageurs* had many adventures to relate and much to say about the wild beauty of the upper Saguenay, its *portages*, waterfalls, tributary streams, and especially about the solitary beauty of the lonely Lake St. John. Hugh declared that he would not have missed it on any account, and *that*, as he remarked, *sotto voce*, to May, was, in the circumstances, saying a good deal. Mr. Winthrop was to write a description of it for an American periodical, and Jack Armstrong declared it would give enough to talk about, and excite other fellows with envy, for the next year, at all events.

And the last day at Murray Bay was, after all, happier than May in her lonely reverie of the preceding evening had thought possible. They visited several of their favorite haunts during the morning, and it was wonderful how much Hugh and May had to say to each other,—said Kate, mischievously, careless of the retort that “People who lived in glass houses needn’t throw stones.” In the afternoon they took a long drive along the Cap-à-l’Aigle heights, watching another gorgeous sunset bathe the hills and river in its exquisite dyes. And as these once more faded into the greyness of twilight, and the stars gleamed out, and the white sails of a large vessel that had

caught the last glow of day became dimly spectral in the distance, Hugh whispered to May, as they turned downwards, and away from the beautiful scene they had been contemplating:

“And now, dearest, what can we desire better, than the hope of the long voyage together down the great river to the silent sea?”

THE END.

[1] The Mamelons—rounded bluffs.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK DOWN THE RIVER TO THE SEA ***

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