

T R A V E L S
THROUGH THE STATES
OF
N O R T H A M E R I C A,
AND THE
PROVINCES OF
UPPER AND LOWER CANADA,
DURING
THE YEARS 1795, 1796, AND 1797.

BY ISAAC WELD, JUNIOR.

ILLUSTRATED AND EMBELLISHED WITH SIXTEEN PLATES.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY.

1799.

EX
BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA ACAD.
GEORGIAE
AUG:

P R E F A C E.

AT a period when war was spreading desolation over the fairest parts of Europe, when anarchy seemed to be extending its frightful progress from nation to nation, and when the storms that were gathering over his native country * in particular, rendered it impossible to say how soon any one of its inhabitants might be forced to seek for refuge in a foreign land ; the Author of the following pages was induced to cross the Atlantic, for the purpose of examining with his own eyes into the truth of the various accounts which had been given of the flourishing and happy condition of the United States of America, and of ascertaining whether, in case of future emergency, any part of those territories might be looked forward to, as an eligible and agreeable place of abode. Arrived in America, he travelled pretty generally through the states of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and New

* Ireland.

York ; he afterwards passed into the Canadas, desirous of obtaining equal information as to the state of those provinces, and of determining from his own immediate observations, how far the present condition of the inhabitants of the British dominions in America might be inferior, or otherwise, to that of the people of the States, who had now indeed thrown off the yoke, but were formerly common members of the same extensive empire.

WHEN abroad, he had not the most distant intention of publishing his travels ; but finding on his return home, that much of the matter contained in the following letters was quite new to his friends, and being induced to think that it might prove equally new, and not wholly unacceptable to the Public, he came to the resolution of committing them to print: accordingly the present volume is now offered to the world, in an humble hope, that if not entertaining to all readers, it will at least be so to some, as well as useful to future travellers.

IF it shall appear to any one, that he has spoken with too much asperity of American men and American manners, the Author begs that such language may not be ascribed to

hasty

hasty prejudice, and a blind partiality for every thing that is European. He crossed the Atlantic strongly prepossessed in favour of the people and the country, which he was about to visit; and if he returned with sentiments of a different tendency, they resulted solely from a cool and dispassionate observation of what chance presented to his view when abroad.

AN enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of nature, the scenery of the countries through which he passed did not fail to attract a great part of his attention; and interspersed through the book will be found views of what he thought would be most interesting to his readers: they are what he himself sketched upon the spot, that of Mount Vernon, the Seat of General Washington, indeed, excepted, for which he is indebted to an ingenious friend that he met in America, and the View of Bethlehem. He has many more views in his possession; but he thought it better to furnish his Publisher with a few only, in hopes that the engraving from them would be well executed, rather than with a great many, which, had they been given, must either have been in a style unworthy of the public eye, or else have swelled the price of the volume beyond the reach of
many

many that may now read it. Of the resemblance which these views bear to their respective archetypes, those alone can be judges who have been spectators of the original scenes. With regard to the Cataract of Niagara, however, it must be observed, that in views on so small a scale no one must expect to find a lively representation of its wonderful and terrific vastness, even were they executed by artists of far superior merit; the inserting of the three in the present work is done merely in the hope that they may help, together with the ground plan of the precipice, if it may be so called, to give a general idea of the position and appearance of that stupendous Cataract. Those who are desirous of becoming more intimately acquainted with it, will soon be gratified, at least so he has been given to understand by the artist in whose hands they at present are, with a set of views from the masterly pencil of Captain Fisher, of the Royal British Artillery, which are allowed by all those who have visited the Falls of Niagara, to convey a more perfect idea of that wonderful natural curiosity, than any paintings or engravings that are extant.

FINALLY, before the Reader proceeds to the perusal of the ensuing pages, the Author will just beg leave to apprise him,
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that they are the production of a very youthful pen, unaccustomed to write a great deal, far less to write for the press. It is now for the first time that one of its productions is ventured to be laid before the public eye. As a first attempt, therefore, it is humbly hoped that the present work may meet with a generous indulgence, and not be too severely criticised on account of its numerous imperfections.

Dublin,
20th December 1798.

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ERRATUM:

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☞ The plate should have been intitled—View on the Hudfon River—instead of—the Patowmac River.

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THROUGH THE STATES OF
N O R T H A M E R I C A.

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MY DEAR SIR,

Philadelphia, November, 1795.

OUR passage across the Atlantic was disagreeable in the extreme. The weather for the most part was bad, and calms and heavy adverse gales so frequently retarded our progress to the westward, that it was not until the fifty-ninth day from that on which we left Ireland, that we discovered the American coast. I shall not attempt to describe the joy which the sight of land, a sight that at once relieved the eye from the uninteresting and wearisome view of sky and water, and that afforded to each individual a speedy prospect of delivery from the narrow confines of a small trading vessel, diffused amongst the passengers. You, who have yourself made a long voyage, can best imagine what it must have been.

The first objects which meet the eye on approaching the American coast, south of New York, are the tops of trees, with which the shore is thickly covered to the very edge of the water. These, at a distance, have the appearance of small islands; but as you draw nearer they are

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seen to unite; and the tall forest rising gradually out of the ocean, at last presents itself in all its majesty to your view. The land which we made was situated very near to the bay of Delaware, and before noon we passed between the capes Henlopen and May, which guard the entrance of the bay. The capes are only eighteen miles apart, but within them the bay expands to the breadth of thirty miles. It afterwards becomes gradually narrower, until it is lost in the river of the same name, at Bombay Hook, seven leagues distant from the Atlantic. The river Delaware, at this place, is about six miles wide; at Reedy Island, twenty miles higher up, it is three miles wide; and at Philadelphia, one hundred and twenty miles from the sea, one mile wide.

The shores of the bay and of the river Delaware, for a very considerable distance upwards, are low; and they are covered, like the coast, with one vast forest, excepting merely in a few places, where extensive marshes intervene. Nothing, however, could be more pleasing than the views with which we were entertained as we sailed up to Philadelphia. The trees had not yet quite lost their foliage, and the rich red and yellow tints which autumn had suffused over the leaves of the oaks and poplars appeared beautifully blended with the sombre green of the lofty pines; whilst the river, winding slowly and smoothly along under the banks, reflected in its glassy surface the varied colours of the objects on shore, as well as the images of multitudes of vessels of various sizes, which, as far as the eye could reach, were seen gliding silently along with the tide. As you approach towards Philadelphia, the banks of the river become more elevated; and on the left hand side, where they are much cleared, they are interspersed with numberless neat farm-houses, with villages and towns; and are in some parts cultivated down to the very edge of the water. The New Jersey shore, on the right hand side, remains thickly wooded, even as far as the city.

Vessels very commonly ascend to Philadelphia, when the wind is favourable, in twenty-four hours; but unfortunately, as our ship entered the river, the wind died away, and she had to depend solely upon the tide, which flows at the rate of about three miles only in the hour. Finding that the passage up to the city was likely therefore to become tedious,

dious, I would fain have gone on shore far below it; but this the captain would not permit me to do. By the laws of Pennsylvania, enacted in consequence of the dreadful pestilence which raged in the capital in the year 1793, the master of any vessel bound for that port is made subject to a very heavy fine, if he suffers any person from on board her, whether mariner or passenger, to go on shore in any part of the state, before his vessel is examined by the health officer: and any person that goes on shore, contrary to the will of the master of the vessel, is liable to be imprisoned for a considerable length of time. In case the existence of this law should not be known on board a vessel bound for a port in Pennsylvania, it is the business of the pilot to furnish the master and the passengers on board with copies of it, with which he always comes provided. The health officer, who is a regular bred physician, resides at Mifflin Fort, four miles below the city, where there is a small garrison kept. A boat is always sent on shore for him from the ship. After having been tossed about on the ocean for nine weeks nearly, nothing could be more tantalizing than to be kept thus close to the shore without being permitted to land.

Philadelphia, as you approach by the river, is not seen farther off than three miles, a point of land covered with trees concealing it from the view. On weathering this point it suddenly opens upon you, and at that distance it looks extremely well; but on a nearer approach, the city makes a poor appearance, as nothing is visible from the water but confused heaps of wooden storehouses, crowded upon each other, the chief of which are built upon platforms of artificial ground, and wharfs which project a considerable way into the river. The wharfs are of a rectangular form, and built of wood; they jut out in every direction, and are well adapted for the accommodation of shipping, the largest merchant vessels being able to lie close alongside them. Behind these wharfs, and parallel to the river, runs Water-street. This is the first street which you usually enter after landing, and it does not serve to give a stranger a very favourable opinion either of the neatness or commodiousness of the public ways of Philadelphia. It is no more than thirty feet wide; and immediately behind the houses, which stand on the side farthest from the

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water, a high bank, supposed to be the old bank of the river, rises, which renders the air very confined. Added to this, such stenches at times prevail in it, owing in part to the quantity of filth and dirt that is suffered to remain on the pavement, and in part to what is deposited in waste houses, of which there are several in the street, that it is really dreadful to pass through it. It was here that the malignant yellow fever broke out in the year 1793, which made such terrible ravages; and in the summer season, in general, the street is found extremely unhealthy. That the inhabitants, after suffering so much from the sickness that originated in it, should remain thus inattentive to the cleanliness of Water-street is truly surprising; more especially so, when it is considered, that the streets in the other parts of the town are as much distinguished for the neatness that prevails throughout them, as this one is for its dirty condition.

On the level plot of ground on the top of the bank which rises behind Water-street, the city of Philadelphia was originally laid out, and it was intended by the founder that no houses should have been erected at the bottom of it; however, as there was no positive law to this effect, the convenience of the situation soon tempted numbers to build there, and they are now encroaching, annually, on the river, by throwing wharfs farther out into the stream. In another respect also the original plan of the city was not adhered to. The ground allotted for it was in the form of an oblong square, two miles in length, reaching from the river Schuylkill to the Delaware, and one mile in breadth. Pursuant to this scheme, the houses were begun on the Delaware side; but instead of having been carried on towards the Schuylkill, the current of building has kept entirely on one side. The houses extend for two miles nearly along the Delaware, but, on an average, not more than half a mile towards the Schuylkill: this is to be attributed to the great superiority of the one river over the other. All the houses built beyond the boundary line of the oblong square are said to be in the "Liberties," as the jurisdiction of the corporation does not extend to that part of the town. Here the streets are very irregularly built, but in the city they all intersect each other at right angles, according to the original plan. The principal

principal street is one hundred feet wide; the others vary from eighty to fifty. They are all tolerably well paved with pebble stones in the middle; and on each side, for the convenience of passengers, there is a footway paved with red brick.

The houses within the limits of the city are for the most part built of brick; a few, and a few only, are of wood.

In the old parts of the town they are in general small, heavy, and inconvenient; but amongst those which have been lately erected, many are to be found that are light, airy, and commodious. In the whole city, however, there are only two or three houses that particularly attract the attention, on account of their size and architecture, and but little beauty is observable in the designs of any of these. The most spacious and the most remarkable one amongst them stands in Chestnut-street, but it is not yet quite finished. At present it appears a huge mass of red brick and pale blue marble, which bids defiance to simplicity and elegance. This superb mansion, according to report, has already cost upwards of fifty thousand guineas, and stands as a monument of the increasing luxury of the city of Philadelphia.

As for the public buildings, they are all heavy tasteless piles of red brick, ornamented with the same sort of blue marble as that already mentioned, and which but ill accord together, unless indeed we except the new Bank of the United States, and the presbyterian church in High-street. The latter building is ornamented with a handsome portico in front, supported by six pillars in the Corinthian order; but it is seen to great disadvantage on account of the market house, which occupies the center of the street before it. The buildings next to these, that are most deserving of notice, are the State House, the President's House, the Hospital, the Bettering House, and the Gaol.

The State House is situated in Chestnut-street; and, considering that no more than fifty-three years elapsed from the time the first cabin was built on the spot marked out for the city, until it was erected, the architecture calls forth both our surprise and admiration. The State House is appropriated to the use of the legislative bodies of the state. Attached to this edifice are the congress and the city-halls. In the former, the
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congress of the United States meets to transact business. The room allotted to the representatives of the lower house is about sixty feet in length, and fitted up in the plainest manner. At one end of it is a gallery, open to every person that chuses to enter it; the stair-case leading to which runs directly from the public street. The senate chamber is in the story above this, and it is furnished and fitted up in a much superior style to that of the lower house. In the city hall the courts of justice are held, the supreme court of the United States, as well as that of the state of Pennsylvania, and those of the city.

The president's house, as it is called, was erected for the residence of the president, before the removal of the seat of the federal government from Philadelphia was agitated. The original plan of this building was drawn by a private gentleman, resident in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, and was possessed, it is said, of no small share of merit; but the committee of citizens, that was appointed to take the plan into consideration, and to direct the building, conceiving that it could be improved upon, reversed the positions of the upper and lower stories, placing the latter at top, so that the pilasters, with which it is ornamented, appear suspended in the air. The committee also contrived, that the windows of the principal apartments, instead of opening into a spacious area in front of the house, as was designed at first, should face towards the confined back yards of the adjoining houses. This building is not yet finished, and as the removal of the seat of government to the federal city of Washington is so shortly to take place, it is most probable that it will never be occupied by the president. To what purpose it will be now applied is yet undetermined. Some imagine, that it will be converted into a city hotel; others, that it will be destined for the residence of the governor of the state. For the latter purpose, it would be unfit in the extreme, the salary of the governor being so inconsiderable, that it would not enable him to keep up an establishment suitable to a dwelling of one-fourth part the size of it.

The hospital, for its airiness, for its convenient accommodation for the sick and infirm, and for the neatness exhibited throughout every part of it, cannot be surpassed by any institution of the kind in the world. The plan of the building is in the form of the letter H. At present but one wing

wing and a part of the center are finished; but the rest of the building is in a state of forwardness. It is two stories high, and underneath the whole are cells for lunatics. Persons labouring under any disorder of body or mind are received into this hospital, excepting such as have diseases that are contagious, and of a malignant nature; such patients, however, have the advice of the attending physicians gratis, and are supplied with medicine from the hospital dispensary.

The productive stock of this hospital, in the year 1793, was estimated £.17,065 currency; besides which there are estates belonging to it that as yet produce nothing. The same year, the legislature granted £.10,000 for enlarging the building, and adding thereto a Lying-in and Foundling hospital. The annual private donations are very considerable. Those that contribute a certain sum have the power of electing the directors, who are twelve in number, and chosen yearly. The directors appoint six of the most skilful surgeons and physicians in the city to attend; there is also a surgeon and apothecary resident in the house. From the year 1756, when it was built, to the year 1793 inclusive, nearly 9,000 patients were admitted into this hospital, upwards of 6,000 of whom were relieved or cured. The hospital stands within the limits of the city, but it is more than a quarter of a mile removed from any of the other buildings. There are spacious walks within the inclosure for such of the patients as are in a state of convalescence.

The Bettering House, which is under the care of the overseers of the poor, stands in the same neighbourhood, somewhat farther removed from the houses of the city. It is a spacious building of brick, with extensive walks and gardens. The poor of the city and neighbourhood are here furnished with employment, and comfortably lodged and dieted. During the severity of the winter season, many aged and reduced persons seek refuge in this place, and leave it again on the return of spring. Whilst they stay there, they are under very little restraint, and go in and out when they please; they must, however, behave orderly. This institution is supported by a tax on the town.

The gaol is a spacious building of common stone, one hundred feet in front. It is fitted up with solitary cells, on the new plan, and the apartments

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ments are all arched, to prevent the communication of fire. Behind the building are extensive yards, which are secured by lofty walls. This gaol is better regulated, perhaps, than any other on the face of the globe. By the new penal laws of Pennsylvania, lately enacted, no crime is punishable with death, excepting murder of the first degree, by which is meant, murder that is perpetrated by wilful premeditated intention, or in attempts to commit rape, robbery, or the like. Every other offence, according to its enormity, is punished by solitary imprisonment of a determined duration. Objections may be made to this mode of punishment, as not being sufficiently severe on the individual to atone for an atrocious crime; nor capable, because not inflicted in public, of deterring evil-minded persons in the community from the commission of offences which incur the rigour of the law; but on a close examination, it will be found to be very severe; and as far as an opinion can be formed from the trial that has been hitherto made by the state of Pennsylvania, it seems better calculated to restrain the excesses of the people than any other. If any public punishment could strike terror into the lawless part of the multitude, it is as likely that the infliction of death would do it as any whatsoever; but death is divested of many of his terrors, after being often presented to our view; so that we find in countries, for instance in England, where it occurs often as punishment, the salutary effects that might be expected from it are in a great measure lost. The unfortunate wretch, who is doomed to forfeit his life in expiation of the crimes he has committed, in numberless instances, looks forward with apparent unconcern to the moment in which he is to be launched into eternity; his companions around him only condole with him, because his career of iniquity has so suddenly been impeded by the course of justice: or, if he is not too much hardened in the paths of vice, but falls a prey to remorse, and sees all the horrors of his impending fate, they endeavour to rally his broken spirits by the consoling remembrance, that the pangs he has to endure are but the pangs of a moment, which they illustrate by the speedy exit of one whose death he was perhaps himself witness to but a few weeks before. A month does not pass over in England without repeated executions; and there

there is scarcely a vagabond to be met with in the country, who has not seen a fellow creature suspended from the gallows. We all know what little good effect such spectacles produce. But immured in darkness and solitude, the prisoner suffers pangs worse than death a hundred times in the day: he is left to his own bitter reflections; there is no one thing to divert his attention, and he endeavours in vain to escape from the horrors which continually haunt his imagination. In such a situation the most hardened offender is soon reduced to a state of repentance.

But punishment by imprisonment, according to the laws of Pennsylvania, is imposed, not only as an expiation of past offences, and an example to the guilty part of society, but for another purpose, regarded by few penal codes in the world, the reform of the criminal. The regulations of the gaol, are calculated to promote this effect as soon as possible, so that the building, indeed, deserves the name of a penitentiary house more than that of a gaol. As soon as a criminal is committed to the prison he is made to wash; his hair is shorn, and if not decently clothed, he is furnished with clean apparel; then he is thrown into a solitary cell, about nine feet long and four wide, where he remains debarred from the sight of every living being excepting his gaoler, whose duty it is to attend to the bare necessities of his nature, but who is forbidden, on any account, to speak to him without there is absolute occasion. If a prisoner is at all refractory, or if the offence for which he is imprisoned is of a very atrocious nature, he is then confined in a cell secluded even from the light of heaven. This is the worst that can be inflicted upon him.

The gaol is inspected twice every week by twelve persons appointed for that purpose, who are chosen annually from amongst the citizens of Philadelphia. Nor is it a difficult matter to procure these men, who readily and voluntarily take it upon them to go through the troublesome functions of the office without any fee or emolument whatever. They divide themselves into committees; each of these takes it in turn, for a stated period, to visit every part of the prison; and a report is made to the inspectors at large, who meet together at times regularly appointed.

From the report of the committee an opinion is formed by the inspectors, who, with the consent of the judges, regulate the treatment of each individual prisoner during his confinement. This is varied according to his crime, and according to his subsequent repentance. Solitary confinement in a dark cell is looked upon as the severest usage; next, solitary confinement in a cell with the admission of light; next, confinement in a cell where the prisoner is allowed to do some sort of work; lastly, labour in company with others. The prisoners are obliged to bathe twice every week, proper conveniencies for that purpose being provided within the walls of the prison, and also to change their linen, with which they are regularly provided. Those in solitary confinement are kept upon bread and water; but those who labour are allowed broth, porridge, puddings, and the like: meat is dispensed only in small quantities, twice in the week. Their drink is water; on no pretence is any other beverage suffered to be brought into the prison. This diet is found, by experience, to afford the prisoners strength sufficient to perform the labour that is imposed upon them; whereas a more generous one would only serve to render their minds less humble and submissive. Those who labour, are employed in the particular trade to which they have been accustomed, provided it can be carried on in the prison; if not acquainted with any, something is soon found that they can do. One room is set apart for shoemakers, another for taylor's, a third for carpenters, and so on; and in the yards are stone-cutters, smiths, nailers, &c. &c.

Excepting the cells, which are at a remote part of the building, the prison has the appearance of a large manufactory. Good order and decency prevail throughout, and the eye of a spectator is never assailed by the sight of such ghastly and squalid figures as are continually to be met with in our prisons; so far, also, is a visitor from being insulted, that he is scarcely noticed as he passes through the different wards. The prisoners are forbidden to speak to each other without there is necessity; they are also forbidden to laugh, or to sing, or to make the smallest disturbance. An overseer attends continually to see that every one performs his work diligently; and in case of the smallest resistance to any of the regulations,

regulations, the offender is immediately cast into a solitary cell, to subsist on bread and water till he returns to a proper sense of his behaviour; but the dread all those have of this treatment, who have once experienced it, is such, that it is seldom found necessary to repeat it. The women are kept totally apart from the men, and are employed in a manner suitable to their sex. The labourers all eat together in one large apartment; and regularly, every Sunday, there is divine service, at which all attend. It is the duty of the chaplain to converse at times with the prisoners, and endeavour to reform their minds and principles. The inspectors, when they visit the prison, also do the same; so that when a prisoner is liberated, he goes out, as it were, a new man; he has been habituated to employment, and has received good instructions. The greatest care is also taken to find him employment the moment he quits the place of his confinement. According to the regulations, no person is allowed to visit the prison without permission of the inspectors. The greatest care is also taken to preserve the health of the prisoners, and for those who are sick there are proper apartments and good advice provided. The longest period of confinement is for a rape, which is not to be less than ten years, but not to exceed twenty-one. For high treason, the length of confinement is not to be less than six nor more than twelve years. There are prisons in every county throughout Pennsylvania, but none as yet are established on the same plan as that which has been described. Criminals are frequently sent from other parts of the state to receive punishment in the prison of Philadelphia.

So well is this gaol conducted, that instead of being an expense, it now annually produces a considerable revenue to the state.

LETTER II.

Population of Philadelphia.—Some Account of the Inhabitants, their Character and Manners—Private Amusements.—Americans lose their Teeth prematurely.—Theatrical Amusements only permitted of late.—Quakers.—President's Levee and Drawing Room.—Places of public Worship.—Carriages, what sort of, used in Philadelphia.—Taverns, how conducted in America.—Difficulty of procuring Servants.—Character of the lower Classes of People in America.

MY DEAR SIR,

Philadelphia, November.

PHILADELPHIA, according to the census taken in the Year 1790, contained 42,000 people. From the natural increase, however, of population, and the influx of strangers, the number is supposed now to be near 50,000, notwithstanding the ravages of the yellow fever in 1793, which swept off 4,000 people. The inhabitants consist of English, Irish, Scotch, Germans, French, and of American born citizens, descended from people of these different nations, who are of course by far the most numerous class. The inhabitants are for the most part engaged in some sort of business; a few, and a few only, live without any ostensible professions, on the fortunes which they themselves have raised; but these men are not idle or inattentive to the increase of their property, being ever on the watch to profit by the sale of lands, which they have purchased, and to buy more on advantageous terms. It would be a difficult matter to find a man of any property in the country, who is not concerned in the buying or selling of land, which may be considered in America as an article of trade.

In a large city, like Philadelphia, where people are assembled together from so many different quarters, there cannot fail to be a great diversity in the manners of the inhabitants. It is a remark, however, very generally made, not only by foreigners, but also by persons from other parts
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of the United States, that the Philadelphians are extremely deficient in hospitality and politeness towards strangers. Amongst the uppermost circles in Philadelphia, pride, haughtiness, and ostentation are conspicuous; and it seems as if nothing could make them happier than that an order of nobility should be established, by which they might be exalted above their fellow citizens, as much as they are in their own conceit. In the manners of the people in general there is a coldness and reserve, as if they were suspicious of some designs against them, which chills to the very heart those who come to visit them. In their private societies a *tristesse* is apparent, near which mirth and gaiety can never approach. It is no unusual thing, in the genteel houses, to see a large party of from twenty to thirty persons assembled, and seated round a room, without partaking of any other amusement than what arises from the conversation, most frequently in whispers, that passes between the two persons who are seated next to each other. The party meets between six and seven in the evening; tea is served with much form; and at ten, by which time most of the company are wearied with having remained so long stationary, they return to their own homes. Still, however, they are not strangers to music, cards, or dancing; their knowledge of music, indeed, is at a very low ebb; but in dancing, which appears to be their most favourite amusement, they certainly excel.

The women, in general, whilst young, are very pretty, but by the time they become mothers of a little family they lose all their beauty, their complexions fade away, their teeth begin to decay, and they hardly appear like the same creatures. In a few instances only it would be possible to find a fine woman of the age of forty, who has had a large family. The sudden decay of the teeth is a circumstance which has engaged the attention of the faculty; both men and women, American born, losing them very generally at an early age. Some ascribe it to the great and sudden changes in the weather, from heat to cold; but negroes, who are exposed to the same transition of climate, are distinguished for the whiteness and beauty of their teeth; and the Indians also, who are more exposed than either, preserve their teeth in good order. Others attribute it to the immoderate use of confectionary. Of confectionary,
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the Americans in the towns certainly make an inordinate use; but in the country, where the people have not an opportunity of getting such things, the men, but more generally the women, also lose their teeth very prematurely. Most probably it is owing to the very general use they make of salted provisions. In the country parts of America in particular, the people live upon salted pork and salted fish nearly the whole year round.

It is only within a few years past, since 1779, that any public amusements have been suffered in this city; the old corporation, which consisted mostly of the Quakers, and not of the most liberal minded people in the city, having always opposed the establishment of any place for the purpose. Now, however, there are two theatres and an amphitheatre. Little or no use is made of the old theatre, which is of wood, and a very indifferent building. The new one is built of brick, and neatly fitted up within; but it is hardly large enough for the town. A shocking custom obtains here, of smoking tobacco in the house, which at times is carried to such an excess, that those to whom it is disagreeable are under the necessity of going away. To the people in the pit, wine and porter is brought between the acts, precisely as if they were in a tavern. The actors are procured, with a very few exceptions, from Great Britain and Ireland; none of them are very eminent performers, but they are equal to what are usually met with in the country towns of England. The amphitheatre is built of wood; equestrian and other exercises are performed there, similar to those at Astley's. Dancing assemblies are held regularly every fortnight through the winter, and occasionally there are public concerts.

During summer, the people that can make it convenient retire to country houses in the neighbourhood of the town, and all public and private amusements cease; winter is the season for them, the Congress being then assembled, and trade not being so closely attended to, as the navigation of the river is then commonly impeded by ice.

The president finds it necessary, in general, to come to Philadelphia preparatory to the meeting of congress, and resides there during the whole of the session. Once in the week, during his stay in the city, he

has levees, between the hours of three and four in the afternoon. At these he always appears himself in a court dress, and it is expected that the foreign ministers should always attend in the same style; this they constantly do, excepting the French minister, who makes a point of going in dishabille, not to say worse of it. Other persons are at liberty to go as they think proper. Mrs. Washington, also, has a drawing room once every week. On this occasion the ladies are seated in great form round the apartment, and tea, coffee, &c. served*.

Philadelphia is the grand residence of the Quakers in America, but their number does not bear the same proportion now to that of the other citizens which it did formerly. At present they form about one fourth only of the inhabitants. This does not arise from any diminution of the number of Quakers, on the contrary they have considerably increased, but from the great influx into the city of persons of a different persuasion. Belonging to the Quakers there are five places for public worship; to the Presbyterians and Seceders six; to the English Episcopalians three; to German Lutherans two; to the Roman Catholics four; and one respectively to the Swedish Lutherans, Moravians, Baptists, Universal Baptists, Methodists, and Jews. On a Sunday every citizen appears well dressed; the lower classes of the people in particular are remarkably well clothed. This is a great day, also for little excursions into the country.

The carriages made use of in Philadelphia consist of coaches, chariots, chaises, coachees, and light waggons, the greater part of which are built in Philadelphia. The equipages of a few individuals are extremely ostentatious; nor does there appear in any that neatness and elegance which might be expected amongst a set of people that are desirous of imitating the fashions of England; and that are continually getting models over from that country. The coachee is a carriage peculiar, I believe, to America; the body of it is rather longer than that of a coach,

* Whether the levee is kept up by the present president, or not, I have not heard. Many objections were made to it by the democratic party during the administration of General

Washington, as being inconsistent with the spirit of a republican government, and destructive of that equality which ought to reign amongst the citizens of every class.

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but of the same shape. In the front it is left quite open down to the bottom, and the driver sits on a bench under the roof of the carriage. There are two seats in it for the passengers, who sit with their faces towards the horses. The roof is supported by small props, which are placed at the corners. On each side of the doors, above the pannels, it is quite open, and to guard against bad weather there are curtains, which are made to let down from the roof, and fasten to buttons placed for the purpose on the outside. There is also a leathern curtain to hang occasionally between the driver and passengers.

The light waggons are on the same construction, and are calculated to accommodate from four to twelve people. The only difference between a small waggon and a coachee is, that the latter is better finished, has varnished pannels, and doors at the side. The former has no doors, but the passengers scramble in the best way they can, over the seat of the driver. The waggons are used universally for stage carriages.

The accommodations at the taverns, by which name they call all inns, &c. are very indifferent in Philadelphia, as indeed they are, with a very few exceptions, throughout the country. The mode of conducting them is nearly the same every where. The traveller is shewn, on arrival, into a room which is common to every person in the house, and which is generally the one set apart for breakfast, dinner, and supper. All the strangers that happen to be in the house sit down to these meals promiscuously, and, excepting in the large towns, the family of the house also forms a part of the company. It is seldom that a private parlour or drawing room can be procured at any of the taverns, even in the towns; and it is always with reluctance that breakfast or dinner is served up separately to any individual. If a single bed room can be procured, more ought not to be looked for; but it is not always that even this is to be had, and those who travel through the country must often submit to be crammed into rooms where there is scarcely sufficient space to walk between the beds.* Strangers who remain for any

* Having stopped one night at Elkton, on my first enquiries from the landlord, on alighting, my journey to Baltimore in the public carriage, as there were many passengers in the stage, were
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any length of time in the large towns most usually go to private boarding houses, of which great numbers are to be met with. It is always a difficult matter to procure furnished lodgings without paying for board.

At all the taverns, both in town and country, but particularly in the latter, the attendance is very bad; indeed, excepting in the southern states, where there are such great numbers of negroes, it is a matter of the utmost difficulty to procure domestic servants of any description. The generality of servants that are met with in Philadelphia are emigrant Europeans; they, however, for the most part, only remain in service until they can save a little money, when they constantly quit their masters, being led to do so by that desire for independence which is so natural to the mind of man, and which every person in America may enjoy that will be industrious. The few that remain steady to those who have hired them are retained at most exorbitant wages. As for the Americans, none but those of the most indifferent characters ever enter into service, which they consider as suitable only to negroes; the negroes again, in Pennsylvania and in the other states where steps have been taken for the gradual abolition of slavery, are taught by the Quakers to look upon themselves in every respect as equal to their white brethren, and they endeavour to imitate them by being saucy. It is the same both with males and females. I must here observe; that amongst the generality of the lower sort of people in the United States, and particularly amongst those of Philadelphia, there is a want of good manners which excites the surprize of almost every foreigner; I wish also that it may not be thought that this remark has been made, merely because the same deference and the same respectful attention, which we see so commonly paid by the lower orders of people in Great Britain and Ireland to those who are in a situation somewhat superior to themselves, is not also paid in America to persons in the same station; it is the want of common civility I complain of, which it is

to know what accommodation his house afforded. He seemed much surpris'd that any enquiries should be made on such a subject, and with much consequence told me, I need not give myself any

trouble about the extent of his accommodations, as he had no less than *eleven* beds in *one* of his rooms.

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always desirable to behold between man and man, let their situations in life be what they may, and which is not contrary to the dictates of nature, or to the spirit of genuine liberty, as it is observable in the behaviour of the wild Indians that wander through the forests of this vast continent, the most free and independent of all human beings. In the United States, however, the lower classes of people will return rude and impertinent answers to questions couched in the most civil terms, and will insult a person that bears the appearance of a gentleman, on purpose to shew how much they consider themselves upon an equality with him. Civility cannot be purchased from them on any terms; they seem to think that it is incompatible with freedom, and that there is no other way of convincing a stranger that he is really in a land of liberty, but by being surly and ill mannered in his presence.

L E T T E R III.

Journey to Baltimore.—Description of the Country about Philadelphia.—Floating Bridges over the Schuylkill, how constructed.—Mills in Brandywine Creek.—Improvement in the Machinery of Flour Mills in America.—Town of Wilmington.—Log Houses.—Bad Roads.—Fine Prospects.—How relished by Americans.—Taverns.—Susquehanna River.—Town of Baltimore.—Plan of the Town.—Harbour.—Public and private Buildings.—Inhabitants.—Country between Baltimore and Washington.—Execrable Roads.

MY DEAR SIR,

Washington, November

ON the 16th of November I left Philadelphia for Baltimore. The only mode of conveyance which offers for a traveller, who is not provided with his own horses or carriage, is the public stage waggon; it is possible, indeed, to procure a private carriage at Philadelphia to go on to Baltimore, for which a great price is always demanded; but there

there is no such thing as hiring a carriage or horses from stage to stage. The country about Philadelphia is well cultivated, and it abounds with neat country houses; but it has a bare appearance, being almost totally stripped of the trees, which have been cut down without mercy for firing, and to make way for the plough; neither are there any hedges, an idea prevailing that they impoverish the land wherever they are planted. The fences are all of the common post and rail, or of the angular kind. These last are made of rails about eight or nine feet long, roughly split out of trees, and placed horizontally above one another, as the bars of a gate; but each tier of rails, or gate as it were, instead of being on a straight line with the one next to it, is put in a different direction, so as to form an angle sufficient to permit the ends of the rails of one tier to rest steadily on those of the next. As these fences, from their serpentine course, occupy at least six times as much ground as a common post and rail fence, and require also a great deal more wood, they are mostly laid aside whenever land and timber become objects of importance, as they soon do in the neighbourhood of large towns.

The road to Baltimore is over the lowest of three floating bridges, which have been thrown across the river Schuylkill, in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia. The view on passing this river, which is about two hundred and fifty yards wide, is beautiful. The banks on each side are high, and for many miles above afford the most delightful situations for villas. A very elegant one, laid out in the English taste, is seen on passing the river just above the bridge. Adjoining to it are public gardens, and a house of entertainment, with several good rooms, to which the citizens of Philadelphia resort in great numbers during the summer season.

The floating bridges are formed of large trees, which are placed in the water transversely, and chained together; beams are then laid lengthways upon these, and the whole boarded over, to render the way convenient for passengers. On each side there is a railing. When very heavy carriages go across these bridges, they sink a few inches below the surface of the water; but the passage is by no means dangerous. They are kept in an even direction across the river, by means of chains and anchors in

different parts, and are also strongly secured on both shores. Over that part of the river where the channel lies, they are so contrived that a piece can be removed to allow vessels to pass through. These bridges are frequently damaged, and sometimes entirely carried away, during floods, at the breaking up of winter, especially if there happens to be much ice floating in the river. To guard against this, when danger is apprehended and the flood does not come on too rapidly, they unfasten all the chains by which the bridge is confined in its proper place, and then let the whole float down with the stream to a convenient part of the shore, where it can be hauled up and secured.

The country, after passing the Schuylkill, is pleasingly diversified with rising grounds and woods, and appears to be in a good state of cultivation. The first town of any note which you come to is Chester, fifteen miles from Philadelphia; this town contains about sixty dwellings, and is remarkable for being the place where the first colonial assembly sat. From the neighbourhood of this town there is a very grand view of the river Delaware.

About half a mile before you come to Wilmington is Brandy-wine River, remarkable for its mills, no less than thirteen being built almost close to each other upon it. The water, just above the bridge which is thrown over it, comes tumbling down with great violence over a bed of rocks; and seats, at a very trifling expense, could be made for three times the number of mills already built. Vessels carrying 1,000 bushels of wheat can come close up to them, and by means of machinery their cargoes are received from, or delivered to them in a very expeditious manner. Among the mills, some are for flour, some for sawing of wood, and others for stone. The improvements which have been made in the machinery of the flour mills in America are very great. The chief of these consist in a new application of the screw, and the introduction of what are called elevators, the idea of which was evidently borrowed from the chain pump. The screw is made by sticking small thin pieces of board, about three inches long and two wide, into a cylinder, so as to form the spiral line. This screw is placed in a horizontal position, and by turning on its axis it forces wheat or flour from one
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end of a trough to the other. For instance, in the trough which receives the meal immediately coming from the stones, a screw of this kind is placed, by which the meal is forced on, to the distance of six or eight feet perhaps, into a reservoir; from thence, without any manual labour, it is conveyed to the very top of the mill by the elevators, which consist of a number of small buckets of the size of tea-cups, attached to a long band that goes round a wheel at the top, and another at the bottom of the mill. As the band revolves round the wheels, these buckets dip into the reservoir of wheat or flour below, and take their loads up to the top, where they empty themselves as they turn round the upper wheel. The elevators are inclosed in square wooden tubes, to prevent them from catching in any thing, and also to prevent dust. By means of these two simple contrivances no manual labour is required from the moment the wheat is taken to the mill till it is converted into flour, and ready to be packed, during the various processes of screening, grinding, sifting, &c.

Wilmington is the capital of the state of Delaware, and contains about six hundred houses, which are chiefly of brick. The streets are laid out on a plan somewhat similar to that of Philadelphia. There is nothing very interesting in this town, and the country round about it is flat and insipid. Elkton, twenty-one miles distant from Wilmington, and the first town in Maryland, contains about ninety indifferent houses, which are built without any regularity; it is a dirty disagreeable place. In this neighbourhood I first took notice of log-houses; those which I had hitherto seen having been built either of brick or stone, or else constructed with wooden frames, sheathed on the outside with boards. The log-houses are cheaper than any others in a country where there is abundance of wood, and generally are the first that are erected on a new settlement in America. The sides consist of trees just squared, and placed horizontally one upon the other; the ends of the logs of one side resting alternately on the ends of those of the adjoining sides, in notches; the interstices between the logs are stopped with clay; and the roof is covered with boards or with shingles, which are small pieces of wood in the shape of slates or tiles, and which are used for that purpose,
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with a few exceptions, throughout America. These habitations are not very fightly, but when well built they are warm and comfortable, and last for a long time.

A considerable quantity of wheat and Indian corn is raised in this neighbourhood, to the production of which the soil is favourable; but the best cultivated parts of the country are not seen from the road, which passes chiefly over barren and hilly tracts, called "ridges." The reason for carrying the road over these is, because it is found to last longer than if carried over the flat part of the country, where the soil is deep, a circumstance which the people of Maryland always take into consideration; for after a road is once cut, they never take pains to keep it in good repair. The roads in this state are worse than in any one in the union; indeed so very bad are they, that on going from Elkton to the Susquehannah ferry, the driver frequently had to call to the passengers in the stage, to lean out of the carriage first at one side, then at the other, to prevent it from oversetting in the deep ruts with which the road abounds: "Now, gentlemen, to the right;" upon which the passengers all stretched their bodies half way out of the carriage to balance it on that side: "Now, gentlemen, to the left," and so on. This was found absolutely necessary at least a dozen times in half the number of miles. Whenever they attempt to mend these roads, it is always by filling the ruts with saplings or bushes, and covering them over with earth. This, however, is done only when there are fields on each side of the road. If the road runs contiguous to a wood, then, instead of mending it where it is bad, they open a new passage through the trees, which they call making a road. It is very common in Maryland to see six or seven different roads branching out from one, which all lead to the same place. A stranger, before he is acquainted with this circumstance, is frequently puzzled to know which he ought to take. The dexterity with which the drivers of the stages guide their horses along these new roads, which are full of stumps of trees, is astonishing, yet to appearance they are the most awkward drivers possible; it is more by the different noises which they make, than by their reins, that they manage their horses.

Charleston stands at a few miles distance from Elkton; there are about twenty houses only in it, which are inhabited chiefly by people who carry on a herring fishery. Beyond it the country is much diversified with hill and dale, and the soil being but of an indifferent quality, the lands are so little cleared, that in many parts the road winds through uninterrupted woods for four or five miles together. The scenery in this neighbourhood is extremely interesting. From the top of the hills you meet with numberless bold and extensive prospects of the Chesapeak Bay and of the river Susquehannah; and scarcely do you cross a valley without beholding in the depths of the wood the waters of some little creek or rivulet rushing over ledges of rock in a beautiful cascade. The generality of Americans stare with astonishment at a person who can feel any delight at passing through such a country as this. To them the sight of a wheat field or a cabbage garden would convey pleasure far greater than that of the most romantic woodland views. They have an unconquerable aversion to trees; and whenever a settlement is made, they cut away all before them without mercy; not one is spared; all share the same fate, and are involved in the general havoc. It appears strange, that in a country where the rays of the sun act with such prodigious power, some few trees near the habitations should not be spared, whose foliage might afford a cooling shade during the parching heats of summer; and I have oftentimes expressed my astonishment that none were ever left for that purpose. In answer I have generally been told, that they could not be left standing near a house without danger. The trees it seems in the American forests have but a very slender hold in the ground, considering their immense height, so that when two or three fully grown are deprived of shelter in consequence of the others which stood around them being cut down, they are very apt to be levelled by the first storm that chances to blow. This, however, would not be the case with trees of a small growth, which might safely be spared, and which would soon afford an agreeable shade if the Americans thought proper to leave them standing; but the fact of the matter is, that from the face of the country being entirely overspread with trees, the eyes of the people become satiated with the sight of them. The ground cannot be
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tilled, nor can the inhabitants support themselves, till they are removed; they are looked upon as a nuisance, and the man that can cut down the largest number, and have the fields about his house most clear of them, is looked upon as the most industrious citizen, and the one that is making the greatest improvements* in the country.

Every ten or twelve miles upon this road there are taverns, which are all built of wood, and much in the same stile, with a porch in front the entire length of the house. Few of these taverns have signs, and they are only to be distinguished from the other houses by the number of handbills pasted up on the walls near the door. They take their name, not from the sign, but from the person who keeps them, as Jones's, Brown's, &c. &c. All of them are kept nearly in the same manner. At each house there are regular hours for breakfast, dinner, and supper, and if a traveller arrives somewhat before the time appointed for any one of these, it is in vain to call for a separate meal for himself; he must wait patiently till the appointed hour, and then sit down with the other guests that may happen to be in the house. Breakfasts are generally plentifully served; there is tea, coffee, and different sorts of bread, cold salt meat, and, very commonly besides, beef steaks, fried fish, &c. &c. †. The charge made for breakfast is nearly the same as that for dinner,

This part of Maryland abounds with iron ore, which is of a quality particularly well adapted for casting. The ore is found in banks so near the surface of the earth that there is never occasion to sink a shaft to get at it. Near Charleston there is a small foundery for cannon. The cannon are bored by water. As I passed by, they were making twenty-four pounders, two of which I was informed they finished every week. The iron is extremely tough; very few of the guns burst on being proved.

* I have heard of Americans landing on barren parts of the north west coast of Ireland, and evincing the greatest surprize and pleasure at the beauty and improved state of the country, "so clear of trees!!"

† The landlady always presides at the head

of the table to make the tea, or a female servant attends for that purpose at breakfast and in the evening; and at many taverns in the country the whole of the family sit down to dinner with the guests.

The Susquehannah river is crossed, on the way to Baltimore, at a ferry five miles above its entrance into the Chesapeake. The river is here about a mile and quarter wide, and deep enough for any vessels; the banks are high and thickly wooded, and the scenery is grand and picturesque. A small town, called Havre de Grace, which contains about forty houses, stands on this river at the ferry. A petition was presented to congress the last year to have it made a port of entry; but at present there is very little trade carried on there. A few ships are annually built in the neighbourhood. From hence to Baltimore the country is extremely poor; the soil is of a yellow gravel mixed with clay, and the roads execrable.

Baltimore is supposed to contain about sixteen thousand inhabitants, and though not the capital of the state, is the largest town in Maryland, and the most considerable place of trade in North America, after Philadelphia and New York. The plan of the town is somewhat similar to that of Philadelphia, most of the streets crossing each other at right angles. The main street, which runs east and west nearly, is about eighty feet wide; the others are from forty to sixty feet. The streets are not all paved, so that when it rains heavily they are rendered almost impassable, the soil being a stiff yellow clay, which retains the water a long time. On the south side of the town is a harbour commonly called the Basin, which affords about nine feet water, and is large enough to contain two thousand sail of merchant vessels. There are wharfs and stores along it, the whole length of the town; but as a particular wind is necessary to enable ships to get out of this basin, by far the greater number of those which enter the port of Baltimore stop at a harbour which is formed by a neck of land near the mouth of the basin, called Fell's Point. Here also wharfs have been built, alongside which vessels of six hundred tons burthen can lie with perfect safety. Numbers of persons have been induced to settle on this Point, in order to be contiguous to the shipping. Upwards of seven hundred houses have already been built there, and regular streets laid out, with a large market place. These houses, generally speaking, are considered as a part of Baltimore, but to all appearance they form a separate town, being upwards of a mile distant from the

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other part of the town. In the neighbourhood, Fell's Point and Baltimore are spoken of as distinct and separate places. Fell's Point is chiefly the residence of seafaring people, and of the younger partners of mercantile houses, who are stationed there to attend to the shipping.

The greater number of private houses in Baltimore are of brick, but many, particularly in the skirts of the town, are of wood. In some of the new streets a few appear to be well built, but in general the houses are small, heavy, and inconvenient. As for the public buildings, there are none worthy of being mentioned. The churches and places for public worship are ten in number; one respectively for Episcopalians, Presbyterians, German Lutherans, German Calvinists, Reformed Germans, Nicolites or New Quakers, Baptists, Roman Catholics, and two for Methodists. The Presbyterian church, which has lately been erected, is the best building among them, and indeed the handsomest building in town. It is of brick, with a portico in front supported by six pillars of stone.

They have no less than three incorporated banks in this town, and the number of notes issued from them is so great, as almost to preclude the circulation of specie. Some of the notes are for as small a sum as a single dollar, and being much more portable than silver, are generally preferred. As for gold, it is very scarce; I hardly ever met with it during two months that I remained in Maryland.

Amongst the inhabitants of Baltimore are to be found English, Irish, Scotch, and French. The Irish appear to be most numerous; and many of the principal merchants in town are in the number. Since the war, a great many French have arrived both from France and from the West India Islands. With a few exceptions the inhabitants are all engaged in trade, which is closely attended to. They are mostly plain people, sociable however amongst themselves, and very friendly and hospitable towards strangers. Cards and dancing are favourite amusements, both in private and at public assemblies, which are held every fortnight. There are two theatres here, in which there are performances occasionally. The oldest of them, which stands in the road to Fell's Point, is most wretched, and appears little better than a heap of loose boards; for

a long time it lay quite neglected, but has lately been fitted up for a company of French actors, the only one I ever heard of in the country. Baltimore, like Philadelphia, has suffered from the ravages of the yellow fever. During the autumn it is generally unhealthy, and those who can afford it retire to country seats in the neighbourhood, of which some are most delightfully situated.

From Baltimore to Washington, which is forty miles distant, the country wears but a poor appearance. The soil in some parts consists of a yellow clay mixed with gravel; in other parts it is very sandy. In the neighbourhood of the creeks and between the hills are patches of rich black earth, called bottoms, the trees upon which grow to a large size; but where there is gravel they are very small. The roads passing over these bottoms are worse than any I ever met with elsewhere. In driving over one of them, near the head waters of a branch of Patuxent river, a few days after a heavy fall of rain, the wheels of a sulky which I was in sunk up to the very boxes. For a moment I despaired of being able to get out without assistance, when my horse, which was very powerful, finding himself impeded, threw himself upon his haunches, and disengaging his fore-feet, made a vigorous plunge forwards, which luckily disengaged both himself and the sulky, and freed me from my embarrassment. I was afterwards informed that General Washington, as he was going to meet congress a short time before, was stopped in the very same place, his carriage sinking so deep in the mud that it was found necessary to send to a neighbouring house for ropes and poles to extricate it. Over some of the bottoms, which were absolutely impassable in their natural state, causeways have been thrown, which are made with large trees laid side by side across the road. For a time these causeways afford a commodious passage; but they do not last long, as many of the trees sinking into the soft soil, and others, exposed to the continual attrition of waggon wheels in a particular part, breaking asunder. In this state, full of unseen obstacles, it is absolutely a matter of danger for a person unacquainted with the road to attempt to drive a carriage along it. The bridges over the creeks, covered with loose boards, are as bad as the causeways, and totter as a carriage passes over. That the legis-

lature of Maryland can be so inactive, and not take some steps to repair this, which is one of the principal roads in the state, the great road from north to south, and the high road to the City of Washington, is most wonderful!

LETTER IV.

Foundation of the City of Washington.—Not readily agreed to by different States.—Choice of the Ground left to General Washington.—Circumstances to be considered in chusing the Ground.—The Spot fixed upon central to all the States.—Also remarkably advantageously situated for Trade.—Nature of the Back Country Trade.—Summary View of the principal Trading Towns in the United States.—Their Prosperity shewn to depend on the Back Country Trade.—Description of the Patowmac River.—Its Connection with other Rivers pointed out.—Prodigious Extent of the Water Communication from Washington City in all Directions.—Country likely to trade immediately with Washington.—Situation of Washington.—Plan of the City.—Public Buildings.—Some begun, others projected.—Capital President's House.—Hotel.—Stone and other building Materials found in the Neighbourhood.—Private Houses and Inhabitants at present in the City.—Different Opinions respecting the future Greatness of the City.—Impediments thrown in the Way of its Improvement.—What has given rise to this.

MY DEAR SIR,

Washington, November.

THE City of Washington, or the Federal City, as it is indiscriminately called, was laid out in the year 1792, and is expressly designed for being the metropolis of the United States, and the seat of the federal government. In the year 1800 the congress is to meet there for the first time. As the foundation of this city has attracted the
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attention of so many people in Europe, and as such very different opinions are entertained about it, I shall, in the following pages, give you a brief account of its rise and progress.

Shortly after the close of the American war, considerable numbers of the Pennsylvanian line, or of the militia, with arms in their hands, surrounded the hall in which the congress was assembled at Philadelphia, and with vehement menaces insisted upon immediate appropriations of money being made to discharge the large arrears due to them for their past services. The members, alarmed at such an outrage, resolved to quit a state in which they met with insult instead of protection, and quickly adjourned to New York, where the session was terminated. A short time afterwards, the propriety was strongly urged in congress, of fixing upon some place for the meeting of the legislature, and for the seat of the general government, which should be subject to the laws and regulations of the congress alone, in order that the members, in future, might not have to depend for their personal safety, and for their freedom of deliberation, upon the good or bad police of any individual state. This idea of making the place, which should be chosen for the meeting of the legislature, independent of the particular state to which it might belong, was further corroborated by the following argument: That as the several states in the union were in some measure rivals to each other, although connected together by certain ties, if any one of them was fixed upon for the seat of the general government in preference, and thus raised to a state of pre-eminence, it might perhaps be the occasion of great jealousy amongst the others. Every person was convinced of the expediency of preserving the union of the states entire; it was apparent, therefore, that the greatest precautions ought to be taken to remove every source of jealousy from amongst them, which might tend, though remotely, to produce a separation. In fine, it was absolutely necessary that the seat of government should be made permanent, as the removal of the public offices and the archives from place to place could not but be attended with many and very great inconveniences.

However, notwithstanding this measure appeared to be beneficial to the interest of the union at large, it was not until after the revolution,
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by which the present federal constitution was established, that it was acceded to on the part of all the states. Pennsylvania in particular, conscious of her being a principal and central state, and therefore likely to be made the seat of government if this new project was not carried into execution, was foremost in the opposition. At last she complied; but it was only on condition that the congress should meet at Philadelphia until the new city was ready for its reception, flattering herself that there would be so many objections afterwards to the removal of the seat of government, and so many difficulties in putting the project into execution, that it would finally be relinquished. To the discriminating judgment of General Washington, then president, it was left to determine upon the spot best calculated for the federal city. After mature deliberation he fixed upon a situation on the banks of the Patowmac River, a situation which seems to be marked out by nature, not only for a large city, but expressly for the seat of the metropolis of the United States.

In the choice of the spot there were two principal considerations: First, that it should be as central as possible in respect to every state in the union; secondly, that it should be advantageously situated for commerce, without which it could not be expected that the city would ever be distinguished for size or for splendour; and it was to be supposed, that the people of the United States would be desirous of having the metropolis of the country as magnificent as it possibly could be. These two essential points are most happily combined in the spot which has been chosen.

The northern and southern extremities of the United States are in 46° and 31° north latitude. The latitude of the new city is $38^{\circ} 53'$ north; so that it is within twenty-three minutes of being exactly between the two extremities. In no part of North America either is there a port situated so far up the country to the westward, excepting what belongs to Great Britain on the river St. Lawrence, its distance from the ocean being no less than two hundred and eighty miles. A more central situation could certainly have been fixed upon, by going further to the westward; but had this been done, it must have been an inland one, which would have
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been very unfavourable for trade. The size of all towns in America has hitherto been proportionate to their trade, and particularly to that carried on with the back settlements. This trade consists in supplying the people of the western parts of the United States, or the back settlements, with certain articles of foreign manufacture, which they do not find any interest in fabricating for themselves at present; nor is it to be supposed that they will, for many years to come, while land remains cheap, and these articles can be imported and sent to them on reasonable terms. The articles chiefly in demand consist of hardware, woollen cloths, figured cottons, hosiery, haberdashery, earthen ware, &c. &c. from England; coffee, rum, sugar*, from the West Indies; tea, coarse muslins, and calicoes, from the East Indies. In return for these articles the people of the back settlements send down for exportation the various kinds of produce which the country affords: wheat and flour, furs, skins, rice, indigo, tobacco, pitch, tar, &c. &c. It is very evident, therefore, that the best situation for a trading town must be upon a long navigable river, so that the town may be open to the sea, and thus enabled to carry on a foreign trade, and at the same time be enabled, by means of an extensive water communication in an opposite direction, to trade with the distant parts of the country. None of the inland towns have as yet increased to a great size. Lancaster, which is the largest in all America, contains only nine hundred houses, and it is nearly double the size of any other inland one. Neither do the sea-port towns flourish, which are not well situated for carrying on an inland trade at the same time. The truth of this position must appear obvious on taking a survey of the principal towns in the United States.

To begin with Boston, the largest town north of New York, and one of the oldest in the United States. Though it has a most excellent harbour, and has always been inhabited by an enterprising industrious set of people, yet it is now inferior, both in size and commerce, to Baltimore, which was little more than the residence of a few fishermen thirty years ago; and this, because there is no river in the neighbourhood navi-

* Sugar is not sent very far back into the country, as it is procured at much less expence from the maple-trees.

gable for more than seven miles, and the western parts of the state of Massachusetts, of which it is the capital, can be supplied with commodities carried up the North River on much better terms than if the same commodities were sent by land carriage from Boston. Neither does Boston increase by any means in the same proportion as the other towns, which have an extensive trade with the people of the back settlements. For the same cause we do not find that any of the sea-port or other towns in Rhode Island and Connecticut are increasing very fast; on the contrary, Newport, the capital of the state of Rhode Island, and which has a harbour that is boasted of as being one of the best throughout the United States, is now falling to decay. Newport contains about one thousand houses; none of the other towns between Boston and New York contain more than five hundred.

We now come to New York, which enjoys the double advantages of an excellent harbour and a large navigable river, which opens a communication with the interior parts of the country; and here we find a flourishing city, containing forty thousand * inhabitants, and increasing beyond every calculation. The North or Hudson River, at the mouth of which New York stands, is navigable from thence for one hundred and thirty miles in large vessels, and in floops of eighty tons burthen as far as Albany; smaller ones go still higher. About nine miles above Albany, the Mohawk River falls into the Hudson, by means of which, Wood Creek, Lake Oneida, and Oswego River, a communication is opened with Lake Ontario. In this route there are several portages, but it is a route which is much frequented, and numbers of boats are kept employed upon it in carrying goods whenever the season is not too dry. In long droughts the waters fall so much that oftentimes there is not sufficient to float an empty boat. All these obstructions however may, and will one day or other, be remedied by the hand of art. Oswego river, before it falls into Lake Ontario, communicates with the Seneca river, which affords in succession an entrance into the lakes Cayuga, Seneca, and Canadaqua. Lake Seneca, the largest, is about forty miles in length;

* Six inhabitants may be reckoned for every house in the United States.

upon it there is a schooner rigged vessel of seventy tons burthen constantly employed. The shores of these lakes are more thickly settled than the other part of the adjacent country, but the population of the whole track lying between the rivers Genesee and Hudson, which are about two hundred and fifty miles apart, is rapidly increasing. All this country west of the Hudson River, together with that to the east, comprehending the back parts of the states of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and also the entire of the state of Vermont, are supplied with European manufactures and West Indian produce, &c. &c. by way of New York; not directly from that city, but from Albany, Hudson, and other towns on the North River, which trade with New York, and which are intermediate places for the deposit of goods passing to, and coming from the back country. Albany, indeed, is now beginning herself to import goods from the West Indies; but still the bulk of her trade is with New York. Nothing can serve more to shew the advantages which accrue to any town from an intercourse with the back country, than the sudden progress of these secondary places of trade upon the North River. At Albany, the number of houses is increasing as fast as at New York; at present there are upwards of eleven hundred; and in Hudson city which was only laid out in the year 1783, there are now more than three hundred and twenty dwellings. This city is on the east side of the North River, one hundred and thirty miles above its mouth. By means also of the North River and Lake Champlain a trade is carried on with Montreal in Canada.

But to go on with the survey of the towns to the southward. In New Jersey, we find Amboy, situated at the head of Raritan Bay, a bay not inferior to any throughout the United States. The greatest encouragements also have been held out by the state legislature to merchants who would settle there; but the town, notwithstanding, remains nearly in the state it was in at the time of the revolution: sixty houses are all that it contains. New Brunswick, which is built on Raritan River, about fifteen miles above its entrance into the bay, carries on a small inland trade with the adjacent country; but the principal part of New Jersey is naturally supplied with foreign manufactures by New York on the one side, and

by Philadelphia on the other, the towns most happily situated for the purpose. There are about two hundred houses in New Brunswick, and about the same number in Trenton on Delaware, the capital of the state.

Philadelphia, the largest town in the union, has evidently been raised to that state of pre-eminence by her extensive inland commerce. On one side is the river Delaware, which is navigable in sloops for thirty-five miles above the town, and in boats carrying eight or nine tons one hundred miles further. On the other side is the Schuylkill, navigable, excepting at the falls, for ninety miles. But the country bordering upon these rivers is but a trifling part of that which Philadelphia trades with. Goods are forwarded to Harrisburgh, a town situated on the Susquehannah, and from thence sent up that river, and dispersed throughout the adjoining country. The eastern branch of Susquehannah is navigable for two hundred and fifty miles above Harrisburgh. This place, which in 1786 scarcely deserved the name of a village, now contains upwards of three hundred houses. By land carriage Philadelphia also trades with the western parts of Pennsylvania, as far as Pittsburg itself, which is on the Ohio, with the back of Virginia, and, strange to tell, with Kentucky, seven hundred miles distant.

Philadelphia, however, does not enjoy the exclusive trade to Virginia and Kentucky; Baltimore, which lies more to the south, comes in for a considerable share, if not for the greatest part of it, and to that is indebted for her sudden rise, and her great superiority over Annapolis, the capital of Maryland. Annapolis, although it has a good harbour, and was made a port of entry as long ago as the year 1694, has scarcely any trade now. Baltimore, situated more in the heart of the country, has gradually drawn it all away from her. From Baltimore nearly the entire of Maryland is furnished with European manufactures. The very flourishing state of this place has already been mentioned.

As the Patowmac river, and the towns upon it, are to come more particularly under notice afterwards, we may from hence pass on to the other towns in Virginia. With regard to Virginia, however, it is to be observed, that the impolitic laws * which have been enacted in that state

* For some account of them see Letter XIII.

have

have thrown a great damp upon trade; the Virginians too have always been more disposed towards agriculture than trade, so that the towns in that state, some of which are most advantageously situated, have never increased as they would have done had the county been inhabited by a different kind of people, and had different laws consequently existed; still however we shall find that the most flourishing towns in the state are those which are open to the sea, and situated most conveniently at the same time for trading with the people of the back country. On Rappahannock River, for instance, Tappahannock or Hobb's Hole was laid out at the same time that Philadelphia was. Fredericksburgh was built many years afterwards on the same river, but thirty miles higher up, and at the head of that part of it which was navigable for sea vessels; the consequence of this has been, that Fredericksburgh, from being situated more in the heart of the country, is now four times as large a town as Hobb's Hole.

York River, from running so closely to James River on the one side, and the Rappahannock on the other, does not afford a good situation for a large town. The largest town upon it, which is York, only contains seventy houses.

Williamsburgh was formerly the capital of the state, and contains about four hundred houses; but instead of increasing, this town is going to ruin, and numbers of the houses at present are uninhabited, which is evidently on account of its inland situation. There is no navigable stream nearer to it than one mile and a half, and this is only a small creek, which runs into James River. Richmond, on the contrary, which is the present capital of the state, has increased very fast, because it stands on a large navigable river; yet Richmond is no more than an intermediate place for the deposit of goods passing to and from the back country, vessels drawing more than seven feet water being unable to come up to the town.

The principal place of trade in Virginia is Norfolk. This town has a good harbour, and is enabled to trade with the upper parts of the country, by means of James River, near the mouth of which it stands. By land also a brisk trade is carried on with the back parts of North Carolina, for in that state there are no towns of any importance. The

entrance from the sea into the rivers in that state are all impeded by shoals and sand banks, none of which afford more than eleven feet water, and the passage over some of them is very dangerous from the sand shifting. Wilmington, which is the greatest place of trade in it, contains only two hundred and fifty houses. In order to carry on their trade to North Carolina to more advantage, a canal is now cutting across the Dismal Swamp, from Norfolk into Albemarle Sound, by means of the rivers that empty into which, a water communication will be opened to the remote parts of that state. Added to this, Norfolk, from its contiguity to the Dismal Swamp, is enabled to supply the West Indian market with lumber on better terms than any other town in the United States. It is in consequence increasing with wonderful rapidity, notwithstanding the disadvantages it labours under from the laws, which are so inimical to commerce. At present it contains upwards of five hundred houses, which have all been built within the last twenty years, for in the year 1776 the town was totally destroyed by orders of Lord Dunmore, then regal governor of Virginia.

Most of the rivers in South Carolina are obstructed at their mouths, much in the same manner as those in North Carolina; at Charleston, however, there is a safe and commodious harbour. From having such an advantage, this town commands nearly the entire trade of the state in which it is situated, as well as a considerable portion of that of North Carolina. The consequence is, that Charleston ranks as the fourth commercial town in the union. There are two rivers which disembogue on each side of the town, Cooper and Ashley; these are navigable, but not for a very great distance; however, from Cooper River a canal is to be cut to the Santee, a large navigable river which runs a considerable way up the country. Charleston has unfortunately been almost totally destroyed by fire of late, but it is rebuilding very fast, and will most probably in a few years be larger than ever.

The view that has been taken so far is sufficient to demonstrate, that the prosperity of the towns in the United States is dependant upon their trade, and principally upon that which is carried on with the interior parts of the country; and also, that those towns which are most conveniently

conveniently situated for the purpose of carrying on this inland trade, are those which enjoy the greatest share of it. It is now time to examine more particularly how far the situation of the federal city is favourable, or otherwise, for commerce: to do so, it will be necessary, in the first place, to trace the course of the Patowmac River, on which it stands, and also that of the rivers with which it is connected.

The Patowmac takes its rise on the north-west side of Alleghany Mountains, and after running in a meandering direction for upwards of four hundred miles, falls into the Chesapeake Bay. At its confluence with the bay it is seven miles and a half wide; about thirty miles higher, at Nominy Bay, four and a half; at Aquia, three; at Hallowing Point, one and a half; and at Alexandria, and from thence to the federal city, it is one mile and quarter wide. The depth of water at its mouth is seven fathoms; at St. George's Island, five; at Alexandria, four; and from thence to Washington, seven miles distant, three fathoms. The navigation of the Patowmac, from the Chesapeake Bay to the city, one hundred and forty miles distant, is remarkable safe, and so plain that any navigator of common abilities, that has once sailed up the river, might venture to take up a vessel drawing twelve feet water without a pilot. This could not be said of any other river on the continent, from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi. In its course it receives several large streams, the principal one of which falls in at the federal city. This river is called the Eastern Branch of the Patowmac; but it scarcely deserves that name, as it extends no more than thirty miles up the country. At its mouth it is nearly as wide as the main branch of the river, and close to the city the water is in many places thirty feet deep. Thousands of vessels might lie here, and sheltered from all danger, arising either from freshes, or from ice upon the breaking up of a severe winter. Thus it appears that the federal city is possessed of one essential qualification for making it a place of importance, namely, a good harbour, from which there is a ready passage to the ocean; it will also appear that it is well situated for trading with the interior parts of the country.

The water in the Patowmac continues nearly the same depth that it

is

is opposite to the city for one mile higher, where a large rock rises up in the middle of the river, on each side of which there are sand-banks. It is said that there is a deep channel between this rock and the shore, but it is so intricate that it would be dangerous to attempt to take a large vessel through it. The navigation, however, is safe to the little falls for river craft, five miles further on; here a canal, which extends two miles and a half, the length of these falls or rapids, has been cut and perfected, which opens a free passage for boats as far as the great falls, which are seven miles from the others. The descent of the river at these is seventy-six feet in a mile and quarter; but it is intended to make another canal here also; a part of it is already cut, and every exertion is making to have the whole completed with expedition *. From hence to Fort Cumberland, one hundred and ninety-one miles above the federal city, there is a free navigation, and boats are continually passing up and down. Beyond this, the passage in the river is obstructed in numerous places; but there is a possibility of opening it, and as soon as the company formed for the purpose have sufficient funds, it will certainly be done. From the place up to which it is asserted the passage of the Patowmac can be opened, the distance across land to Cheat River is only thirty-seven miles. This last river is not at present navigable for more than fifty miles above its mouth; but it can be rendered so for boats, and so far up that there will only be the short portage that I have mentioned between the navigable waters of the two rivers. Things are only great or small by comparison, and a portage of thirty-seven miles will be thought a very short one, when found to be the only interruption to an inland navigation of upwards of two thousand seven hundred miles, of which two thousand one hundred and eighty-three are down stream. Cheat River is two hundred yards wide at its mouth, and falls into the Monongahela, which runs on to Pittsburgh, and there receives the Alleghany River; united they form the Ohio, which after a course of one thousand one hundred and eighty-three miles, during which it receives twenty-four other considerable rivers, some of them six hundred

* For a further description of these Falls see Letter XXXI.

yards wide at the mouth, and navigable for hundreds of miles up the country, empties itself into the Mississippi.

If we trace the water communication in an opposite direction, its prodigious extent will be a still greater subject of astonishment. By ascending the Alleghany River from Pittsburgh as far as French Creek, and afterwards this latter stream, you come to Fort le Bœuf. This place is within fifteen miles of Presqu' Isle, a town situated upon Lake Erie, which has a harbour capable of admitting vessels drawing nine feet water. Or you may get upon the lake by ascending the Great Miami River, which falls into the Ohio five hundred and fifty miles below Pittsburgh. From the Great Miami there is a portage of nine miles only to Sandusky River, which runs into Lake Erie. It is most probable, however, that whatever intercourse there may be between the lakes and the federal city, it will be kept up by means of the Alleghany River and French Creek, rather than by the Miami, as in the last case it would be necessary to combat against the stream of the Ohio for five hundred and fifty miles, a very serious object of consideration.

Lake Erie is three hundred miles in length, and ninety in breadth, and there is a free communication between it, Lake Huron, and Lake Michigan. Lake Huron is upwards of one thousand miles in circumference; Michigan is somewhat smaller. Numbers of large rivers fall into these lakes, after having watered immense tracts of country in various directions. Some of these rivers too are connected in a most singular manner with others, which run in a course totally different. For instance, after passing over the Lakes Erie, St. Clair, and Michigan, to the head of Puan's Bay, you come to Fox River; from hence there is a portage of three miles only to Ouisconsin River, which empties itself into the Mississippi; and in the fall of the year, when the waters are high, and the rivers overflow, it is oftentimes possible to pass from Fox River to Ouisconsin River without ever getting out of a canoe. Thus, excepting a portage of three miles only at the most, it is possible to go the whole way by water from Presqu' Isle, on Lake Erie, to New Orleans, at the mouth of the Mississippi, a distance of near four thousand miles. It would be an endless task to trace the water communication in
* every

every direction. By a portage of nine miles at the Falls of Niagara, the navigation of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence is opened on one side, and at the other that of Lake Superior, by a still shorter portage at the Falls of St. Mary. This last lake, which is at least fifteen hundred miles in circumference, is supplied by no less than forty rivers; and beyond it the water communication extends for hundreds of miles farther on, through the Lake of the Woods to Lake Winnipeg, which is still larger than that of Superior.

But supposing that the immense regions bordering upon these lakes and rivers were already peopled, it is not to be concluded, that because they are connected by water with the Patowmac, the federal city must necessarily be the mart for the various productions of the whole country. There are different sea ports to which the inhabitants will trade, according to the situation of each particular part of the country. Quebec, on the river St. Lawrence, will be one; New York, connected as has been shewn with Lake Ontario, another; and New Orleans, at the mouth of the Mississippi, which by the late treaty with Spain has been made a free port, a third. The federal city will come in also for its share, and what this share will be it now remains to ascertain.

Situated upon the banks of the Patowmac, there are already two towns, and both in the vicinity of the federal city. George Town, which contains about two hundred and fifty houses, and Alexandria, with double the number. The former of these stands about one mile above the city, nearly opposite the large rock in the river, which has been spoken of; the latter, seven miles below it. Considerable quantities of produce are already sent down the Patowmac to each of these towns, and the people in the country are beginning to look thither in return for a part of their supply of foreign manufactures. It has been maintained, therefore, that these two places, already in the practice of trading with the back settlers, will draw the greater part of the country trade to themselves, to the prejudice of the federal city. Both these towns have as great advantages in point of situation as the city; the interests of the three places therefore must unquestionably for a time clash together. It can hardly be doubted, however, but that the
federal

federal city will in a few years completely eclipse the other two. George Town can furnish the people of the back country with foreign manufactures, at second hand only, from Baltimore and Philadelphia; Alexandria imports directly from Europe, but on a very contracted scale: more than two thirds of the goods which are sent from thence to the back country are procured in the same manner as at George Town. In neither place are there merchants with large capitals; nor have the banks, of which there is one in each town, sufficient funds to afford them much assistance; but merchants with large capitals are preparing to move to the city. As soon also as the seat of government is fixed there, the national bank, or at least a large branch of it, will be established at the same time; this circumstance alone will afford the people of the city a decided advantage over those of Alexandria and George Town. Added to all, both these towns are in the territory of Columbia, that is, in the district of ten miles round the city which is to be subject to the laws and regulations of congress alone; it may be, therefore, that encouragements will be held out by congress to those who settle in the city, which will be refused to such as go to any other part of the territory. Although Alexandria and George Town, then, may rival the city while it is in its infancy, yet it cannot be imagined that either of them will be able to cope with it in the end. The probable trade of the city may for this reason be spoken of as if neither of the other places existed.

It may be taken for granted, in the first place, that the whole of the country bordering upon the Patowmac river, and upon those rivers which fall into it, will trade with the city of Washington. In tracing the course of the Patowmac all these rivers were not enumerated; a better idea of them may be had from an inspection of the map. Shenandoah, which is the longest, is not navigable at present; but it has been surveyed, and the company for improving the navigation of the Patowmac have stated that it can be made so for one hundred miles. This would be coming very near to Staunton, behind the Blue Mountains, and which is on the high road from Kentucky, and from the new state of Tennessee, to the city of Philadelphia. Frankfort, the capital of the former of these states, is nearly eight hundred miles from Philadelphia; Knoxville,

ville, that of the other, seven hundred and twenty-eight. Both these towns draw their supplies of foreign manufactures from Philadelphia, and by landcarriage. Supposing then that the navigation of the Shenandoah should be perfected, there would be a saving of four hundred and thirty-six miles of land carriage from going to Washington by the Shenandoah and Patowmac instead of going to Philadelphia; such a saving, it might be imagined, would draw the whole of this trade to Washington. Whether the two western states, Kentucky and Tennessee, will trade to New Orleans or not, at a future day, in preference to any of these places, will be investigated presently.

By means of Cheat and Monongahela rivers it has been shewn, that an opening may be obtained to Pittsburgh. This will be a route of about four hundred and fifty miles from Washington, and in it there will be one portage, from the Patowmac to Cheat River, of thirty-seven miles, and perhaps two or three others; but these will be all very small. It has been ascertained beyond doubt, that the Pittsburgh merchant can have his goods conveyed from New York, by means of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, to Oswego, and from thence by the lakes Ontario and Erie, and the Alleghany River, to Pittsburgh, for one third of the sum which it costs him to transport them by land from Philadelphia. He prefers getting them by land, because the route from New York is uncertain; his goods may be lost, or damaged, or delayed months beyond the time he expects them. From Hudson River to the Mohawk is a portage of ten miles, or thereabouts; and before they can get to Oswego are two or three more. At Oswego the goods must be shipped on board a vessel suitable for navigating the lakes, where they are exposed to tempests and contrary winds. At the Falls of Niagara is a portage of nine miles more; the goods must here be shipped again on board a vessel on Lake Erie, and after arriving at Presqu' Isle must be conveyed over another portage preparatory to their being laden in a boat upon the Alleghany River. The whole of this route, from New York to Pittsburgh, is about eight hundred miles; that from the federal city not much more than half the distance; if therefore the merchant at Pittsburgh can get his goods conveyed from New York
for

for one third of what he pays for the carriage of them by land from Philadelphia, he ought not to pay more than one sixth of the sum for their carriage from the federal city; it is to be concluded, therefore, that he will avail himself of the latter route, as there will be no objection to it on account of any uncertainty in the mode of conveyance, arising from storms and contrary winds.

The people in Pittsburgh, and the western country along the waters of the Ohio, draw their supplies from Philadelphia and Baltimore; but they send the productions of the country, which would be too bulky for land carriage, down the Ohio and Mississippi to New Orleans. From Pittsburgh to New Orleans the distance is two thousand one hundred and eighty-three miles. On an average it takes about twenty-eight days to go down there with the stream; but to return by water it takes from sixty days to three months. The passage back is very laborious as well as tedious; on which account they seldom think of bringing back boats which are sent down from Pittsburgh, but on arriving at New Orleans they are broken up, and the plank sold. These boats are built on the cheapest construction, and expressly for the purpose of going down stream. The men get back the best way they can, generally in ships bound from New Orleans to the southern states, and from thence home by land. Now, if the passage from the Ohio to the Patowmac is opened, it cannot be supposed that the people in Pittsburgh and the vicinity will continue thus to send the produce down to Orleans, from whence they cannot bring any thing in return; they will naturally send to the federal city, from whence they can draw the supplies they are in want of, and which is so much nearer to them, that when the navigation is perfected it will be possible to go there and back again in the same time that it requires merely to go down to New Orleans.

But although the people of that country which borders upon the Ohio and its waters, in the vicinage of Pittsburgh, may have an interest in trading to the federal city, yet those who live towards the mouth of that river will find an interest equally great in trading to New Orleans, for the Ohio River is no less than eleven hundred and eighty three miles in length. How far down upon the Ohio a commercial intercourse will be kept up

with the city, will most probably be determined by other circumstances than that of distance alone; it may depend upon the demand there may be at one or other port for particular articles, &c. &c.; it may also depend upon the season; for at regular periods there are floods in the Mississippi, and also in the Ohio, which make a great difference in the time of ascending and descending these rivers. The floods in the Mississippi are occasioned by the dissolution of the immense bodies of snow and ice accumulated during winter in those northern regions through which the river passes; they are also very regular, beginning in the month of March and subsiding in July. Those in the Ohio take place between Christmas and May; but they are not regular and steady like those of the Mississippi, for the water rises and falls many times in the course of the season. These floods are occasioned by heavy falls of rain in the beginning of winter, as well as by the thawing of the ice.

The Mississippi has a very winding course*, and at every bend there is an eddy in the water. These eddies are always strongest during the inundations, consequently it is then a much less difficult task to ascend the river. With the Ohio, however, it is directly the reverse; there are no eddies in the river; wherefore floods are found to facilitate the passage downwards, but to render that against the stream difficult.

Supposing, however, the season favourable for the navigation of the Mississippi, and also for the navigation of the Ohio, which it might well be at the same time, then Louisville, in Kentucky, is the place through which the line may be drawn that will separate as nearly as possible the country naturally connected with Washington from that appertaining to New Orleans. It takes twenty days, on an average, at the most favourable season, to go from Louisville to New Orleans, and to return,

* In the year 1722, as a party of Canadians were going down the river, they found at one place such a bend in it, that although the distance across land, from one part of the river to the other, was not more perhaps than two hundred yards, yet by water it was no less than forty miles.—The Canadians cut a trench across the

land for curiosity.—The soil bordering upon the Mississippi is remarkably rich and soft, and the current being strong, the river in a short time forced a new passage for itself, and the Canadians took their boat through it. This place is called Pointé Coupée. There are many similar bends in the river at present, but none so great.

forty; which in the whole makes sixty days. From the rapids in the Ohio, close to which Louisville is situated, to Pittsburgh, the distance is seven hundred and three miles; so that at the rate of thirty miles a day, which is a moderate computation, it would require twenty-four days to go there. From Pittsburgh to the Patowmac the distance is one hundred and sixty miles against the stream, which at the same rate, and allowing time for the portages, would take seven days more, and two hundred and ninety miles down the Patowmac, at sixty miles per day, would require five days: this is allowing thirty-five days for going, and computing the time for returning at the same rate, that is thirty miles against the stream, and sixty miles with the stream, each day, it would amount to twenty-five days, which, added to the time of going, makes in the whole fifty-nine days; if the odd day be allowed for contingencies, the passage to and from the two places would then be exactly alike. It is fair then to conclude, that if the demand at the federal city for country produce be equally great as at New Orleans, and there is no reason to say why it should not, the whole of the produce of that country, which lies contiguous to the Ohio, and the rivers falling into it, as far down as Louisville in Kentucky, will be sent to the former of these places. This tract is seven hundred miles in length, and from one hundred to two hundred miles in breadth. Added to this, the whole of that country lying near the Alleghany River, and the streams that run into it, must naturally be supplied from the city; a great part of the country bordering upon Lake Erie, near Presqu' Isle, may likewise be included.

Considering the vastness of the territory, which is thus opened to the federal city by means of a water communication; considering that it is capable, from the fertility of its soil, of maintaining three times the number of inhabitants that are to be found at present in all the United States; and that it is advancing at the present time more rapidly in population than any other part of the whole continent; there is a good foundation for thinking that the federal city, as soon as the navigation is perfected, will increase most rapidly; and that at a future day, if the affairs of the United States go on as prosperously as they have done, it
will

will become the grand emporium of the west, and rival in magnitude and splendor the cities of the old world.

The city is laid out on a neck of land between the forks formed by the eastern and western or main branch of Patowmac River. This neck of land, together with an adjacent territory, which is in the whole ten miles square, was ceded to congress by the states of Maryland and Virginia. The ground on which the city immediately stands was the property of private individuals, who readily relinquished their claim to one half of it in favour of congress, conscious that the value of what was left to them would increase, and amply compensate them for their loss. The profits arising from the sale of that part which has thus been ceded to congress will be sufficient, it is expected, to pay for the public buildings, for the watering of the city, and also for paving and lighting of the streets. The plan of the city was drawn by a Frenchman of the name of L'Enfant, and is on a scale well suited to the extent of the country, one thousand two hundred miles in length, and one thousand in breadth, of which it is to be the metropolis; for the ground already marked out for it is no less than fourteen miles in circumference. The streets run north, south, east, and west; but to prevent that sameness necessarily ensuing from the streets all crossing each other at right angles, a number of avenues are laid out in different parts of the city, which run transversely; and in several places, where these avenues intersect each other, are to be hollow squares. The streets, which cross each other at right angles, are from ninety to one hundred feet wide, the avenues one hundred and sixty feet. One of these is named after each state, and a hollow square also allotted to each, as a suitable place for statues, columns, &c. which, at a future period, the people of any one of these states may wish to erect to the memory of great men that may appear in the country. On a small eminence, due west of the capitol, is to be an equestrian statue of General Washington.

The capitol is now building upon the most elevated spot of ground in the city, which happens to be in a very central situation. From this spot there is a complete view of every part of the city, and also of the adjacent country. In the capitol are to be spacious apartments
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for the accommodation of congress; in it also are to be the principal public offices in the executive department of the government, together with the courts of justice. The plan on which this building is begun is grand and extensive; the expense of building it is estimated at a million of dollars, equal to two hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds sterling.

The house for the residence of the president stands north-west of the capitol, at the distance of about one mile and a half. It is situated upon a rising ground not far from the Patowmac, and commands a most beautiful prospect of the river, and of the rich country beyond it. One hundred acres of ground, towards the river, are left adjoining to the house for pleasure grounds. South of this there is to be a large park or mall, which is to run in an easterly direction from the river to the capitol. The buildings on either side of this mall are all to be elegant in their kind; amongst the number it is proposed to have houses built at the public expense for the accommodation of the foreign ministers, &c. On the eastern branch a large spot is laid out for a marine hospital and gardens. Various other parts are appointed for churches, theatres, colleges, &c. The ground in general, within the limits of the city, is agreeably undulated; but none of the risings are so great as to become objects of inconvenience in a town. The soil is chiefly of a yellowish clay mixed with gravel. There are numbers of excellent springs in the city, and water is readily had in most places by digging wells. Here are two streams likewise, which run through the city, Reedy Branch and Tiber Creek.* The perpendicular height of the source of the latter, above the level of the tide, is two hundred and thirty-six feet.

By the regulations published, it was settled that all the houses should be built of brick or stone; the walls to be thirty feet high, and to be built parallel to the line of the street, but either upon it or

* Upon the granting possession of waste lands to any person, commonly called the *location* of lands, it is usual to give particular names to different spots, and also to the creeks and rivers. On the original location of the ground now allotted for the seat of the federal city, this creek

received the name of Tiber Creek, and the identical spot of ground on which the capitol now stands was called Rome. This anecdote is related by many as a certain prognostic of the future magnificence of this city, which is to be, as it were, a second Rome.

withdrawn:

withdrawn from it, as suited the taste of the builder. However, numbers of wooden habitations have been built; but the different owners have all been cautioned against considering them as permanent. They are to be allowed for a certain term only, and then destroyed. Three commissioners, who reside on the spot, are appointed by the president, with a salary, for the purpose of superintending the public and other buildings, and regulating every thing pertaining to the city.

The only public buildings carrying on as yet, are the president's house, the capitol, and a large hotel. The president's house, which is nearly completed on the outside, is two stories high, and built of free stone. The principal room in it is of an oval form. This is undoubtedly the handsomest building in the country, and the architecture of it is much extolled by the people, who have never seen any thing superior; but it will not bear a critical examination. Many persons find fault with it, as being too large and too splendid for the residence of any one person in a republican country; and certainly it is a ridiculous habitation for a man who receives a salary that amounts to no more than £.5,625 sterling per annum, and in a country where the expences of living are far greater than they are even in London.

The hotel is a large building of brick, ornamented with stone; it stands between the president's house and the capitol. In the beginning of the year 1796, when I last saw it, it was roofed in, and every exertion making to have it finished with the utmost expedition. It is any thing but beautiful. The capitol, at the same period, was raised only a very little way above the foundation.

The stone, which the president's house is built with, and such as will be used for all the public buildings, is very similar in appearance to that found at Portland in England; but I was informed by one of the sculptors, who had frequently worked the Portland stone in England, that it is of a much superior quality, as it will bear to be cut as fine as marble, and is not liable to be injured by rain or frost. On the banks of the Patowmac they have inexhaustible quarries of this stone; good specimens of common marble have also been found; and there is in various

parts

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parts of the river abundance of excellent slate, paving stone, and limestone. Good coal may also be had.

The private houses are all plain buildings; most of them have been built on speculation, and still remain empty. The greatest number, at any one place, is at Green Leaf's Point, on the main river, just above the entrance of the eastern branch. This spot has been looked upon by many as the most convenient one for trade; but others prefer the shore of the eastern branch, on account of the superiority of the harbour, and the great depth of the water near the shore. There are several other favourite situations, the choice of any one of which is a mere matter of speculation at present. Some build near the capitol, as the most convenient place for the residence of members of congress, some near the president's house; others again prefer the west end of the city, in the neighbourhood of George Town, thinking that as trade is already established in that place, it must be from thence that it will extend into the city. Were the houses that have been built situated in one place all together, they would make a very respectable appearance, but scattered about as they are, a spectator can scarcely perceive any thing like a town. Excepting the streets and avenues, and a small part of the ground adjoining the public buildings, the whole place is covered with trees. To be under the necessity of going through a deep wood for one or two miles, perhaps, in order to see a next door neighbour, and in the same city, is a curious, and, I believe, a novel circumstance. The number of inhabitants in the city, in the spring of 1796, amounted to about five thousand, including artificers, who formed by far the largest part of that number. Numbers of strangers are continually passing and repassing through a place which affords such an extensive field for speculation.

In addition to what has already been said upon the subject, I have only to observe, that notwithstanding all that has been done at the city, and the large sums of money which have been expended, there are numbers of people in the United States, living to the north of the Patowmac, particularly in Philadelphia, who are still very adverse to the removal of the seat of government thither, and are doing all in their power to check the progress of the buildings in the city,

and to prevent the congress from meeting there at the appointed time. In the spring of 1796, when I was last on the spot, the building of the capitol was absolutely at a stand for want of money; the public lots were at a very low price, and the commissioners were unwilling to dispose of them; in consequence they made an application to congress, praying the house to guaranty a loan of three hundred thousand dollars, without which they could not go on with the public buildings, except they disposed of the lots to great disadvantage, and to the ultimate injury of the city; so strong, however, was the opposition, that the petition was suffered to lie on the table unattended to for many weeks; nor was the prayer of it complied with until a number of gentlemen, that were very deeply interested in the improvement of the city, went round to the different members, and made interest with them in person to give their assent to the measure. These people, who are opposed to the building of the city of Washington, maintain, that it can never become a town of any importance, and that all such as think to the contrary have been led astray by the representations of a few enthusiastic persons; they go so far even as to assert, that the people to the eastward will never submit to see the seat of government removed so far from them, and the congress assembled in a place little better than a forest, where it will be impossible to procure information upon commercial points; finally, they insist, that if the removal from Philadelphia should take place, a separation of the states will inevitably follow. This is the language held forth; but their opposition in reality arises from that jealousy which narrow minded people in trade are but too apt to entertain of each other when their interests clash together. These people wish to crush the city of Washington while it is yet in its infancy, because they know, that if the seat of government is transferred thither, the place will thrive, and enjoy a considerable portion of that trade which is centered at present in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. It is idle, however, to imagine that this will injure their different towns; on the contrary, although a portion of that trade which they enjoy at present should be drawn from them, yet the increase of population in that part of the country, which they must naturally supply, will be such, that their trade on the whole will,

will, in all probability, be found far more extensive after the federal city is established than it ever was before.

A large majority, however, of the people in the United States is desirous that the removal of the seat of government should take place; and there is little doubt that it will take place at the appointed time. The discontents indeed, which an opposite measure would give rise to in the south could not but be alarming, and if they did not occasion a total separation of the southern from the northern states, yet they would certainly materially destroy that harmony which has hitherto existed between them.

LETTER V.

Some Account of Alexandria.—Mount Vernon, the Seat of General Washington.—Difficulty of finding the Way thither through the Woods.—Description of the Mount, and of the Views from it.—Description of the House and Grounds.—Slaves at Mount Vernon.—Thoughts thereon.—A Person at Mount Vernon to attend to Strangers.—Return to Washington.

MY DEAR SIR,

Washington, December.

FROM Washington I proceeded to Alexandria, seven miles lower down the river, which is one of the neatest towns in the United States. The houses are mostly brick, and many of them are extremely well built. The streets intersect each other at right angles; they are commodious and well paved. Nine miles below this place, on the banks of the Patowmac, stands Mount Vernon, the seat of General Washington; the way to it, however, from Alexandria, by land, is considerably farther, on account of the numerous creeks which fall into the Patowmac, and the mouths of which it is impossible to pass near to.

Very thick woods remain standing within four or five miles of the place; the roads through them are very bad, and so many of them cross one another in different directions, that it is a matter of very great dif-

faculty to find out the right one. I set out from Alexandria with a gentleman who thought himself perfectly well acquainted with the way; had he been so there was ample time to have reached Mount Vernon before the close of the day, but night overtook us wandering about in the woods. We did not perceive the vestige of a human being to set us right, and we were preparing to pass the night in the carriage, when luckily a light appeared at some distance through the trees; it was from a small farm house, the only one in the way for several miles; and having made our way to it, partly in the carriage, partly on foot, we hired a negro for a guide, who conducted us to the place of our destination in about an hour. The next morning I heard of a gentleman, who, a day or two preceding, had been from ten o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon on horseback, unable to find out the place, although within three or four miles of it the whole time.

The Mount is a high part of the bank of the river, which rises very abruptly about two hundred feet above the level of the water. The river before it is three miles wide, and on the opposite side it forms a bay about the same breadth, which extends for a considerable distance up the country. This, at first sight, appears to be a continuation of the river; but the Patowmac takes a very sudden turn to the left, two or three miles above the house, and is quickly lost to the view. Downwards, to the right, there is a prospect of it for twelve miles. The Maryland shore, on the opposite side, is beautifully diversified with hills, which are mostly covered with wood; in many places, however, little patches of cultivated ground appear, ornamented with houses. The scenery altogether is most delightful. The house, which stands about sixty yards from the edge of the Mount, is of wood, cut and painted so as to resemble hewn stone. The rear is towards the river, at which side is a portico of ninety-six feet in length, supported by eight pillars. The front is uniform, and at a distance looks tolerably well. The dwelling house is in the center, and communicates with the wings on either side, by means of covered ways, running in a curved direction. Behind these wings, on the one side, are the different offices belonging to the house, and also to the farm, and on the other, the
cabins

cabins for the SLAVES*. In front, the breadth of the whole building, is a lawn with a gravel walk round it, planted with trees, and separated by hedges on either side from the farm yard and garden. As for the garden, it wears exactly the appearance of a nursery, and with every thing about the place indicates that more attention is paid to profit than to pleasure. The ground in the rear of the house is also laid out in a lawn, and the declivity of the Mount, towards the water, in a deer park.

The rooms in the house are very small, excepting one, which has been built since the close of the war for the purpose of entertainments. All of these are very plainly furnished, and in many of them the furniture is dropping to pieces. Indeed, the close attention which General Washington has ever paid to public affairs having obliged him to reside

* These are amongst the first of the buildings which are seen on coming to Mount Vernon, and it is not without astonishment and regret they are surveyed by the stranger, whose mind has dwelt with admiration upon the inestimable blessings of liberty, whilst approaching the residence of that man who has distinguished himself so gloriously in its cause. Happy would it have been, if the man who stood forth the champion of a nation contending for its freedom, and whose declaration to the whole world was, "That all men were created equal, and that they were endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, amongst the first of which were life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" happy would it have been, if this man could have been the first to wave all interested views, to liberate his own slaves, and thus convince the people he had fought for, that it was their duty, when they had established their own independence, to give freedom to those whom they had themselves held in bondage!!

But material objections, we must suppose, appeared against such a measure, otherwise, doubtless, General Washington would have shewn the glorious example. Perhaps he thought it more for the general good, that the first step for the emancipation of slaves should be taken by the legislative assembly; or perhaps there was reason to apprehend, that the enfranchisement of his

own slaves might be the cause of insurrections amongst others who were not liberated, a matter which could not but be attended with evil consequences in a country where the number of slaves exceeded that of freemen; however, it does not appear that any measures have been pursued, either by private individuals or by the legislature in Virginia, for the abolition of slavery; neither have any steps been taken for the purpose in Maryland, much less in the more southern states; but in Pennsylvania and the rest, laws have passed for its gradual abolition. In these states the number of slaves, it is true, was very small, and the measure was therefore easily carried into effect; in the others then it will require more consideration. The plan, however, which has been adopted for the liberation of the few has succeeded well; why then not try it with a larger number? If it does not answer, still I cannot but suppose that it might be so modified as to be rendered applicable to the enfranchisement of the number of ill fated beings who are enslaved in the southern parts of the country, let it be ever so large. However, that there will be an end to slavery in the United States on some day or other cannot be doubted; negroes will not remain deaf to the inviting call of liberty for ever; and if their avaricious oppressors do not free them from the galling yoke, they will liberate themselves with a vengeance.

principally

principally at Philadelphia, Mount Vernon has consequently suffered very materially. The house and offices, with every other part of the place, are out of repair, and the old part of the building is in such a perishable state, that I have been told he wishes he had pulled it entirely down at first, and built a new house, instead of making any addition to the old one. The grounds in the neighbourhood are cultivated, but the principal farms are at the distance of two or three miles.

As almost every stranger going through the country makes a point of visiting Mount Vernon, a person is kept at the house during General Washington's absence, whose sole business it is to attend to strangers. Immediately on our arrival every care was taken of our horses, beds were prepared, and an excellent supper provided for us, with claret and other wine, &c.

As the season was now too far advanced to see the country to advantage, I proceeded no farther in Virginia than Mount Vernon, but returned again to the city of Washington.

L E T T E R VI.

Arrival at Philadelphia.—Some Observations on the Climate of the Middle States.—Public Carriages prevented from plying between Baltimore and Philadelphia by the Badness of the Roads.—Left Baltimore during Frost.—Met with American Travellers on the Road.—Their Behaviour preparatory to setting off from an Inn.—Arrival on the Banks of the Susquehannab.—Passage of that River when frozen over.—Dangerous Situation of the Passengers.—American Travellers at the Tavern on the opposite Side of the River.—Their noisy Disputations.

MY DEAR SIR,

Philadelphia, February.

AFTER having spent some weeks in Washington, George Town, and Baltimore, I set out for this city, where I arrived four days ago.

The months of October and November are the most agreeable, in the middle and southern states, of any in the year; the changes in the weather are then less frequent, and for the most part the air is temperate and the sky serene. During this year the air was so mild, that when I was at George Town, even as late as the second week in December, it was found pleasant to keep the windows up during dinner time. This, however, was an unusual circumstance.

In Maryland, before December was over, there were a few cold days, and during January we had two or three different falls of snow; but for the most part the weather remained very mild until the latter end of January, when a sharp north-west wind set in. The keenness of this wind in winter is prodigious, and surpasses every thing of the kind which we have an idea of in England. Whenever it blows, during the winter months, a frost immediately takes place. In the course of three days, in the present instance, the Susquehannah and Delaware rivers were frozen over; a fall of snow took place, which remained on the ground about two feet deep, and there was every appearance of a severe and

tedious

tedious winter. Before five days, however, were over, the wind again changed, and so sudden was the thaw that the snow disappeared entirely on the second day, and not a vestige of the frost was to be seen, excepting in the rivers, where large pieces of ice remained floating about.

It was about the middle of December when I reached Baltimore; but I was deterred from going on to Philadelphia until the frosty weather should set in, by the badness of the roads; for they were in such a state, that even the public stages were prevented from plying for the space of ten or twelve days. The frost soon dried them, and rendered them as good as in summer. I set out when it was most severe. At day break, the morning after I left Baltimore, the thermometer, according to Fahrenheit, stood at 7°. I never observed it so low during any other part of the winter.

Several travellers had stopped at the same house that I did the first night I was on the road, and we all breakfasted together preparatory to setting out the next morning. The American travellers, before they pursued their journey, took a hearty draught each, according to custom, of egg-nog, a mixture composed of new milk, eggs, rum, and sugar, beat up together; they appeared to be at no small pains also in fortifying themselves against the severity of the weather with great coats and wrappers over each other, woollen socks and trowsers over their boots, woollen mittens over their gloves, and silk handkerchiefs tied over their ears and mouths, &c. so that nothing could be seen excepting their noses and their eyes. It was absolutely a subject of diversion to me, and to a young gentleman just arrived from the West Indies, who accompanied me from Baltimore, to see the great care with which they wrapped themselves up, for we both found ourselves sufficiently warm in common clothing. It seems, however, to be a matter generally allowed, that strangers, even from the West Indies, unaccustomed to intense cold, do not suffer so much from the severity of the winter, the first year of their arrival in America, as the white people who have been born in the country. Every person that we met upon the road was wrapped up much in the same manner as the travellers who breakfasted with us, and had
silk

filk handkerchiefs tied round their heads, so as to cover their mouths and ears.

About the middle of the day we arrived at the Susquehannah, and, as we expected to find it, the river was frozen entirely over. In what manner we were to get across was now the question. The people at the ferry-house were of opinion that the ice was not sufficiently strong to bear in every part of the river; at the same time they said, it was so very thick near the shores, that it would be impracticable to cut a passage through it before the day was over; however, as a great number of travellers desirous of getting across was collected together, and as all of them were much averse to remaining at the ferry-house till the next morning, by which time it was supposed that the ice would be strong enough to bear in every part, the people were at last over-ruled, and every thing was prepared for cutting a way across the river.

The passengers were about twelve in number, with four horses; the boat's crew consisted of seven blacks; three of whom, with large clubs, stood upon the bow of the boat, and broke the ice, whilst the others, with iron-headed poles, pushed the boat forwards. So very laborious was the task which the men at the bow had to perform, that it was necessary for the others to relieve them every ten minutes. At the end of half an hour their hands, arms, faces, and hats, were glazed entirely over with a thick coat of ice, formed from the water which was dashed up by the reiterated strokes of their clubs. Two hours elapsed before one half of the way was broken; the ice was found much thicker than had been imagined; the clubs were shivered to pieces; the men were quite exhausted; and having suffered the boat to remain stationary for a minute or two in a part where the ice was remarkably thick, it was frozen up, so that the utmost exertions of the crew and passengers united were unable to extricate it. In this predicament a council was held; it was impossible to move either backward or forward; the boat was half a mile from the shore; no one would attempt to walk there on the ice; to remain all night in the boat would be death. Luckily I had a pair of pistols in my holsters, and having fired

a few signals, the attention of the people on shore was attracted towards us, and a small batteau, which is a light boat with a flat bottom, was dispatched for our relief. This was not sent, however, for the purpose of bringing a single person back again, but to assist us in getting to the opposite shore. It was slipped along a-head of the large boat, and two or three men having stepped into it, rocked it about from side to side until the ice was sufficiently broken for the large boat to follow. The batteau was now in the water, and the men seating themselves as much as possible towards the stern, by so doing raised the bow of it considerably above the ice; by means of boat hooks it was then pulled on the ice again, and by rocking it about as before a passage was as easily opened. In this manner we got on, and at the end of three hours and ten minutes found ourselves again upon dry land, fully prepared for enjoying the pleasures of a bright fireside and a good dinner. The people at the tavern had seen us coming across, and had accordingly prepared for our reception; and as each individual thought he had travelled quite far enough that day, the passengers remained together till the next morning.

At the American taverns, as I before mentioned, all sorts of people, just as they happen to arrive, are crammed together into the one room, where they must reconcile themselves to each other the best way they can. On the present occasion, the company consisted of about thirteen people, amongst whom were some eminent lawyers from Virginia and the southward, together with a judge of the supreme court, who were going to Philadelphia against the approaching sessions: it was not, however, till after I quitted their company that I heard who they were; for these kind of gentlemen in America are so very plain, both in their appearance and manners, that a stranger would not suspect that they were persons of the consequence which they really are in the country. There were also in the company two or three of the neighbouring farmers, boorish, ignorant, and obtrusive fellows. It is scarcely possible for a dozen Americans to sit together without quarrelling about politics, and the British treaty, which had just been ratified, now gave rise to a
long

long and acrimonious debate. The farmers were of one opinion, and gabbled away for a long time; the lawyers and the judge were of another, and in turns they rose to answer their opponents with all the power of rhetoric which they possessed. Neither party could say any thing to change the sentiments of the other one; the noisy contest lasted till late at night, when getting heartily tired they withdrew, not to their respective chambers, but to the general one that held five or six beds, and in which they laid down in pairs. Here the conversation was again revived, and pursued with as much noise as below, till at last sleep closed their eyes, and happily their mouths at the same time; for could they have talked in their sleep, I verily believe they would have prated on until morning. Thanks to our stars! my friend and I got the only two-bedded room in the house to ourselves. The next morning I left the banks of the Susquehannah, and the succeeding day reached Philadelphia.

L E T T E R VII.

Philadelphia gayer in the Winter than at any other Season.—Celebration in that City of General Washington's Birth Day.—Some Account of General Washington's Person and of his Character.—Americans dissatisfied with his Conduct as President.—A Spirit of Dissatisfaction common amongst them.

MY DEAR SIR,

Philadelphia, February.

PHILADELPHIA now wears a very different aspect to what it did when I landed there in the month of November. Both congress and the state assembly are sitting, as well as the supreme federal court. The city is full of strangers; the theatres are open; and a variety of public and private amusements are going forward. On General Washing-

ton's birth day, which was a few days ago, this city was unusually gay * ; every person of consequence in it, Quakers alone excepted, made it a point

* On this day General Washington terminated his sixty-fourth year; but though not an unhealthy man, he seemed considerably older. The innumerable vexations he has met with in his different public capacities have very sensibly impaired the vigour of his constitution, and given him an aged appearance. There is a very material difference, however, in his locks when seen in private and when he appears in public full dress; in the latter case the hand of art makes up for the ravages of time, and he seems many years younger.

Few persons find themselves for the first time in the presence of General Washington, a man so renowned in the present day for his wisdom and moderation, and whose name will be transmitted with such honour to posterity, without being impressed with a certain degree of veneration and awe; nor do these emotions subside on a closer acquaintance; on the contrary, his person and deportment are such as rather tend to augment them. There is something very austere in his countenance, and in his manners he is uncommonly reserved. I have heard some officers, that served immediately under his command during the American war, say, that they never saw him smile during all the time that they were with him. No man has ever yet been connected with him by the reciprocal and unconstrained ties of friendship; and but a few can boast even of having been on an easy and familiar footing with him.

The height of his person is about five feet eleven; his chest is full; and his limbs, though rather slender, well shaped and muscular. His head is small, in which respect he resembles the make of a great number of his countrymen. His eyes are of a light grey colour; and, in proportion to the length of his face, his nose is long. Mr. Stewart, the eminent portrait painter, told me, that there are features in his face totally different from what he ever observed in that of any other human being; the sockets for the eyes, for instance, are larger than what he ever met with before, and the upper part of the nose broader. All his features, he observed, were indicative of the strongest and most ungovernable passions,

and had he been born in the forests, it was his opinion that he would have been the fiercest man amongst the savage tribes. In this Mr. Stewart has given a proof of his great discernment and intimate knowledge of the human countenance; for although General Washington has been extolled for his great moderation and calmness, during the very trying situations in which he has so often been placed, yet those who have been acquainted with him the longest and most intimately say, that he is by nature a man of a fierce and irritable disposition, but that, like Socrates, his judgment and great self-command have always made him appear a man of a different cast in the eyes of the world. He speaks with great diffidence, and sometimes hesitates for a word; but it is always to find one particularly well adapted to his meaning. His language is manly and expressive. At levee, his discourse with strangers turns principally upon the subject of America; and if they have been through any remarkable places, his conversation is free and particularly interesting, as he is intimately acquainted with every part of the country. He is much more open and free in his behaviour at levee than in private, and in the company of ladies still more so than when solely with men.

General Washington gives no public dinners or other entertainments, except to those who are in diplomatic capacities, and to a few families on terms of intimacy with Mrs. Washington. Strangers, with whom he wishes to have some conversation about agriculture, or any such subject, are sometimes invited to tea. This by many is attributed to his saving disposition; but it is more just to ascribe it to his prudence and foresight; for as the salary of the president, as I have before observed, is very small, and totally inadequate by itself to support an expensive style of life, were he to give numerous and splendid entertainments the same might possibly be expected from subsequent presidents, who, if their private fortunes were not considerable, would be unable to live in the same style, and might be exposed to many ill-natured observations, from the relinquishment of what the people had been accustomed

point to visit the General on this day. As early as eleven o'clock in the morning he was prepared to receive them, and the audience lasted till three in the afternoon. The society of the Cincinnati, the clergy, the officers of the militia, and several others, who formed a distinct body of citizens, came by themselves separately. The foreign ministers attended in their richest dresses and most splendid equipages. Two large parlours were open for the reception of the gentlemen, the windows of one of which towards the street were crowded with spectators on the outside. The sideboard was furnished with cake and wines, whereof the visitors partook. I never observed so much cheerfulness before in the countenance of General Washington; but it was impossible for him to remain insensible to the attention and the compliments paid to him on this occasion.

The ladies of the city, equally attentive, paid their respects to Mrs. Washington, who received them in the drawing room up stairs. After having visited the General, most of the gentlemen also waited upon her. A public ball and supper terminated the rejoicings of the day.

Not one town of any importance was there in the whole union, where some meeting did not take place in honour of this day; yet singular as it may appear, there are people in the country, Americans too, foremost in boasting to other nations of that constitution which has been raised for them by his valour and wisdom, who are either so insensible to his merit, or so totally devoid of every generous sentiment, that they can refuse to join in commendations of those talents to which they are so much indebted; indeed to such a length has this perverse spirit been carried, that I have myself seen numbers of men, in all other points men of respectability, that have peremptorily refused even to pay him the small compliment of drinking to his health after dinner; it is true in-

customed to; it is most likely also that General Washington has been actuated by these motives, because in his private capacity at Mount Vernon every stranger meets with a hospitable reception from him.

General Washington's self moderation is well known to the world already. It is a remark-

able circumstance, which redounds to his eternal honour, that while president of the United States he never appointed one of his own relations to any office of trust or emolument, although he has several that are men of abilities, and well qualified to fill the most important stations in the government.

deed,

deed, that they qualify their conduct partly by asserting, that it is only as president of the United States, and not as General Washington, that they have a dislike to him; but this is only a mean subterfuge, which they are forced to have recourse to, lest their conduct should appear too strongly marked with ingratitude. During the war there were many, and not loyalists either, who were doing all in their power to remove him from that command whereby he so eminently distinguished himself. It is the spirit of dissatisfaction which forms a leading trait in the character of the Americans as a people, which produces this malevolence at present, just as it did formerly; and if their public affairs were regulated by a person sent from heaven, I firmly believe his acts, instead of meeting with universal approbation, would by many be considered as deceitful and flagitious.

L E T T E R VIII.

Singular Mildness of the Winter of 1795-6.—Set out for Lancaster.—Turnpike Road between that Place and Philadelphia.—Summary View of the State of Pennsylvania.—Description of the Farms between Lancaster and Philadelphia.—The Farmers live in a penurious Style.—Greatly inferior to English Farmers.—Bad Taverns on this Road.—Waggons and Waggoners.—Customs of the latter.—Description of Lancaster.—Lately made the Seat of the State Government.—Manufactures carried on there.—Rifle Guns—Great Dexterity with which the Americans use them.—Anecdote of Two Virginian Soldiers belonging to a Rifle Regiment.

MY DEAR SIR,

Lancaster, March.

THIS winter has proved one of the mildest that has ever been experienced in the country. During the last month there were two or three slight falls of snow, but in no one instance did it remain two days on the ground. A smart frost sat in the first week of this month, and snow fell to the depth of six or seven inches; but on the third day

a sudden thaw came on, and it quickly disappeared: since then the weather has remained uncommonly mild. The season being so fine, and so favourable for travelling, I was unwilling to stay at Philadelphia; accordingly I set out for this place on horseback, and arrived here last night, at the end of the second day's journey. From hence I intend to proceed towards the south, to meet the approaching spring.

The road between Philadelphia and Lancaster has lately undergone a thorough repair, and tolls are levied upon it, to keep it in order, under the direction of a company. Whenever these tolls afford a profit of more than fifteen per cent. on the stock originally subscribed for making the road, the company is bound, by an act of assembly, to lessen them. This is the first attempt to have a turnpike road in Pennsylvania, and it is by no means relished by the people at large, particularly by the wagoners, who go in great numbers by this route to Philadelphia from the back parts of the state.

The state of Pennsylvania lies nearly in the form of a parallelogram, whose greatest length is from east to west. This parallelogram is crossed diagonally from the north-east to the south-west by several different ridges of mountains, which are about one hundred miles in breadth. The valleys between these ridges contain a rich black soil, and in the south-west and north-east angles also, at the outside of the mountains, the soil is very good. The northern parts of this state are but very thinly inhabited as yet, but towards the south, the whole way from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, it is well settled. The most populous part of it is the south-east corner, which lies between the mountains and the river Delaware; through this part the turnpike road passes which leads to Lancaster. The country on each side of the road is pleasingly diversified with hill and dale. Cultivation is chiefly confined to the low lands, which are the richest; the hills are all left covered with wood, and afford a pleasing variety to the eye. The further you go from Philadelphia the more fertile is the country, and the more picturesque at the same time.

On the whole road from Philadelphia to Lancaster there are not any two dwellings standing together, excepting at a small place called Downing's

ing's Town, which lies about midway; numbers of farm houses, however, are scattered over the country as far as the eye can reach. These houses are mostly built of stone, and are about as good as those usually met with on an arable farm of fifty acres in a well cultivated part of England. The farms attached to these houses contain about two hundred acres each, and are, with a few exceptions only, the property of the persons who cultivate them. In the cultivated parts of Pennsylvania the farms rarely exceed three hundred acres; towards the north, however, where the settlements are but few, large tracts of land are in the hands of individuals, who are speculators and land jobbers. Adjoining to the houses there is generally a peach or an apple orchard. With the fruit they make cyder and brandy; the people have a method also of drying the peaches and apples, after having sliced them, in the sun, and thus cured they last all the year round. They are used for pies and puddings, but they have a very acrid taste, and scarcely any of the original flavour of the fruit. The peaches in their best state are but indifferent, being small and dry; I never eat any that were good, excepting such as were raised with care in gardens. It is said that the climate is so much altered that they will not grow now as they formerly did. In April and May nightly frosts are very common, which were totally unknown formerly, and frequently the peaches are entirely blighted. Gardens are very rare in the country parts of Pennsylvania, for the farmers think the labour which they require does not afford sufficient profit; in the neighbourhood of towns, however, they are common, and the culinary vegetables raised in them are equal to any of their respective kinds in the world, *potatoes* excepted, which generally have an earthy unpleasent taste.

Though the south-east part of the state of Pennsylvania is better cultivated than any other part of America, yet the style of farming is on the whole very slovenly. I venture, indeed, to assert, that the farmers do not raise more on their two hundred acres than a skilful farmer in Norfolk, Suffolk, or Essex, or in any well cultivated part of England, would do on fifty acres of good land there. The farmer also, who rents fifty acres of arable land in England, lives far more comfortably in every respect

respect than the farmer in Pennsylvania, or in any other of the middle states, who owns two hundred acres of land, his house will be found better furnished, and his table more plentifully covered. That the farmers do not live better in America, I hardly know whether to ascribe to their love of making money, or to their real indifference about better fare; perhaps it may be owing, in some measure, to both; certain it is, however, that their mode of living is most wretched.

The taverns throughout this part of the country are kept by farmers, and they are all very indifferent. If the traveller can procure a few eggs with a little bacon he ought to rest satisfied; it is twenty to one that a bit of fresh meat is to be had, or any salted meat except pork. Vegetables seem also to be very scarce, and when you do get any, they generally consist of turnips, or turnip tops boiled by way of greens. The bread is heavy and sour, though they have as fine flour as any in the world; this is owing to their method of making of it; they raise it with what they call *sots*; hops and water boiled together. No dependence is to be placed upon getting a man at these taverns to rub down your horse, or even to give him his food, frequently therefore you will have to do every thing of the kind for yourself if you do not travel with a servant; and indeed, even where men are kept for the purpose of attending to travellers, which at some of the taverns is the case, they are so sullen and disobliging that you feel inclined to do every thing with your own hands rather than be indebted to them for their assistance: they always appear doubtful whether they should do any thing for you or not, and to be reasoning within themselves, whether it is not too great a departure from the rules of equality to take the horse of another man, and whether it would not be a pleasing sight to see a gentleman strip off his coat, and go to work for himself; nor will money make them alter their conduct; civility, as I before said, is not to be purchased at any expence in America; nevertheless the people will pocket your money with the utmost readiness, though without thanking you for it. Of all beings on the earth, Americans are the most interested and covetous.

It is scarcely possible to go one mile on this road without meeting numbers of waggons passing and repassing between the back parts of

the state and Philadelphia. These waggons are commonly drawn by four or five horses, four of which are yoked in pairs. The waggons are heavy, the horses small, and the driver unmerciful; the consequence of which is, that in every team, nearly, there is a horse either lame or blind. The Pennsylvanians are notorious for the bad care which they take of their horses. Excepting the night be tempestuous, the waggoners never put their horses under shelter, and then it is only under a shed; each tavern is usually provided with a large one for the purpose. Market or High-street, in Philadelphia, the street by which these people come into the town, is always crowded with waggons and horses, that are left standing there all night. This is to save money; the expence of putting them into a stable would be too great, in the opinion of these people. Food for the horses is always carried in the waggon, and the moment they stop they are unyoked, and fed whilst they are warm. By this treatment half the poor animals are foundered. The horses are fed out of a large trough carried for the purpose, and fixed on the pole of the waggon by means of iron pins.

Lancaster is the largest inland town in North America, and contains about nine hundred houses, built chiefly of brick and stone, together with six churches, a court house, and gaol. Of the churches, there is one respectively for German Lutherans, German Calvinists, Moravians, English Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics. The streets are laid out regularly, and cross each other at right angles.

An act of assembly has been passed, for making this town the seat of the state government instead of Philadelphia, and the assembly was to meet in the year 1797. This circumstance is much in favour of the improvement of the town. The Philadelphians, inimical to the measure, talked of it much in the same style that they do now of the removal of the seat of the federal government, saying, that it must be again changed to Philadelphia; but the necessity of having the seat of the legislature as central as possible in each state is obvious, and if a change does take place again, it is most likely that it will only be to remove the seat still farther from Philadelphia. On the same principle, the assembly of Virginia

ginia meets now at Richmond instead of Williamsburgh, and that of New York state at Albany instead of the city of New York.

Several different kinds of articles are manufactured at Lancaster by German mechanics, individually, principally for the people of the town and the neighbourhood. Rifled barrel guns however are to be excepted, which, although not as handsome as those imported from England, are more esteemed by the hunters, and are sent to every part of the country.

The rifled barrel guns, commonly used in America, are nearly of the length of a musket, and carry leaden balls from the size of thirty to sixty in the pound. Some hunters prefer those of a small bore, because they require but little ammunition; others prefer such as have a wide bore, because the wound which they inflict is more certainly attended with death; the wound, however, made by a ball discharged from one of these guns is always very dangerous. The inside of the barrel is fluted, and the grooves run in a spiral direction from one end of the barrel to the other, consequently when the ball comes out it has a whirling motion round its own axis, at the same time that it moves forward, and when it enters into the body of an animal, it tears up the flesh in a dreadful manner. The best of powder is chosen for a rifled barrel gun, and after a proper portion of it is put down the barrel, the ball is inclosed in a small bit of linen rag, well greased at the outside, and then forced down with a thick ramrod. The grease and the bits of rag, which are called patches, are carried in a little box at the but-end of the gun. The best rifles are furnished with two triggers, one of which being first pulled sets the other, that is, alters the spring, so that it will yield even to the slight touch of a feather. They are also furnished with double sights along the barrel, as fine as those of a surveying instrument. An experienced marksman, with one of these guns, will hit an object not larger than a crown piece, to a certainty, at the distance of one hundred yards. Two men belonging to the Virginia rifle regiment, a large division of which was quartered in this town during the war, had such a dependance on each other's dexterity, that the one would hold a piece of board, not more than nine inches square, between his knees, whilst

the other shot at it with a ball at the distance of one hundred paces. This they used to do alternately, for the amusement of the town's people, as often as they were called upon. Numbers of people in Lancaster can vouch for the truth of this fact. Were I, however, to tell you all the stories I have heard of the performances of riflemen, you would think the people were most abominably addicted to lying. A rifle gun will not carry shot, nor will it carry a ball much farther than one hundred yards with certainty.

LETTER IX.

Number of Germans in the Neighbourhood of York and Lancaster.—How brought over.—White Slave Trade.—Cruelty frequently practised in the carrying it on.—Character of the German Settlers contrasted with that of the Americans.—Passage of the Susquehannab between York and Lancaster.—Great Beauty of the Prospects along the River.—Description of York.—Courts of Justice there.—Of the Pennsylvanian System of Judicature.

MY DEAR SIR,

York, March.

I Arrived at this place, which is about twenty miles distant from Lancaster, yesterday. The inhabitants of this town, as well as those of Lancaster and of the adjoining country, consist principally of Dutch and German emigrants, and their descendants. Great numbers of these people emigrate to America every year, and the importation of them forms a very considerable branch of commerce. They are for the most part brought from the Hanse Towns and from Rotterdam. The vessels sail thither from America, laden with different kinds of produce, and the masters of them, on arriving there, entice on board as many of these people as they can persuade to leave their native country, without demanding any money for their passage. When the vessel arrives in America, an advertisement is put into the paper, mentioning the different kinds

kinds of men on board, whether smiths, tailors, carpenters, labourers, or the like, and the people that are in want of such men flock down to the vessel; these poor Germans are then sold to the highest bidder, and the captain of the vessel, or the ship holder, puts the money into his pocket*.

There have been many very shocking instances of cruelty in the carrying on of this trade, vulgarly called "The white slave trade." I shall tell you but of one. While the yellow fever was raging in Philadelphia in the year 1793, at which time few vessels would venture to approach nearer to the city than Fort Mifflin, four miles below it, a captain in the trade arrived in the river, and hearing that such was the fatal nature of the infection, that a sufficient number of nurses could not be procured to attend the sick for any sum whatever, he conceived the philanthropic idea of supplying this deficiency from amongst his passengers; accordingly he boldly sailed up to the city, and advertised his cargo for sale: "A few healthy servants, generally between seventeen and eighteen years of age, are just arrived in the brig ———, their times will be disposed of by applying on board." The cargo, as you may suppose, did not remain long unsold. This anecdote was communicated to me by a gentleman who has the original advertisement in his possession.

When I tell you that people are sold in this manner, it is not to be understood that they are sold for ever, but only for a certain number of years; for two, three, four, or five years, according to their respective merits. A good mechanic, that understands a particular kind of trade, for which men are much wanted in America, has to serve a shorter time than a mere labourer, as more money will be given for his time, and the expence of his passage does not exceed that of any other man. During their servitude, these people are liable to be resold at the caprice of their masters; they are as much under dominion as negro slaves, and if they attempt to run away, they may be imprisoned like felons. The laws respecting "redemptioners," so are the men called that are brought

* Thousands of people were brought from the north of Ireland in the same way before the war with France.

over in this manner, were grounded on those formed for the English convicts before the revolution, and they are very severe. The Germans are a quiet, sober, and industrious set of people, and are most valuable citizens. They generally settle a good many together in one place, and, as may be supposed, in consequence keep up many of the customs of their native country as well as their own language. In Lancaster and the neighbourhood German is the prevailing language, and numbers of people living there are ignorant of any other. The Germans are some of the best farmers in the United States, and they seldom are to be found but where the land is particularly good; wherever they settle they build churches, and are wonderfully attentive to the duties of religion. In these and many other respects the Germans and their descendants differ widely from the Americans, that is, from the descendants of the English, Scotch, Irish, and other nations, who, from having lived in the country for many generations, and from having mingled together, now form one people, whose manners and habits are very much the same.

The Germans are a plodding race of men, wholly intent upon their own business, and indifferent about that of others: a stranger is never molested as he passes through their settlements with inquisitive and idle questions. On arriving amongst the Americans*, however, a stranger must tell where he came from, where he is going, what his name is, what his business is, and until he gratifies their curiosity on these points, and many others of equal importance, he is never suffered to remain quiet for a moment. In a tavern he must satisfy every fresh set that comes in, in the same manner, or involve himself in a quarrel, especially if it is found out that he is not a native, which it does not require much sagacity to discover.

The Germans give themselves but little trouble about politics; they elect their representatives to serve in congress and the state assemblies, and satisfied that deserving men have been chosen by the people at large, they trust that these men do what is best for the public good, and therefore

* In speaking of the Americans here, and in the following lines, it is those of the lower and middling classes of the people which I allude to, such as are met with in the country parts of Pennsylvania,

abide patiently by their decisions; they revere the constitution, conscious that they live happily under it, and express no wishes to have it altered. The Americans, however, are for ever cavilling at some of the public measures; something or other is always wrong, and they never appear perfectly satisfied. If any great measure is before congress for discussion, seemingly distrustful of the abilities or the integrity of the men they have elected, they meet together in their towns or districts, canvass the matter themselves, and then send forward instructions to their representatives how to act. They never consider that any important question is more likely to meet with a fair discussion in an assembly where able men are collected together from all parts of the states than in an obscure corner, where a few individuals are assembled, who have no opportunity of getting general information on the subject. Party spirit is for ever creating dissensions amongst them, and one man is continually endeavouring to obtrude his political creed upon another. If it is found out that a stranger is from Great Britain or Ireland, they immediately begin to boast of their own constitution and freedom, and give him to understand, that they think every Englishman a slave, because he submits to be called a subject. Their opinions are for the most part crude and dogmatical, and principally borrowed from newspapers, which are wretchedly compiled from the pamphlets of the day, having read a few of which, they think themselves arrived at the summit of intellectual excellence, and qualified for making the deepest political researches.

The Germans, as I have said, are fond of settling near each other: when the young men of a family are grown up, they generally endeavour to get a piece of land in the neighbourhood of their relations, and by their industry soon make it valuable; the American, on the contrary, is of a roving disposition, and wholly regardless of the ties of consanguinity; he takes his wife with him, goes to a distant part of the country, and buries himself in the woods, hundreds of miles distant from the rest of his family, never perhaps to see them again. In the back parts of the country you always meet numbers of men prowling about to try and buy cheap land; having found what they like, they immediately remove; nor having once removed, are these people satisfied; restless and discontented

tented with what they possess, they are for ever changing. It is scarcely possible in any part of the continent to find a man, amongst the middling and lower classes of Americans, who has not changed his farm and his residence many different times. Thus it is, that though there are not more than four millions of people in the United States, yet they are scattered from the confines of Canada to the farthest extremity of Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the banks of the Mississippi. Thousands of acres of waste land are annually taken up in unhealthy and unfruitful parts of the country, notwithstanding that the best settled and healthy parts of the middle states would maintain five times the number of inhabitants that they do at present. The American, however, does not change about from place to place in this manner merely to gratify a wandering disposition; in every change he hopes to make money. By the desire of making money, both the Germans and Americans of every class and description are actuated in all their movements; self-interest is always uppermost in their thoughts; it is the idol which they worship, and at its shrine thousands and thousands would be found, in all parts of the country, ready to make a sacrifice of every noble and generous sentiment that can adorn the human mind.

In coming to this place from Lancaster I crossed the Susquehannah River, which runs nearly midway between the two towns, at the small village of Columbia, as better boats are kept there than at either of the ferries higher up or lower down the river. The Susquehannah is here somewhat more than a quarter of a mile wide, and for a considerable distance, both above and below the ferry, it abounds with islands and large rocks, over which fast the water runs with prodigious velocity: the roaring noise that it makes is heard a great way off. The banks rise very boldly on each side, and are thickly wooded; the islands also are covered with small trees, which, interspersed with the rocks, produce a very fine effect. The scenery in every point of view is wild and romantic. In crossing the river it is necessary to row up against the stream under the shore, and then to strike over to the opposite side, under the shelter of some of the largest islands. As these rapids continue for many miles, they totally impede the navigation, excepting

cepting when there are floods in the river, at which time large rafts may be conducted down the stream, carrying several hundred barrels of flour. It is said that the river could be rendered navigable in this neighbourhood, but the expense of such an undertaking would be enormous, and there is little likelihood indeed that it will ever be attempted, as the Pennsylvanians are already engaged in cutting a canal below Harrisburgh, which will connect the navigable part of the river with the Schuylkill, and also another canal from the Schuylkill to the Delaware, by means of which a vent will be opened for the produce of the country bordering upon the Susquehannah at Philadelphia. These canals would have been finished by this time if the subscribers had all paid their respective shares, but at present they are almost at a stand for want of money.

The quantity of wild fowl that is seen on every part of the Susquehannah is immense. Throughout America the wild fowl is excellent and plentiful; but there is one duck in particular found on this river, and also on Patowmac and James rivers, which surpasses all others: it is called the white or canvas-back duck, from the feathers between the wings being somewhat of the colour of canvas. This duck is held in such estimation in America, that it is sent frequently as a present for hundreds of miles—indeed it would be a dainty morsel for the greatest epicure in any country.

York contains about five hundred houses and six churches, and is much such another town as Lancaster. It is inhabited by Germans, by whom the same manufactures are carried on as at Lancaster.

The courts of common pleas, and those of general quarter sessions, were holding when I reached this place; I found it difficult, therefore, at first, to procure accommodation, but at last I got admission in a house principally taken up by lawyers. To behold the strange assemblage of persons that was brought together this morning in the one poor apartment which was allotted to all the lodgers was really a subject of diversion. Here one lawyer had his clients in a corner of the room; there another had his; a third was shaving; a fourth powdering his own hair; a fifth noting his brief; and the table standing in the middle of

the room, between a clamorous set of old men on one side, and three or four women in tears on the other, I and the rest of the company, who were not lawyers, were left to eat our breakfast.

On entering into the courts a stranger is apt to smile at the grotesque appearance of the judges who preside in them, and at their manners on the bench; but this smile must be suppressed when it is recollected, that there is no country, perhaps, in the world, where justice is more impartially administered, or more easily obtained by those who have been injured. The judges in the country parts of Pennsylvania are no more than plain farmers, who from their infancy have been accustomed to little else than following the plough. The laws expressly declare that there must be, at least, three judges resident in every county; now as the salary allowed is but a mere trifle, no lawyer would accept of the office, which of course must be filled from amongst the inhabitants*, who are all in a happy state of mediocrity, and on a perfect equality with each other. The district judge, however, who presides in the district or circuit, has a larger salary, and is a man of a different cast. The district or circuit consists of at least three, but not more than six counties. The county judges, which I have mentioned, are “judges of the court of common pleas, and by virtue of their offices also justices of oyer and terminer, and general gaol delivery, for the trial of capital and other offenders therein.” Any two judges compose the court of quarter sessions. Under certain regulations, established by law, the accused party has the power of removing the proceedings into the supreme court, which has jurisdiction over every part of the state. This short account of the courts relates only to Pennsylvania: every state in the union has a separate code of laws for itself, and a distinct judicature.

* This is also the case in Philadelphia, where we find practising physicians and surgeons sitting on the bench as judges in a court of justice.

L E T T E R X.

Of the Country near York.—Of the Soil of the Country on each Side of the Blue Mountains.—Frederic-town.—Change in the Inhabitants and in the Country as you proceed towards the Sea.—Numbers of Slaves.—Tobacco chiefly cultivated.—Inquisitiveness of the People at the Taverns.—Observations thereon.—Description of the Great Falls of the Patowmac River.—George Town.—Of the Country between that Place and Hoe's Ferry.—Poisonous Vines.—Port Tobacco.—Wretched Appearance of the Country bordering upon the Ferry.—Slaves neglected.—Passage of the Patowmac very dangerous.—Fresh Water Oysters.—Landed on a deserted Part of the Virginian Shore.—Great Hospitality of the Virginians.

Stratford, March.

IN the neighbourhood of York and Lancaster, the soil consists of a rich, brown, loamy earth; and if you proceed in a south westerly course, parallel to the Blue Mountains, you meet with the same kind of soil as far as Frederic in Maryland. Here it changes gradually to a deep reddish colour, and continues much the same along the eastern side of the mountains, all the way down to North Carolina. On crossing over the mountains, however, directly from Frederic, the same fertile brown soil, which is common in the neighbourhood of York and Lancaster, is again met with, and it is found throughout the Shenandoah Valley, and as far down as the Carolinas, on the west side of the mountains.

Between York and Frederic in Maryland there are two or three small towns; viz. Hanover, Peterburgh, and Woodsburg, but there is nothing worthy of mention in any of them. Frederic contains about seven hundred houses and five churches, two of which are for German Lutherans, one for Presbyterians, one for Calvinists, and one for Baptists. It is a flourishing town, and carries on a brisk inland trade. The arsenal of the state of Maryland is placed here, the situation being secure and central.

From Frederic I proceeded in a southerly course through Montgomery county in Maryland. In this direction the soil changes to a yellowish sort of clay mixed with gravel, and continues much the same until you come to the federal city, beyond which, as I have before mentioned, it becomes more and more sandy as you approach the sea coast. The change in the face of the country after leaving Frederic is gradual, but at the end of a day's journey a striking difference is perceptible. Instead of well cultivated fields, green with wheat, such as are met with along that rich track which runs contiguous to the mountains, large pieces of land, which have been worn out with the culture of tobacco, are here seen lying waste, with scarcely an herb to cover them. Instead of the furrows of the plough, the marks of the hoe appear on the ground; the fields are overspread with little hillocks for the reception of tobacco plants, and the eye is assailed in every direction with the unpleasent sight of gangs of male and female slaves toiling under the harsh commands of the overseer. The difference in the manners of the inhabitants is also great. Instead of being amongst the phlegmatic Germans, a traveller finds himself again in the midst of an inquisitive and prying set of Americans, to gratify whose curiosity it is always necessary to devote a certain portion of time after alighting at a tavern.

A traveller on arriving in America may possibly imagine, that it is the desire of obtaining useful information which leads the people, wherever he stops, to accost him; and that the particular enquiries respecting the object of his pursuits, the place of his abode, and that of his destination, &c. are made to prepare the way for questions of a more general nature, and for conversation that may be attended with some amusement to him; he therefore readily answers them, hoping in return to gain information about the country through which he passes; but when it is found that these questions are asked merely through an idle and impertinent curiosity, and that by far the greater part of the people who ask them are ignorant, boorish fellows; when it is found that those who can keep up some little conversation immediately begin to talk upon politics, and to abuse every country excepting their own; when, lastly, it is found that the people scarcely ever give satisfactory answers at first

to the enquiries which are made by a stranger respecting their country, but always hesitate, as if suspicious that he was asking these questions to procure some local information, in order to enable him to overreach them in a bargain, or to make some speculation in land to their injury; the traveller then loses all patience at this disagreeable and prying disposition, and feels disposed to turn from them with disgust; still, however, if he wishes to go through the country peaceably, and without quarrelling at every place where he stops, it is absolutely necessary to answer some few of their questions.

Having followed the high way as far as Montgomery court-house, which is about thirty miles from Frederic, I turned off along a bye road running through the woods, in order to see the great falls of Patowmac River. The view of them from the Maryland shore is very pleasing, but not so much so as that from the opposite side. Having reached the river therefore close to the falls, I rode along through the woods, with which its banks are covered, for some distance higher up, to a place where there was a ferry, and where I crossed into Virginia. From the place where I landed to the falls, which is a distance of about three miles, there is a wild romantic path running along the margin of the river, and winding at the same time round the base of a high hill covered with lofty trees and rocks. Near to the shore, almost the whole way, there are clusters of small islands covered with trees, which suddenly opposing the rapid course of the stream, form very dangerous eddies, in which boats are frequently lost when navigated by men who are not active and careful. On the shore prodigious heaps of white sand are washed up by the waves, and in many places the path is rendered almost impassable by piles of large trees, which have been brought down from the upper country by floods, and drifted together.

The river, at the ferry which I mentioned, is about one mile and a quarter wide, and it continues much the same breadth as far as the falls, where it is considerably contracted and confined in its channel by immense rocks on either side. There also its course is very suddenly altered, so much so indeed, that below the falls for a short distance it runs in an opposite direction from what it did above, but soon after it re-
fumes

sumes its former course. The water does not descend perpendicularly, excepting in one part close to the Virginian shore, where the height is about thirty feet, but comes rushing down with tremendous impetuosity over a ledge of rocks in several different falls. The best view of the cataract is from the top of a pile of rocks about sixty feet above the level of the water, and which, owing to the bend in the river, is situated nearly opposite to the falls. The river comes from the right, then gradually turning, precipitates itself down the falls, and winds along at the foot of the rocks on which you stand with great velocity. The rocks are of a slate colour, and lie in strata; the surface of them in many places is glossy and sparkling.

From hence I followed the course of the river downwards as far as George Town, where I again crossed it; and after passing through the federal city, proceeded along the Maryland shore of the river to Piscatoway, and afterwards to Port Tobacco, two small towns situated on creeks of their own name, which run into the Patowmac. In the neighbourhood of Piscatoway there are several very fine views of the Virginian shore; Mount Vernon in particular appears to great advantage.

I observed here great numbers of the poisonous vines which grow about the large trees, and are extremely like the common grape vines. If handled in the morning, when the branches are moist with the dew, they infallibly raise blisters on the hands, which it is sometimes difficult to get rid of. Port Tobacco contains about eighty houses, most of which are of wood, and very poor. There is a large English episcopalian church on the border of the town, built of stone, which formerly was an ornament to the place, but it is now entirely out of repair; the windows are all broken, and the road is carried through the church-yard over the graves, the paling that surrounded it having been torn down. Near the town is Mount Misery, towards the top of which is a medicinal spring, remarkable in summer for the coldness of the water.

From Port Tobacco to Hoe's Ferry, on the Patowmac River, the country is flat and sandy, and wears a most dreary aspect. Nothing is to be seen here for miles together but extensive plains, that have been

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worn out by the culture of tobacco, overgrown with yellow sedge,* and interspersed with groves of pine and cedar trees, the dark green colour of which forms a curious contrast with the yellow of the sedge. In the midst of these plains are the remains of several good houses, which shew that the country was once very different to what it is now. These were the houses, most probably, of people who originally settled in Maryland with Lord Baltimore, but which have now been suffered to go to decay, as the land around them is worn out, and the people find it more to their interest to remove to another part of the country, and clear a piece of rich land, than to attempt to reclaim these exhausted plains. In consequence of this, the country in many of the lower parts of Maryland appears as if it had been deserted by one half of its inhabitants.

Such a number of roads in different directions cross over these flats, upon none of which there is any thing like a direction post, and the face of a human being is so rarely met with, that it is scarcely possible for a traveller to find out the direct way at once. Instead of twelve miles, the distance by the straight road from Port Tobacco to the ferry, my horse had certainly travelled twice the number before we got there. The ferry-house was one of those old dilapidated mansions that formerly was the residence perhaps of some wealthy planter, and at the time when the fields yielded their rich crops of tobacco would have afforded some refreshment to the weary traveller; but in the state I found it, it was the picture of wretchedness and poverty. After having waited for two hours and a half for my breakfast, the most I could procure was two eggs, a pint of milk, and a bit of cake bread, scarcely as big as my hand, and but little better than dough. This I had also to divide with my servant, who came to inform me, that there was absolutely nothing to eat in the house but what had been brought to me. I could not but mention this circumstance to several persons when I got

* This sedge, as it is called, is a sort of coarse grass, so hard that cattle will not eat it, which springs up spontaneously, in this part of the country, on the ground that has been left waste; it commonly grows about two feet high; towards

winter it turns yellow, and remains standing until the ensuing summer, when a new growth displaces that of the former year. At its first springing up it is of a bright green colour.

into Virginia, and many of them informed me, that they had experienced the same treatment themselves at this house; yet this house had the name of a tavern. What the white people who inhabited it lived upon I could not discover, but it was evident that they took care of themselves. As for the poor slaves, however, of which there were many in the huts adjoining the tavern, they had a most wretched appearance, and seemed to be half starved. The men and women were covered with rags, and the children were running about stark naked.

After having got into the ferry boat, the man of the house, as if conscious that he had given me very bad fare, told me that there was a bank of oysters in the river, close to which it was necessary to pass, and that if I chose to stop the men would procure abundance of them for me. The curiosity of getting oysters in fresh water tempted me stop, and the men got near a bushel of them in a very few minutes. These oysters are extremely good when cooked, but very disagreeable eaten raw; indeed all the oysters found in America, not excepting what are taken at New York, so close to the ocean, are, in the opinion of most Europeans, very indifferent and tasteless when raw. The Americans, on their part, find still greater fault with our oysters, which they say are not fit to be eat in any shape, because they taste of copper. The Patowmac, as well as the rest of the rivers in Virginia, abounds with excellent fish of many different kinds, as sturgeon, shad, roach, herrings, &c. which form a very principal part of the food of the people living in the neighbourhood of them.

The river at the ferry is about three miles wide, and with particular winds the waves rise very high; in these cases they always tie the horses, for fear of accidents, before they set out; indeed, with the small open boats which they make use of, it is what ought always to be done, for in this country gusts of wind rise suddenly, and frequently when they are not at all expected; having omitted to take this precaution, the boat was on the point of being overfet two or three different times as I crossed over.

On the Virginian shore, opposite to the ferry house from whence I sailed, there are several large creeks, which fall into the Patowmac, and

it is impossible to cross these on horseback, without riding thirty or forty miles up a sandy uninteresting part of the country to the fords or bridges. As I wished to go beyond these creeks, I therefore hired the boatmen to carry me ten miles down the Patowmac River in the ferry boat, past the mouths of them all; this they accordingly did, and in the afternoon I landed on the beach, not a little pleased at finding that I had reached the shore without having been under the necessity of swimming any part of the way, for during the last hour the horses had not remained quiet for two minutes together, and on one or two occasions, having got both to the same side of the boat, the trim of it was very nearly destroyed, and it was with the utmost difficulty that we prevented it from being overfet.

The part of the country where I landed appeared to be a perfect wilderness; no traces of a road or pathway were visible on the loose white sand, and the cedar and pine trees grew so closely together on all sides, that it was scarcely possible to see farther forward in any direction than one hundred yards. Taking a course, however, as nearly as I could guess, in a direct line from the river up the country, at the end of an hour I came upon a narrow road, which led to a large old brick house, somewhat similar to those I had met with on the Maryland shore. On enquiring here, from two blacks for a tavern, I was told there was no such thing in this part of the country; that in the house before me no part of the family was at home; but that if I rode on a little farther, I should come to some other gentlemen's houses, where I could readily get accommodation. In the course of five or six miles I saw several more of the same sort of old brick houses, and the evening now drawing towards a close, I began to feel the necessity of going to some one of them. I had seen no person for several miles to tell me who any of the owners were, and I was considering within myself which house I should visit, when a lively old negro, mounted on a little horse, came galloping after me. On applying to him for information on the subject, he took great pains to assure me, that I should be well received at any one of the houses I might stop at; he said there were no taverns in this part of the country, and strongly recommended me to proceed under his guidance to

his master's house, which was but a mile farther on; "Maffer will be so glad to see to you," added he, "nothing can be like." Having been apprized beforehand, that it was customary in Virginia for a traveller to go without ceremony to a gentleman's house, when there was no tavern at hand, I accordingly took the negro's advice, and rode to the dwelling of his master, made him acquainted with my situation, and begged I might be allowed to put my horses in his stable for the night. The reception, however, which this gentleman gave me, differed so materially from what I had been led to expect, that I was happy at hearing from him, that there was a *good* tavern at the distance of two miles. I apologised for the liberty I had taken, and made the best of my way to it. Instead of two miles, however, this tavern proved to be about three times as far off, and when I came to it, I found it to be a most wretched hovel; but any place was preferable to the house of a man so thoroughly devoid of hospitality.

The next day I arrived at this place, the residence of a gentleman, who, when at Philadelphia, had invited me to pass some time with him whenever I visited Virginia. Some of the neighbouring gentlemen yesterday dined here together, and having related to them my adventures on arriving in Virginia, the whole company expressed the greatest astonishment, and assured me that it was never known before, in that part of Virginia, that a stranger had been suffered to go away from a gentleman's house, where he stopped, to a tavern, although it was close by. Every one seemed eager to know the name of the person who had given me such a reception, and begged me to tell it. I did so, and the Virginians were satisfied, for the person was a — Scotchman, and had, it seems, removed from some town or other to the plantation on which I found him but a short time before. The Virginians in the lower parts of the state are celebrated for their politeness and hospitality towards strangers; beyond the mountains there is a great difference in the manners of the inhabitants.

L E T T E R XI.

Of the Northern Neck of Virginia.—First settled by the English.—Houses built by them remaining.—Disparity of Condition amongst the Inhabitants.—Estates worked by Negroes.—Condition of the Slaves.—Worse in the Carolinas.—Lands worn out by Cultivation of Tobacco.—Mode of cultivating and curing Tobacco.—Houses in Virginia.—Those of Wood preferred.—Lower Classes of People in Virginia.—Their unhealthy Appearance.

Stratford, April.

THIS part of Virginia, situated between the Patowmac and Rappahannock rivers, is called the Northern Neck, and is remarkable for having been the birth place of many of the principal characters, which distinguished themselves in America, during the war, by their great talents, General Washington at their head. It was here that numbers of English gentlemen, who migrated when Virginia was a young colony, fixed their residence; and several of the houses which they built, exactly similar to the old manor houses in England, are still remaining, particularly in the counties of Richmond and Westmoreland. Some of these, like the houses in Maryland, are quite in ruins; others are kept in good repair by the present occupiers, who live in a style which approaches nearer to that of English country gentlemen than what is to be met with any where else on the continent, some other parts of Virginia alone excepted.

Amongst the inhabitants here and in the lower parts of Virginia there is a disparity unknown elsewhere in America, excepting in the large towns. Instead of the lands being equally divided, immense estates are held by a few individuals, who derive large incomes from them, whilst the generality of the people are but in a state of mediocrity. Most of the men also, who possess these large estates, having received liberal educations, which the others have not, the distinction between them is still more observable. I met with several in this neighbourhood, who had

been brought up at the public schools and universities in England, where, until the unfortunate war which separated the colonies from her, the young men were very generally educated; and even still a few are sent there, as the veneration for that country from whence their ancestors came, and with which they were themselves for a long time afterwards connected, is by no means yet extinguished.

There is by no means so great a disparity now, however, amongst the inhabitants of the Northern Neck, as was formerly, and it is becoming less and less perceptible every year, many of the large estates having been divided in consequence of the removal of the proprietors to other parts of the country that were more healthy, and many more on account of the present laws of Virginia, which do not permit any one son to inherit the landed estates of the father to the exclusion of his brothers.

The principal planters in Virginia have nearly every thing they can want on their own estates. Amongst their slaves are found tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, smiths, turners, wheelwrights, weavers, tanners, &c. I have seen patterns of excellent coarse woollen cloth made in the country by slaves, and a variety of cotton manufactures, amongst the rest good nankeen. Cotton grows here extremely well; the plants are often killed by frost in winter, but they always produce abundantly the first year in which they are sown. The cotton from which nankeen is made is of a particular kind, naturally of a yellowish colour.

The large estates are managed by stewards and overseers, the proprietors just amusing themselves with seeing what is going forward. The work is done wholly by slaves, whose numbers are in this part of the country more than double that of white persons. The slaves on the large plantations are in general very well provided for, and treated with mildness. During three months nearly, that I was in Virginia, but two or three instances of ill treatment towards them came under my observation. Their quarters, the name whereby their habitations are called, are usually situated one or two hundred yards from the dwelling house, which gives the appearance of a village to the residence of every planter in Virginia; when the estate, however, is so large as to be divided into
several

several farms, then separate quarters are attached to the house of the overseer on each farm. Adjoining their little habitations, the slaves commonly have small gardens and yards for poultry, which are all their own property; they have ample time to attend to their own concerns, and their gardens are generally found well stocked, and their flocks of poultry numerous. Besides the food they raise for themselves, they are allowed liberal rations of salted pork and Indian corn. Many of their little huts are comfortably furnished, and they are themselves, in general, extremely well clothed. In short, their condition is by no means so wretched as might be imagined. They are forced to work certain hours in the day; but in return they are clothed, dieted, and lodged comfortably, and saved all anxiety about provision for their offspring. Still, however, let the condition of a slave be made ever so comfortable, as long as he is conscious of being the property of another man, who has it in his power to dispose of him according to the dictates of caprice; as long as he hears people around him talking of the blessings of liberty, and considers that he is in a state of bondage, it is not to be supposed that he can feel equally happy with the freeman. It is immaterial under what form slavery presents itself, whenever it appears there is ample cause for humanity to weep at the sight, and to lament that men can be found so forgetful of their own situations, as to live regardless of the feelings of their fellow creatures.

With respect to the policy of holding slaves in any country, on account of the depravity of morals which it necessarily occasions, besides the many other evil consequences attendant upon it, so much has already been said by others, that it is needless here to make any comments on the subject.

The number of the slaves increases most rapidly, so that there is scarcely any estate but what is overstocked. This is a circumstance complained of by every planter, as the maintenance of more than are requisite for the culture of the estate is attended with great expence. Motives of humanity deter them from selling the poor creatures, or turning them adrift from the spot where they have been born and brought up, in the midst of friends and relations.

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What I have here said, respecting the condition and treatment of slaves; appertains, it must be remembered, to those only who are upon the large plantations in Virginia; the lot of such as are unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the lower class of white people, and of hard task-masters in the towns, is very different. In the Carolinas and Georgia again, slavery presents itself in very different colours from what it does even in its worst form in Virginia. I am told, that it is no uncommon thing there, to see gangs of negroes staked at a horse race, and to see these unfortunate beings bandied about from one set of drunken gamblers to another for days together. How much to be deprecated are the laws which suffer such abuses to exist! yet these are the laws enacted by people who boast of their love of liberty and independence, and who presume to say, that it is in the breasts of Americans alone that the blessings of freedom are held in just estimation.

The Northern Neck, with the exception of some few spots only, is flat and sandy, and abounds with pine and cedar trees. Some parts of it are well cultivated, and afford good crops; but these are so intermixed with extensive tracts of waste land, worn out by the culture of tobacco, and which are almost destitute of verdure, that on the whole the country has the appearance of barrenness.

This is the case wherever tobacco has been made the principal object of cultivation. It is not, however, so much owing to the great share of nutriment which the tobacco plant requires, that the land is impoverished, as to the particular mode of cultivating it, which renders it necessary for people to be continually walking between the plants from the moment they are set out, so that the ground about each plant is left exposed to the burning rays of the sun all the summer, and becomes at the end of the season a hard beaten pathway. A ruinous system has prevailed also of working the same piece of land year after year, till it was totally exhausted; after this it was left neglected, and a fresh piece of land was cleared, that always produced good crops for one or two seasons; but this in its turn was worn out and afterwards left waste. Many of the planters are at length beginning to see the absurdity of wearing out their lands in this manner, and now raise only one crop of tobacco upon a
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piece of new land, then they sow wheat for two years, and afterwards clover. They put on from twelve to fifteen hundred bushels of manure per acre at first, which is found to be sufficient both for the tobacco and wheat; the latter is produced at the rate of about twenty bushels per acre.

In some parts of Virginia, the lands left waste in this manner throw up, in a very short time, a spontaneous growth of pines and cedars; in which case, being shaded from the powerful influence of the sun, they recover their former fertility at the end of fifteen or twenty years; but in other parts many years elapse before any verdure appears upon them. The trees springing up in this spontaneous manner usually grow very close to each other; they attain the height of fifteen or twenty feet, perhaps, in the same number of years; there is, however, but very little sap in them, and in a short time after they are cut down they decay.

Tobacco is raised and manufactured in the following manner: When the spring is so far advanced that every apprehension of the return of frost is banished, a convenient spot of ground is chosen, from twenty to one hundred feet square, whereon they burn prodigious piles of wood, in order to destroy the weeds and insects. The warm ashes are then dug in with the earth, and the seed, which is black, and remarkably small, sown. The whole is next covered over with bushes, to prevent birds and flies, if possible, from getting to it; but this, in general, proves very ineffectual; for the plant scarcely appears above ground, when it is attacked by a large black fly of the beetle kind, which destroys the leaves. Persons are repeatedly sent to pick off these flies; but sometimes, notwithstanding all their attention, so much mischief is done that very few plants are left alive. As I passed through Virginia, I heard universal complaints of the depredations they had committed; the beds were almost wholly destroyed.

As soon as the young plants are sufficiently grown, which is generally in the beginning of May, they are transplanted into fields, and set out in hillocks, at the distance of three or four feet from each other. Here again they have other enemies to contend with; the roots are attacked

by worms, and between the leaves and stem different flies deposit their eggs, to the infallible ruin of the plant if not quickly removed; it is absolutely necessary, therefore, as I have said, for persons to be continually walking between the plants in order to watch, and also to trim them at the proper periods. The tops are broken off at a certain height, and the suckers, which spring out between the leaves, are removed as soon as discovered. According also to the particular kind of tobacco which the planter wishes to have, the lower, the middle, or the upper leaves are suffered to remain. The lower leaves grow the largest; they are also milder, and more inclined to a yellow colour than those growing towards the top of the plant.

When arrived at maturity, which is generally about the month of August, the plants are cut down, pegs are driven into the stems, and they are hung up in large houses, built for the purpose, to dry. If the weather is not favourable for drying the leaves, fires are then lighted, and the smoke is suffered to circulate between the plants; this is also sometimes done to give the leaves a browner colour than what they have naturally. After this they are tied up in bundles of six or seven leaves each, and thrown in heaps to sweat; then they are again dried. When sufficiently cured, the bundles are packed, by means of presses, in hogheads capable of containing eight hundred or one thousand pounds weight. The planters send the tobacco thus packed to the nearest shipping town, where, before exportation, it is examined by an inspector appointed for the purpose, who gives a certificate to warrant the shipping of it if it is found and merchantable, if not, he sends it back to the owner. Some of the warehouses to which the tobacco is sent for inspection are very extensive, and skilful merchants can accurately tell the quality of the tobacco from knowing the warehouse at which it has been inspected*. Where the roads are good and dry, tobacco is

* By the laws of America, no produce which has undergone any sort of manufacture, as flour, potash, tobacco, rice, &c. can be exported without inspection, nor even put into a boat to be conveyed down a river to a sea port. The inspectors are all sworn, are paid by the states, and

not suffered to take fees from any individual. This is a most politic measure; for as none but the best of each article can be sent out of the country, it enhances the price of American produce in foreign markets, and increases the demand.

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sent to the warehouses in a singular manner: Two large pins of wood are driven into either end of the hoghead by way of axles; a pair of shafts, made for the purpose, are attached to these, and the hoghead is thus drawn along by one or two horses; when this is done great care is taken to have the hoops very strong.

Tobacco is not near so much cultivated now as it was formerly, the great demand for wheat having induced most of the planters to raise that grain in preference. Those who raise tobacco and Indian corn are called planters, and those who cultivate small grain, farmers.

Though many of the houses in the Northern Neck are built, as I have said, of brick and stone, in the style of the old English manor houses, yet the greater number there, and throughout Virginia, are of wood; amongst which are all those that have been built of late years. This is chiefly owing to a prevailing, though absurd opinion, that wooden houses are the healthiest, because the inside walls never appear damp, like those of brick and stone, in rainy weather. In front of every house is a porch or pent-house, commonly extending the whole length of the building; very often there is one also in the rear, and sometimes all round. These porches afford an agreeable shade from the sun during summer. The hall, or saloon as it is called, is always a favourite apartment, during the hot weather, in a Virginian house, on account of the draught of air through it, and it is usually furnished similar to a parlour, with sofas, &c.

The common people in the lower parts of Virginia have very fallow complexions, owing to the burning rays of the sun in summer, and the bilious complaints to which they are subject in the fall of the year. The women are far from being comely, and the dresses, which they wear out of doors to guard them from the sun, make them appear still more ugly than nature has formed them. There is a kind of bonnet very commonly worn, which, in particular, disfigures them amazingly; it is made with a caul, fitting close on the back part of the head, and a front stiffened with small pieces of cane, which projects nearly two feet from the head in a horizontal direction. To look at a person

at one side, it is necessary for a woman wearing a bonnet of this kind to turn her whole body round.

In the upper parts of the country, towards the mountains, the women are totally different, having a healthy comely appearance.

L E T T E R XII.

Town of Tappahannock.—Rappahannock River.—Sharks found in it.—Country bordering upon Urbanna.—Fires common in the Woods.—Manner of stopping their dreadful Progress.—Mode of getting Turpentine from Trees.—Gloucester.—York Town.—Remains of the Fortifications erected here during the American War.—Houses shattered by Balls still remaining.—Cave in the Bank of the River.—Williamsburgh.—State House in Ruins.—Statue of Lord Bottetourt.—College of William and Mary.—Condition of the Students.

Williamsburgh, April.

SINCE I last wrote, the greater part of my time has been spent at the houses of different gentlemen in the Northern Neck. Four days ago I crossed the Rappahannock River, which bounds the Northern Neck on one side, to a small town called Tappahannock, or Hobb's Hole, containing about one hundred houses. Before the war this town was in a much more flourishing state than at present; that unfortunate contest ruined the trade of this little place, as it did that of most of the sea-port towns in Virginia. The Rappahannock is about three quarters of a mile wide opposite the town, which is seventy miles above its mouth. Sharks are very often seen in this river. What is very remarkable, the fish are all found on the side of the river next to the town.

From Tappahannock to Urbanna, another small town on the Rappahannock River, situated about twenty-five miles lower down, the country wears but a poor aspect.

The road, which is level and very sandy, runs through woods for miles together. The habitations that are seen from it are but few, and they are of the poorest description. The woods chiefly consist of black oak, pine, and cedar trees, which grow on land of the worst quality only.

On this road there are many creeks to be crossed, which empty themselves into the Rappahannock River, in the neighbourhood of which there are extensive marshes, that render the adjacent country, as may be supposed, very unhealthy. Such a quantity of snipes are seen in these marshes continually, that it would be hardly possible to fire a gun in a horizontal direction, and not kill many at one shot.

As I passed through this part of the country, I observed many traces of fires in the woods, which are frequent, it seems, in the spring of the year. They usually proceed from the negligence of people who are burning brushwood to clear the lands, and considering how often they happen, it is wonderful that they are not attended with more serious consequences than commonly follow. I was a witness myself to one of these fires, that happened in the Northern Neck. The day had been remarkably serene, and appearing favourable for the purpose, large quantities of brushwood had been fired in different places; in the afternoon, however, it became sultry, and streams of hot air were perceptible now and then, the usual tokens of a gulf. About five o'clock, the horizon towards the north became dark, and a terrible whirlwind arose. I was standing with some gentlemen on an eminence at the time, and perceived it gradually advancing. It carried with it a cloud of dust, dried leaves, and pieces of rotten wood, and in many places, as it came along, it levelled the fence rails and unroofed the sheds for the cattle. We made every endeavour, but in vain, to get to a place of shelter; in the course of two minutes the whirlwind overtook us; the shock was violent; it was hardly possible to stand, and difficult to breathe; the whirlwind passed over in about three minutes, but a storm, accompanied by heavy thunder and lightning, succeeded, which lasted for more than half an hour. On looking round immediately after the whirlwind had passed, a prodigious column of fire now appeared in a part of the wood

where some brushwood had been burning, in many places the flames rose considerably above the summit of the trees, which were of a large growth. It was a tremendous, and at the same time sublime sight. The negroes on the surrounding plantations were all assembled with their hoes, and watches were stationed at every corner to give the alarm if the fire appeared elsewhere, lest the conflagration should become general. To one plantation a spark was carried by the wind more than half a mile; happily, however, a torrent of rain in a short time afterwards came pouring down, and enabled the people to extinguish the flames in every quarter.

When these fires do not receive a timely check, they sometimes increase to a most alarming height; and if the grass and dead leaves happen to be very dry, and the wind brisk, proceed with so great velocity that the swiftest runners are often overtaken in endeavouring to escape from the flames. Indeed I have met with people, on whose veracity the greatest dependance might be placed, that have assured me they have found it a difficult task, at times, to get out of the reach of them, though mounted on good horses.

There is but one mode of stopping a fire of this kind, which makes such a rapid progress along the ground. A number of other fires are kindled at some distance a head of that which they wish to extinguish, so as to form a line across the course, which, from the direction of the wind, it is likely to take. These are carefully watched by a sufficient number of men furnished with hoes and rakes, and they are prevented from spreading, except on that side which is towards the large fire, a matter easily accomplished when attended to in the beginning. Thus the fires in a few minutes meet, and of consequence they must cease, as there is nothing left to feed them, the grass and leaves being burnt on all sides. In general there is but very little brushwood in the woods of America, so that these fires chiefly run along the ground; the trees, however, are often scorched, but it is very rare for any of them to be entirely consumed.

The country between Urbanna and Gloucester, a town situated upon York River, is neither so sandy nor so flat as that bordering upon
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the Rappahannock. The trees, chiefly pines, are of a very large size, and afford abundance of turpentine, which is extracted from them in great quantities by the inhabitants, principally, however, for home consumption. The turpentine is got by cutting a large gash in the tree, and setting a trough underneath to receive the resinous matter distilled from the wound. The trees thus drained last but a short time after they are cut down. In this neighbourhood there are numbers of ponds or small lakes, surrounded by woods, along some of which the views are very pleasing. From most of them are falls of water into some creek or river, which afford excellent seats for mills.

Gloucester contains only ten or twelve houses; it is situated on a neck of land nearly opposite to the town of York, which is at the other side of the river. There are remains here of one or two redoubts thrown up during the war. The river between the two places is about one mile and a half wide, and affords four fathom and a half of water.

The town of York consists of about seventy houses, an episcopalian church, and a gaol. It is not now more than one third of the size it was before the war, and it does not appear likely soon to recover its former flourishing state. Great quantities of tobacco were formerly inspected here; very little, however, is now raised in the neighbourhood, the people having got into a habit of cultivating wheat in preference. The little that is sent for inspection is reckoned to be of the very best quality, and is all engaged for the London market.

York is remarkable for having been the place where Lord Cornwallis surrendered his army to the combined forces of the Americans and French. A few of the redoubts, which were erected by each army, are still remaining, but the principal fortifications are almost quite obliterated; the plough has passed over some of them, and groves of pine trees sprung up about others, though, during the siege, every tree near the town was destroyed. The first and second parallels can just be traced, when pointed out by a person acquainted with them in a more perfect state.

In the town the houses bear evident marks of the siege, and the inhabitants

habitants will not, on any account, suffer the holes perforated by the cannon balls to be repaired on the outside. There is one house in particular, which stands in the skirt of the town, that is in a most shattered condition. It was the habitation of a Mr. Neilson, a secretary under the regal government, and was made the head quarters of Lord Cornwallis when he first came to the town; but it stood so much exposed, and afforded so good a mark to the enemy, that he was soon forced to quit it. Neilson, however, it seems, was determined to stay there till the last, and absolutely remained till his negro servant, the only person that would live with him in such a house, had his brains dashed out by a cannon shot while he stood by his side; he then thought it time to retire, but the house was still continually fired at, as if it had been head quarters. The walls and roof are pierced in innumerable places, and at one corner a large piece of the wall is torn away; in this state, however, it is still inhabited in one room by some person or other equally fanciful as the old secretary. There are trenches thrown up round it, and on every side are deep hollows made by the bombs that fell near it. Till within a year or two the broken shells themselves remained; but the New England men that traded to York finding they would sell well as old iron, dug them up, and carried them away in their ships.

The banks of the river, where the town stands, are high and inaccessible, excepting in a few places; the principal part of the town is built on the top of them; a few fishing huts and storehouses merely stand at the bottom. A cave is shewn here in the banks, described by the people as having been the place of head-quarters during the siege, after the cannonade of the enemy became warm; but in reality it was formed and hung with green baize for a lady, either the wife or acquaintance of an officer, who was terrified with the idea of remaining in the town, and died of fright after her removal down to the cave.

Twelve miles from York, to the westward, stands Williamsburgh, formerly the seat of government in Virginia. Richmond was fixed upon during the war as a more secure place, being farther removed from the sea coast, and not so much exposed to depredations if an enemy were to land unexpectedly. Richmond also had the advantage of being situated at the
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head of a navigable river, and was therefore likely to increase to a size which the other never could attain. It is wonderful, indeed, what could have induced people to fix upon the spot where Williamsburgh stands for a town, in the middle of a plain, and one mile and a half removed from any navigable stream, when there were so many noble rivers in the neighbourhood.

The town consists of one principal street, and two others which run parallel to it. At one end of the main street stands the college, and at the other end the old capitol or statehouse, a capacious building of brick, now crumbling to pieces from negligence. The houses around it are mostly uninhabited, and present a melancholy picture. In the hall of the capitol stands a maimed statue of lord Botetourt, one of the regal governors of Virginia, erected at the public expence, in memory of his lordship's equitable and popular administration. During the war, when party rage was at its highest pitch, and every thing pertaining to royalty obnoxious, the head and one arm of the statue were knocked off; it now remains quite exposed, and is more and more defaced every day. Whether the motto, "*Resurgo rege favente*," inscribed under the coat of arms, did or did not help to bring upon it its present fate, I cannot pretend to say; as it is, it certainly remains a monument of the extinction of monarchical power in America.

The college of William and Mary, as it is still called, stands at the opposite end of the main street; it is a heavy pile, which bears, as Mr. Jefferson, I think, says, "a very close resemblance to a large brick kiln, excepting that it has a roof." The students were about thirty in number when I was there: from their appearance one would imagine that the seminary ought rather to be termed a grammar school than a college; yet I understand the visitors, since the present revolution, finding it full of young boys just learning the rudiments of Greek and Latin, a circumstance which consequently deterred others more advanced from going there, dropped the professorships for these two languages, and established others in their place. The professorships, as they now stand, are for law, medicine, natural and moral philosophy, mathematics, and modern languages. The bishop of Virginia is president of the college, and
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has apartments in the buildings. Half a dozen or more of the students, the eldest about twelve years old, dined at his table one day that I was there; some were without shoes or stockings, others without coats. During dinner they constantly rose to help themselves at the side board. A couple of dishes of salted meat, and some oyster soup, formed the whole of the dinner. I only mention this, as it may convey some little idea of American colleges and American dignitaries.

The episcopalian church, the only one in the place, stands in the middle of the main street; it is much out of repair. On either side of it is an extensive green, surrounded with neat looking houses, which bring to mind an English village.

The town contains about twelve hundred inhabitants, and the society in it is thought to be more extensive and more genteel at the same time than what is to be met with in any other place of its size in America. No manufactures are carried on here, and scarcely any trade.

There is an hospital here for lunatics, but it does not appear to be well regulated,

L E T T E R XIII.

Hampton.—Ferry to Norfolk.—Danger in crossing the numerous Ferries in Virginia.—Norfolk.—Laws of Virginia injurious to the Trading Interest.—Streets narrow and dirty in Norfolk.—Yellow Fever there.—Observations on this Disorder.—Violent Party Spirit amongst the Inhabitants.—Few Churches in Virginia.—Several in Ruins.—Private Grave Yards.

Norfolk, April.

FROM Williamsburgh to Hampton the country is flat and uninteresting. Hampton is a small town, situated at the head of a bay, near the mouth of James River, which contains about thirty houses and an episcopalian church. A few sea boats are annually built here; and corn and lumber are exported annually to the value of about forty-two thousand dollars. It is a dirty disagreeable place, always infested by a shocking stench from a muddy shore when the tide is out.

From this town there is a regular ferry to Norfolk, across Hampton roads, eighteen miles over. I was forced to leave my horses here behind me for several days, as all the flats belonging to the place had been sent up a creek some miles for staves, &c. and they had no other method of getting horses into the ferry boats, which were too large to come close into shore, excepting by carrying them out in these flats, and then making them leap on board. It is a most irksome piece of business to cross the ferries in Virginia; there is not one in six where the boats are good and well manned, and it is necessary to employ great circumspection in order to guard against accidents, which are but too common. As I passed along I heard of numberless recent instances of horses being drowned, killed, and having their legs broken, by getting in and out of the boats.

Norfolk stands nearly at the mouth of the eastern branch of Elizabeth River, the most southern of those which empty themselves into the Chesapeak Bay. It is the largest commercial town in Virginia, and

carries on a flourishing trade to the West Indies. The exports consist principally of tobacco, flour, and corn, and various kinds of lumber; of the latter it derives an inexhaustible supply from the Dismal Swamp, immediately in the neighbourhood.

Norfolk would be a place of much greater trade than it is at present, were it not for the impolicy of some laws which have existed in the state of Virginia. One of these laws, so injurious to commerce, was passed during the war. By this law it was enacted, that all merchants and planters in Virginia, who owed money to British merchants, should be exonerated from their debts if they paid the money due into the public treasury instead of sending it to Great Britain; and all such as stood indebted were invited to come forward, and give their money in this manner, towards the support of the contest in which America was then engaged.

The treasury at first did not become much richer in consequence of this law; for the Virginian debtor, individually, could gain nothing by paying the money that he owed into the treasury, as he had to pay the full sum which was due to the British merchant; on the contrary, he might lose considerably: his credit would be ruined in the eyes of the British merchant by such a measure, and it would be a great impediment to the renewal of a commercial intercourse between them after the conclusion of the war.

However, when the continental paper money became so much depreciated, that one hundred paper dollars were not worth one in silver, many of the people, who stood deeply indebted to the merchants in Great Britain, began to look upon the measure in a different point of view; they now saw a positive advantage in paying their debts into the treasury in these paper dollars, which were a legal tender; accordingly they did so, and in consequence were exonerated of their debts by the laws of their country, though in reality they had not paid more than one hundredth part of them. In vain did the British merchant sue for his money when hostilities were terminated; he could obtain no redress in any court of justice in Virginia. Thus juggled out of his property he naturally became distrustful of the Virginians; he refused to trade with them on the same terms as
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with the people of the other states, and the Virginians have consequently reaped the fruits of their very dishonourable conduct*.

Another law, baneful in the highest degree to the trading interest, is one which renders all landed property inviolable. This law has induced numbers to run into debt; and as long as it exists foreigners will be cautious of giving credit to a large amount to men who, if they chuse to purchase a tract of land with the goods or money entrusted to their care, may sit down upon it securely, out of the reach of all their creditors, under protection of the laws of the country. Owing to this law they have not yet been enabled to get a bank established in Norfolk, though it would be of the utmost importance to the traders. The directors of the bank of the United States have always peremptorily refused to let a branch of it be fixed in any part of Virginia whilst this law remains. In Boston, New York, Baltimore, Charleston, &c. there are branches of the bank of the United States, besides other banks, established under the sanction of the state legislature.

Repeated attempts have been made in the state assembly to get this last mentioned law repealed, but they have all proved ineffectual. The debates have been very warm on the business, and the names of the majority, who voted for the continuation of it, have been published, to expose them if possible to infamy; but so many have sheltered themselves under its sanction, and so many still find an interest in its continuance, that it is not likely to be speedily repealed.

The houses in Norfolk are about five hundred in number; by far the greater part of them are of wood, and but meanly built. These have all been erected since the year 1776, when the town was totally destroyed by fire, by the order of Lord Dunmore, then regal governor of Virginia. The losses sustained on that occasion were estimated at £.300,000 sterling. Towards the harbour the streets are narrow and irregular; in

* In February 1796, this nefarious business was at last brought before the supreme court of the United States in Philadelphia, by the agents of the British merchants, and the decision of the

judges was such as redounded to their honour; for they declared that these debts should all be paid over again, bona fide, to the British merchant.

the other parts of the town they are tolerably wide; none of them are paved, and all are filthy; indeed, in the hot months of summer, the stench that proceeds from some of them is horrid. That people can be thus inattentive to cleanliness, which is so conducive to health, and in a town where a sixth part of the people died in one year of a pestilential disorder, is most wonderful!! *

Amongst

* The yellow fever, which has committed such dreadful ravages of late years in America, is certainly to be considered as a sort of plague. It first appeared at Philadelphia in the year 1793; in 1794 it appeared at Baltimore; in 1795, at New York and Norfolk; and in 1796, though the matter was hushed up as much as possible, in order to prevent an alarm, similar to that which had injured the city so much the preceding year, yet in New York a far greater number of deaths than usual were heard of during the summer and autumn, strongly supposed to have been occasioned by the same malignant disorder.

The accounts given of the calamitous consequences attendant upon it, in these different places, are all much alike, and nearly similar to those given of the plague:—The people dying suddenly, and under the most shocking circumstances—such as were well flying away—the sick abandoned, and perishing for want of common necessaries—the dead buried in heaps together without any ceremony—charity at an end—the ties of friendship and consanguinity disregarded by many—others, on the contrary, nobly coming forward, and at the hazard of their own lives doing all in their power to relieve their fellow citizens, and avert the general woe.—At Philadelphia, in the space of about three months, no less than four thousand inhabitants were swept off by this dreadful malady, a number, at that time, amounting to about one tenth of the whole. Baltimore and New York did not suffer so severely; but at Norfolk, which is computed to contain about three thousand people, no less than five hundred fell victims to it.

The disorder has been treated very differently by different physicians, and as some few have survived under each system that has been tried,

no general one has yet been adopted. I was told, however, by several people in Norfolk, who resided in the most sickly part of the town during the whole time the fever lasted, that as a preventative medicine, a strong mercurial purge was very generally administered, and afterwards Peruvian bark; and that few of those who had taken this medicine were attacked by the fever. All however that can be done by medicine to stop the progress of the disorder, when it has broke out in a town, seems to be of no very great effect;—for as long as the excessive hot weather lasts the fever rages, but it regularly disappears on the approach of cold weather. With regard to its origin there have been also various opinions; some have contended that it was imported into every place where it appeared from the West Indies; others, that it was generated in the country. These opinions have been ably supported on either side of the question by medical men, who resided at the different places where the fever has appeared. There are a few notorious circumstances, however, which lead me, as an individual, to think that the fever has been generated on the American continent. In the first place, the fever has always broken out in those parts of towns which were most closely built, and where the streets have been suffered through negligence to remain foul and nasty; in the second place, it has regularly broken out during the hottest time of the year, in the months of July and August, when the air on the American coast is for the most part stagnant and sultry, and when vegetable and animal matter becomes putrid in an incredible short space of time; thirdly, numbers of people died of the disorder in New York, in the year 1796, notwithstanding that every West Indian vessel which entered the port that season was examined by the health

Amongst the inhabitants are great numbers of Scotch and French. The latter are almost entirely from the West Indies, and principally from St. Domingo. In such prodigious numbers did they flock over after the British forces had got footing in the French islands, that between two and three thousand were in Norfolk at one time; most of them, however, afterwards dispersed themselves throughout different parts of the country; those who staid in the town opened little shops of different kinds, and amongst them I found many who had been in affluent circumstances before they were driven from their homes.

A strong party spirit has always been prevalent amongst the American inhabitants of this town; so much so that a few years ago, when some English and French vessels of war were lying in Hampton roads, and the sailors, from each, on shore, the whole people were up and ready to join them, on the one side or the other, in open contest; but the mayor drew out the militia, and sent them to their respective homes.

Here are two churches, one for episcopalians, the other for methodists. In the former, service is not performed more than once in two or three weeks, and very little regard is paid by the people in general to Sunday. Indeed, throughout the lower parts of Virginia, that is, between the mountains and the sea, the people have scarcely any sense of religion, and in the country parts the churches are all falling into decay. As I rode along, I scarcely observed one that was not in a ruinous condition, with the windows broken, and doors dropping off the hinges, and lying open to the pigs and cattle wandering about the woods; yet many of these were not past repair. The churches in Virginia, excepting such as are in towns, stand for the most part in the woods, retired from any houses, and it does not appear that any persons are appointed to pay the smallest attention to them.

A custom prevails in Norfolk, of private individuals holding graveyards, which are looked upon as a very lucrative kind of property, the

health officer, a regular bred physician, and that every one suspected was obliged to perform quarantine. The people in New York are so fully persuaded that the fever originates in America from putrid matter, that they have

stopped up one or two docks, which were receptacles for the filth of the neighbourhood, and which contaminated the air when the tide was out.

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owners receiving considerable fees annually for giving permission to people to bury their dead in them. It is very common also to see, in the large plantations in Virginia, and not far from the dwelling house, cemeteries walled in, where the people of the family are all buried. These cemeteries are generally built adjoining the garden.

L E T T E R XIV.

Description of Dismal Swamp.—Wild Men found in it.—Bears, Wolves, &c.—Country between Swamp and Richmond.—Mode of making Tar and Pitch.—Poor Soil.—Wretched Taverns.—Corn Bread.—Difficulty of getting Food for Horses.—Petersburgh.—Horse Races there.—Description of Virginian Horses.—Stile of Riding in America.—Description of Richmond, Capital of Virginia.—Singular Bridge across James River.—State House.—Falls of James River.—Gambling common in Richmond.—Lower Classes of People very quarrelsome.—Their Mode of Fighting.—Gouging.

Richmond, May.

FROM Norfolk I went to look at the great Dismal Swamp, which commences at the distance of nine miles from the town, and extends into North Carolina, occupying in the whole about one hundred and fifty thousand acres. This great tract is entirely covered with trees; juniper and cypress trees grow where there is most moisture, and on the dry parts, white and red oaks and a variety of pines.

These trees grow to a most enormous size, and between them the brushwood springs up so thick that the swamp in many parts is absolutely impervious. In this respect it differs totally from the common woods in the country. It abounds also with cane reeds, and with long rich grass, upon which cattle feed with great avidity, and become fat in a very short space of time; the canes, indeed, are considered to be the very best
green

green food that can be given to them. The people who live on the borders of the swamp drive all their cattle into it to feed; care however is taken to train them to come back regularly to the farms every night by themselves, otherwise it would be impossible to find them. This is effected by turning into the swamp with them, for the first few weeks they are sent thither to feed, two or three old milch cows accustomed to the place, round whose necks are fastened small bells. The cows come back every evening to be milked; the rest of the cattle herd with these, following the noise of the bells, and when they return to the farm a handful of salt, or something of which they are equally fond, is given to each as an inducement for them to return again. In a short time the cattle become familiar with the place, and having been accustomed from the first day to return, they regularly walk to the farms every evening.

In the interior parts of the swamp large herds of wild cattle are found, most probably originally lost on being turned in to feed. Bears, wolves, deer, and other wild indigenous animals are also met with there. Stories are common in the neighbourhood of wild men having been found in it, who were lost, it is supposed, in the swamp when children.

The swamp varies very much in different parts; in some the surface of it is quite dry, and firm enough to bear a horse; in others it is overflowed with water; and elsewhere so miry that a man would sink up to his neck if he attempted to walk upon it; in the driest part, if a trench is cut only a few feet deep, the water gushes in, and it is filled immediately. Where the canal to connect the water of Albemarle Sound with Norfolk is cut, the water in many places flows in from the sides, at the depth of three feet from the surface, in large streams, without intermission; in its colour it exactly resembles brandy, which is supposed to be occasioned by the roots of the juniper trees; it is perfectly clear however, and by no means unpalatable; it is said to possess a diuretic quality, and the people in the neighbourhood, who think it very wholesome, prefer it to any other. Certainly there is something very uncommon in the nature of this swamp, for the people living upon the
borders:

borders of it do not suffer by fever and ague, or bilious complaints, as is generally the case with those resident in the neighbourhood of other swamps and marshes. Whether it is the medicinal quality of the water, however, which keeps them in better health or not, I do not pretend to determine.

As the Dismal Swamp lies so very near to Norfolk, where there is a constant demand for shingles, staves, &c. for exportation, and as the very best of these different articles are made from the trees growing upon the swamp, it of course becomes a very valuable species of property. The canal which is now cutting through it will also enhance its value, as when it is completed, lumber can then be readily sent from the remotest parts. The more southern parts of it, when cleared, answer uncommonly well for the culture of rice; but in the neighbourhood of Norfolk, as far as ten feet deep from the surface, there seems to be nothing but roots and fibres of different herbs mixed with a whitish sand, which would not answer for the purpose, as rice requires a very rich soil. The trees, however, that grow upon it, are a most profitable crop, and instead of cutting them all down promiscuously, as commonly is done, they only fell such as have attained a large size, by which means they have a continued succession for the manufacture of those articles I mentioned. Eighty thousand acres of the swamp are the property of a company incorporated under the title of "The Dismal Swamp Company." Before the war broke out a large number of negroes was constantly employed by the company in cutting and manufacturing staves, &c. and their affairs were going on very prosperously; but at the time that Norfolk was burnt they lost all their negroes, and very little has been done by them since. The lumber that is now sent to Norfolk is taken principally off those parts of the swamp which are private property.

From the Dismal Swamp to Richmond, a distance of about one hundred and forty miles, along the south side of James River, the country is flat and sandy, and for miles together entirely covered with pine trees. In Nansemonde county, bordering on the swamp, the soil is so poor that but very little corn or grain is raised; it answers well however for peach orchards, which are found to be very profitable. From the

peaches they make brandy, and when properly matured it is an excellent liquor, and much esteemed; they give it a very delicious flavour in this part of the country by infusing dried pears in it. Spirit and water is the universal beverage throughout Virginia. They also make considerable quantities of tar and pitch from the pine trees. For this purpose a sort of pit is dug, in which they burn large piles of the trees. The tar runs out, and is deposited at the bottom of the pit, from whence it is taken, cleared of the bits of charcoal that may be mixed with it and put into barrels. The tar, inspissated by boiling, makes pitch.

The accommodation at the taverns along this road I found most wretched; nothing was to be had but rancid fish, fat salt pork, and bread made of Indian corn. For this indifferent fare also I had to wait oftentimes an hour or two. Indian corn bread, if well made, is tolerably good, but very few people can relish it on the first trial; it is a coarse, strong kind of bread, which has something of the taste of that made from oats. The best way of preparing it is in cakes; the large loaves made of it are always like dough in the middle. There is a dish also which they make of Indian corn, very common in Virginia and Maryland, called "hominy." It consists of pounded Indian corn and beans boiled together with milk till the whole mass becomes firm. This is eat, either hot or cold, with bacon, or with other meat.

As for my horses, they were almost starved. Hay is scarcely ever made use of in this part of the country, but in place of it they feed their cattle upon fodder, that is, the leaves of the Indian corn plant. Not a bit of fodder, however, was to be had on the whole road from Norfolk to Richmond, excepting at two places; and the season having been remarkably dry, the little grass that had sprung up had been eat down every where by the cattle in the country. Oats were not to be had on any terms; and Indian corn was so scarce, that I had frequently to send to one or two different houses before I could get even sufficient to give one feed each to my horses. The people in the country endeavoured to account for this scarcity from the badness of the harvest the preceding year; but the fact, I believe, was, that corn for exportation having been in great demand, and a most enormous price offered for it, the

people had been tempted to dispose of a great deal more than they could well spare. Each person was eager to sell his own corn to such advantage, and depended upon getting supplied by his neighbour, so that they were all reduced to want.

Petersburgh stands at the head of the navigable part of Appamatox River, and is the only place of consequence south of James River, between Norfolk and Richmond. The rest of the towns, which are but very small, seem to be fast on the decline, and present a miserable and melancholy appearance. The houses in Petersburgh amount to about three hundred; they are built without any regularity. The people who inhabit them are mostly foreigners; ten families are not to be found in the town that have been born in it. A very flourishing trade is carried on in this place. About two thousand four hundred hogheads of tobacco are inspected annually at the warehouses; and at the falls of the Appamatox River, at the upper end of the town, are some of the best flour mills in the state.

Great crowds were assembled at this place, as I passed through, attracted to it by the horse races, which take place four or five times in the year. Horse racing is a favourite amusement in Virginia; and it is carried on with spirit in different parts of the state. The best bred horses which they have are imported from England; but still some of those raised at home are very good. They usually run for purses made up by subscription. The only particular circumstance in their mode of carrying on their races in Virginia is, that they always run to the left; the horses are commonly rode by negro boys, some of whom are really good jockies.

The horses in common use in Virginia are all of a light description, chiefly adapted for the saddle; some of them are handsome, but they are for the most part spoiled by the false gaits which they are taught. The Virginians are wretched horsemen, as indeed are all the Americans I ever met with, excepting some few in the neighbourhood of New York. They sit with their toes just under the horse's nose, their stirrups being left extremely long, and the saddle put about three or four inches forward on the mane. As for the management of the reins, it is

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what they have no conception of. A trot is odious to them, and they express the utmost astonishment at a person who can like that uneasy gait, as they call it. The favourite gaits which all their horses are taught, are a pace and a *wrack*. In the first, the animal moves his two feet on one side at the same time, and gets on with a sort of shuffling motion, being unable to spring from the ground on these two feet as in a trot. We should call this an unnatural gait, as none of our horses would ever move in that manner without a rider; but the Americans insist upon it that it is otherwise, because many of their foals pace as soon as born. These kind of horses are called "natural pacers," and it is a matter of the utmost difficulty to make them move in any other manner; but it is not one horse in five hundred that would pace without being taught. In the *wrack*, the horse gallops with his fore feet, and trots with those behind. This is a gait equally devoid of grace with the other, and equally contrary to nature; it is very fatiguing also to the horse; but the Virginian finds it more conducive to his ease than a fair gallop, and this circumstance banishes every other consideration.

The people in this part of the country, bordering upon James River, are extremely fond of an entertainment which they call a *barbacue*. It consists in a large party meeting together, either under some trees, or in a house, to partake of a sturgeon or pig roasted in the open air, on a sort of hurdle, over a slow fire; this, however, is an entertainment chiefly confined to the lower ranks, and, like most others of the same nature, it generally ends in intoxication.

Richmond, the capital of Virginia, is situated immediately below the falls of James River, on the north side. The river opposite to the town is about four hundred yards wide, and is crossed by means of two bridges, which are separated by an island that lies nearly in the middle of the river. The bridge, leading from the south shore to the island, is built upon fifteen large flat bottomed boats, kept stationary in the river by strong chains and anchors. The bows of them, which are very sharp, are put against the stream, and fore and aft there is a strong beam, upon which the piers of the bridge rest. Between the island and the town, the water being shallower, the bridge is built upon

piers formed of square casements of logs filled with stones. To this there is no railing, and the boards with which it is covered are so loose, that it is dangerous to ride a horse across it that is not accustomed to it. The bridges thrown across this river, opposite the town, have repeatedly been carried away; it is thought idle, therefore, to go to the expence of a better one than what exists at present. The strongest stone bridge could hardly resist the bodies of ice that are hurried down the falls by the floods on the breaking up of a severe winter.

Though the houses in Richmond are not more than seven hundred in number, yet they extend nearly one mile and a half along the banks of the river. The lower part of the town, according to the course of the river, is built close to the water, and opposite to it lies the shipping; this is connected with the upper town by a long street, which runs parallel to the course of the river, about fifty yards removed from the banks. The situation of the upper town is very pleasing; it stands on an elevated spot, and commands a fine prospect of the falls of the river, and of the adjacent country on the opposite side. The best houses stand here, and also the capitol or statehouse. From the opposite side of the river this building appears extremely well, as its defects cannot be observed at that distance, but on a closer inspection it proves to be a clumsy ill shapen pile. The original plan was sent over from France by Mr. Jefferson, and had great merit; but his ingenious countrymen thought they could improve it, and to do so placed what was intended for the attic story, in the plan, at the bottom, and put the columns on the top of it. In many other respects, likewise, the plan was inverted. This building is finished entirely with red brick; even the columns themselves are formed of brick; but to make them appear like stone, they have been partially whitened with common whitewash. The inside of the building is but very little better than its exterior part. The principal room is for the house of representatives; this is used also for divine service, as there is no such thing as a church in the town. The vestibule is circular, and very dark; it is to be ornamented with a statue of General Washington, executed by an eminent artist in France, which

which arrived while I was in the town. Ugly and ill contrived as this building is, a stranger must not attempt to find fault with any part of it, for it is looked upon by the inhabitants as a most elegant fabric.

The falls in the river, or the rapids, as they should be called, extend six miles above the city, in the course of which there is a descent of about eighty feet. The river is here full of large rocks, and the water rushes over them in some places with great impetuosity. A canal is completed at the north side of these falls, which renders the navigation complete from Richmond to the Blue Mountains, and at particular times of the year, boats with light burthens can proceed still higher up. In the river, opposite the town, are no more than seven feet water, but ten miles lower down about twelve feet. Most of the vessels trading to Richmond unlade the greater part of their cargoes at this place into river craft, and then proceed up to the town. Trade is carried on here chiefly by foreigners, as the Virginians have but little inclination for it, and are too fond of amusement to pursue it with much success.

Richmond contains about four thousand inhabitants, one half of whom are slaves. Amongst the freemen are numbers of lawyers, who, with the officers of the state government, and several that live retired on their fortunes, reside in the upper town; the other part is inhabited principally by the traders.

Perhaps in no place of the same size in the world is there more gambling going forward than in Richmond. I had scarcely alighted from my horse at the tavern, when the landlord came to ask what game I was most partial to, as in such a room there was a faro table, in another a hazard table, in a third a billiard table, to any one of which he was ready to conduct me. Not the smallest secrecy is employed in keeping these tables; they are always crowded with people, and the doors of the apartment are only shut to prevent the rabble from coming in. Indeed, throughout the lower parts of the country in Virginia, and also in that part of Maryland next to it, there is scarcely a petty tavern without a billiard room, and this is always full of a set of idle low lived fellows, drinking spirits or playing cards, if not engaged at the table. Cockfighting is also another favourite diversion; it is chiefly, however, the lower class

class of people that partake of these amusements at the taverns; in private there is, perhaps, as little gambling in Virginia as in any other part of America. The circumstance of having the taverns thus infested by such a set of people renders travelling extremely unpleasant. Many times I have been forced to proceed much farther in a day than I have wished, in order to avoid the scenes of rioting and quarrelling that I have met with at the taverns, which it is impossible to escape as long as you remain in the same house where they are carried on, for every apartment is considered as common, and that room in which a stranger sits down is sure to be the most frequented.

Whenever these people come to blows, they fight just like wild beasts, biting, kicking, and endeavouring to tear each other's eyes out with their nails. It is by no means uncommon to meet with those who have lost an eye in a combat, and there are men who pride themselves upon the dexterity with which they can scoop one out. This is called gouging. To perform the horrid operation, the combatant twists his forefingers in the side locks of his adversary's hair, and then applies his thumbs to the bottom of the eye, to force it out of the socket. If ever there is a battle, in which neither of those engaged loses an eye, their faces are however generally cut in a shocking manner with the thumb nails, in the many attempts which are made at gouging. But what is worse than all, these wretches in their combat endeavour to their utmost to tear out each other's testicles. Four or five instances came within my own observation, as I passed through Maryland and Virginia, of men being confined in their beds from the injuries which they had received of this nature in a fight. In the Carolinas and Georgia, I have been credibly assured, that the people are still more depraved in this respect than in Virginia, and that in some particular parts of these states, every third or fourth man appears with one eye.

LETTER XV.

Description of Virginia between Richmond and the Mountains.—Fragrance of Flowers and Shrubs in the Woods.—Melody of the Birds.—Of the Birds of Virginia.—Mocking Bird.—Blue Bird.—Red Bird, &c.—Singular Noises of the Frogs.—Columbia.—Magazine there.—Fire Flies in the Woods.—Green Springs.—Wretchedness of the Accommodation there.—Difficulty of finding the Way through the Woods.—Serpents.—Rattle-Snake.—Copper-Snake.—Black Snake.—South-west, or Green Mountains.—Soil of them.—Mountain Torrents do great Damage.—Salubrity of the Climate.—Great Beauty of the Peasantry.—Many Gentlemen of Property living here.—Monticello, the Seat of Mr. Jefferson.—Vineyards.—Observations on the Culture of the Grape, and the Manufacture of Wine.

Monticello, May.

HAVING staid at Richmond somewhat longer than a week, which I found absolutely necessary, if it had only been to recruit the strength of my horses, that had been half starved in coming from Norfolk, I proceeded in a north-westerly direction towards the South-west or Green Mountains.

The country about Richmond is sandy, but not so much so, nor as flat as on the south side of James River towards the sea. It now wore a most pleasing aspect. The first week in May had arrived; the trees had obtained a considerable part of their foliage, and the air in the woods was perfumed with the fragrant smell of numberless flowers and flowering shrubs, which sprang up on all sides. The music of the birds was also delightful. It is thought that in Virginia the singing birds are finer than what are to be met with on any other part of the continent, as the climate is more congenial to them, being neither so intensely hot in summer as that of the Carolinas, nor so cold in winter as that of the more northern states. The notes of the mocking bird or Virginian nightingale are in particular most melodious. This bird is of the colour

lour and about the size of a thrush, but more slender; it imitates the song of every other bird, but with increased strength and sweetness. The bird whose song it mocks generally flies away, as if conscious of being excelled by the other, and dissatisfied with its own powers. It is a remark, however, made by Catesby, and which appears to be a very just one, that the birds in America are much inferior to those in Europe in the melody of their notes, but that they are superior in point of plumage. I know of no American bird that has the rich mellow note of our black-bird, the sprightly note of the sky-lark, or the sweet and plaintive one of the nightingale.

After having listened to the mocking bird, there is no novelty in hearing the song of any other bird in the country; and indeed their songs are for the most part but very simple in themselves, though combined they are pleasing.

The most remarkable for their plumage of those commonly met with are, the blue bird and the red bird. The first is about the size of a linnet; its back, head, and wings are of dark yet bright blue; when flying the plumage appears to the greatest advantage. The red bird is larger than a sky lark, though smaller than a thrush; it is of a vermilion colour, and has a small tuft on its head. A few humming birds make their appearance in summer, but their plumage is not so beautiful as those found more to the southward.

Of the other common birds there are but few worth notice. Doves and quails, or partridges as they are sometimes called, afford good diversion for the sportsman. These last birds in their habits are exactly similar to European partridges, excepting that they alight sometimes upon trees; their size is that of the quail, but they are neither the same as the English quail or the English partridge. It is the same with many other birds, as jays, robins, larks, pheasants, &c. which were called by the English settlers after the birds of the same name in England, because they bore some resemblance to them, though in fact they are materially different. In the lower parts of Virginia, and to the southward, are great numbers of large birds, called turkey buzzards, which, when mounted aloft on the wing, look like eagles. In Carolina there is a law prohibit-

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ing the killing these birds, as they feed upon putrid carcases, and therefore contribute to keep the air wholesome. There is only one bird more which I shall mention, the whipper-will, or whip-poor-will, as it is sometimes called, from the plaintive noise that it makes; to my ear it sounded w̄yp-ō-īl. It begins to make this noise, which is heard a great way off, about dusk, and continues it through the greater part of the night. This bird is so very wary, and so few instances have occurred of its being seen, much less taken, that many have imagined the noise does not proceed from a bird, but from a frog, especially as it is heard most frequently in the neighbourhood of low grounds.

The frogs in America, it must here be observed, make a most singular noise, some of them absolutely whistling, whilst others croak so loudly, that it is difficult at times to tell whether the sound proceeds from a calf or a frog: I have more than once been deceived by the noise when walking in a meadow. These last frogs are called bull frogs; they mostly keep in pairs, and are never found but where there is good water; their bodies are from four to seven inches long, and their legs are in proportion; they are extremely active, and take prodigious leaps.

The first town I reached on going towards the mountains was Columbia, or Point of Fork, as it is called in the neighbourhood. It is situated about sixty miles above Richmond, at the confluence of Rivanna and Fluvanna rivers, which united form James River. This is a flourishing little place, containing about forty houses, and a warehouse for the inspection of tobacco. On the neck of land between the two rivers, just opposite to the town, is the magazine of the state, in which are kept twelve thousand stand of arms, and about thirty tons of powder. The low lands bordering upon the river in this neighbourhood are extremely valuable.

From Columbia to the Green Springs, about twenty miles farther on, the road runs almost wholly through a pine forest, and is very lonely. Night came on before I got to the end of it, and, as very commonly happens with travellers in this part of the world, I soon lost my way. A light, however, seen through the trees, seemed to indicate that a house was not far off; my servant eagerly rode up to it, but the poor fellow's
Q
consternation

confertation was great indeed when he observed it moving from him, presently coming back, and then with swiftness departing again into the woods. I was at a loss for a time myself to account for the appearance, but after proceeding a little farther, I observed the same sort of light in many other places, and dismounting from my horse to examine a bush where one of these sparks appeared to have fallen, I found it proceeded from the fire fly. As the summer came on, these flies appeared every night: after a light shower in the afternoon, I have seen the woods sparkling with them in every quarter. The light is emitted from the tail, and the animal has the power of emitting it or not at pleasure.

After wandering about till it was near eleven o'clock, a plantation at last appeared, and having got fresh information respecting the road from the negroes in the quarter, who generally sit up half the night, and over a fire in all seasons, I again set out for the Green Springs. With some difficulty I at last found the way, and arrived there about midnight. The hour was so unseasonable, that the people at the tavern were very unwilling to open their doors; and it was not till I had related the history of my adventures from the last stage two or three times that they could be prevailed upon to let me in. At last a tall fellow in his shirt came grumbling to the door, and told me I might come in if I would. I had now a parley for another quarter of an hour to persuade him to give me some corn for my horses, which he was very unwilling to do; but at last he complied, though much against his inclination, and unlocked the stable door. Returning to the house, I was shewn into a room about ten feet square, in which were two filthy beds swarming with bugs; the ceiling had mouldered away, and the walls admitted light in various places; it was a happy circumstance, however, that these apertures were in the wall, for the window of the apartment was insufficient in itself to admit either light or fresh air. Here I would fain have got something to eat, if possible, but not even so much as a piece of bread was to be had; indeed, in this part of the country they seldom think of keeping bread ready made, but just prepare sufficient for the meal about half an hour before it is wanted, and then serve it hot. Unable therefore to procure any food, and fatigued with a long journey during

during a parching day, I threw myself down on one of the beds in my clothes, and enjoyed a profound repose, notwithstanding the repeated onsets of the bugs and other vermin with which I was molested.

Besides the tavern and the quarters of the slaves, there is but one more building at this place. This is a large farm house, where people that resort to the springs are accommodated with lodgings, about as good as those at the tavern. These habitations stand in the center of a cleared spot of land of about fifty acres, surrounded entirely with wood. The springs are just on the margin of the wood, at the bottom of a slope, which begins at the houses, and are covered with a few boards, merely to keep the leaves from falling in. The waters are chalybeate, and are drank chiefly by persons from the low country, whose constitutions have been relaxed by the heats of summer.

Having breakfasted in the morning at this miserable little place, I proceeded on my journey up the South-west Mountain. In the course of this day's ride I observed a great number of snakes, which were now beginning to come forth from their holes. I killed a black one, that I found sleeping, stretched across the road; it was five feet in length. The black snake is more commonly met with than any other in this part of America, and is usually from four to six feet in length. In proportion to the length it is extremely slender; the back is perfectly black, the belly lead colour, inclining to white towards the throat. The bite of this snake is not poisonous, and the people in that country are not generally inclined to kill it, from its great utility in destroying rats and mice. It is wonderfully fond of milk, and is frequently found in the dairies, which in Virginia are for the most part in low situations, like cellars, as the milk could not otherwise be kept sweet for two hours together in summer time. The black snake, at the time of copulation, immediately pursues any person who comes in sight, and with such swiftness, that the best runner cannot escape from him upon even ground. Many other sorts of harmless snakes are found here, some of which are beautifully variegated, as the garter, the ribbon, the blueish green snake, &c. &c. Of the venomous kind, the most common are the rattle snake, and the copper or moccasin snake. The former is found chiefly on

the mountains; but although frequently met with, it is very rarely that people are bitten by it; scarcely a summer, however, passes over without several being bit by the copper snake. The poison of the latter is not so subtle as that of the rattle snake, but it is very injurious, and if not attended to in time, death will certainly ensue. The rattle snake is very dull, and never attacks a person that does not molest him; but, at the same time, he will not turn out of the way to avoid any one; before he bites, he always gives notice by shaking his rattles, so that a person that hears them can readily get out of his way. The copper snake, on the contrary, is more active and treacherous, and, it is said, will absolutely put himself in the way of a person to bite him. Snakes are neither so numerous nor so venomous in the northern as in the southern states. Horses, cows, dogs, and fowl seem to have an innate sense of the danger they are exposed to from these poisonous reptiles, and will shew evident symptoms of fear on approaching near them, although they are dead; but what is remarkable, hogs, so far from being afraid of them, pursue and devour them with the greatest avidity, totally regardless of their bites. It is supposed that the great quantity of fat, with which they are furnished, prevents the poison from operating on their bodies as on those of other animals. Hog's lard, it might therefore reasonably be conjectured, would be a good remedy for the bite of a snake; however, I never heard of its being tried; the people generally apply herbs to the wound, the specific qualities of which are well known. It is a remarkable instance of the bounty of providence, that in all those parts of the country where these venomous reptiles abound, those herbs which are the most certain antidote to the poison are found in the greatest plenty.

The South-west Mountains run nearly parallel to the Blue Ridge, and are the first which you come to on going up the country from the sea-coast in Virginia. These mountains are not lofty, and ought indeed rather to be called hills than mountains; they are not seen till you come within a very few miles of them, and the ascent is so gradual, that you get upon their top almost without perceiving it.

The soil here changes to a deep argillaceous earth, particularly well suited to the culture of small grain and clover, and produces
abundant

abundant crops. As this earth, however, does not absorb the water very quickly, the farmer is exposed to great losses from heavy falls of rain; the seed is liable to be washed out of the ground, so that sometimes it is found necessary to sow a field two or three different times before it becomes green; and if great care be not taken to guard such fields as lie on a declivity by proper trenches, the crops are sometimes entirely destroyed, even after they arrive at maturity; indeed, very often, notwithstanding the utmost precautions, the water departs from its usual channel, and sweeps away all before it. After heavy torrents of rain I have frequently seen all the negroes in a farm dispatched with hoes and spades to different fields, to be ready to turn the course of the water, in case it should take an improper direction. On the sides of the mountain, where the ground has been worn out with the culture of tobacco, and left waste, and the water has been suffered to run in the same channel for a length of time, it is surprising to see the depth of the ravines or gullies, as they are called, which it has formed. They are just like so many precipices, and are insurmountable barriers to the passage from one side of the mountain to the other.

Notwithstanding such disadvantages, however, the country in the neighbourhood of these mountains is far more populous than that which lies towards Richmond; and there are many persons that even consider it to be the garden of the United States. All the productions of the lower part of Virginia may be had here, at the same time that the heat is never found to be so oppressive; for in the hottest months in the year there is a freshness and elasticity in the air unknown in the low country. The extremes of heat and cold are found to be 90° and 60° above cipher, but it is not often that the thermometer rises above 84° , and the winters are so mild in general, that it is a very rare circumstance for the snow to lie for three days together upon the ground.

The salubrity of the climate is equal also to that of any part of the United States; and the inhabitants have in consequence a healthy ruddy appearance. The female part of the peasantry in particular is totally different from that in the low country. Instead of the pale, sickly, debilitated

bilitated beings, whom you meet with there, you find amongst these mountains many a one that would be a fit subject to be painted for a Lavinia. It is really delightful to behold the groups of females, assembled here, at times, to gather the cherries and other fruits which grow in the greatest abundance in the neighbourhood of almost every habitation. Their shapes and complexions are charming; and the carelessness of their dresses, which consist of little more, in common, than a simple bodice and petticoat, makes them appear even still more engaging.

The common people in this neighbourhood appeared to me to be of a more frank and open disposition, more inclined to hospitality, and to live more contentedly on what they possessed, than the people of the same class in any other part of the United States I passed through. From being able, however, to procure the necessaries of life upon very easy terms, they are rather of an indolent habit, and inclined to dissipation. Intoxication is very prevalent, and it is scarcely possible to meet with a man who does not begin the day with taking one, two, or more drams as soon as he rises. Brandy is the liquor which they principally use, and having the greatest abundance of peaches, they make it at a very trifling expence. There is hardly a house to be found with two rooms in it, but where the inhabitants have a still. The females do not fall into the habit of intoxication like the men, but in other respects they are equally disposed to pleasure, and their morals are in like manner relaxed.

Along these mountains live several gentlemen of large landed property, who farm their own estates, as in the lower parts of Virginia; among the number is Mr. Jefferson*, from whose seat I date this letter. His house is about three miles distant from Charlottesville and two from Milton, which is on the head waters of Rivanna River. It is most singularly situated, being built upon the top of a small mountain, the apex of which has been cut off, so as to leave an area of about an acre and half. At

* Vice-president of the United States.

present it is in an unfinished state; but if carried on according to the plan laid down, it will be one of the most elegant private habitations in the United States. A large apartment is laid out for a library and museum, meant to extend the entire breadth of the house, the windows of which are to open into an extensive green house and aviary. In the center is another very spacious apartment, of an octagon form, reaching from the front to the rear of the house, the large folding glass doors of which, at each end, open under a portico. An apartment like this, extending from front to back, is very common in a Virginian house; it is called the saloon, and during summer is the one generally preferred by the family, on account of its being more airy and spacious than any other. The house commands a magnificent prospect on one side of the blue ridge of mountains for nearly forty miles, and on the opposite one, of the low country, in appearance like an extended heath covered with trees, the tops alone of which are visible. The mists and vapours arising from the low grounds give a continual variety to the scene. The mountain whereon the house stands is thickly wooded on one side, and walks are carried round it, with different degrees of obliquity, running into each other. On the south side is the garden and a large vineyard, that produces abundance of fine fruit.

Several attempts have been made in this neighbourhood to bring the manufacture of wine to perfection; none of them however have succeeded to the wish of the parties. A set of gentlemen once went to the expence even of getting six Italians over for the purpose, but the vines which the Italians found growing here were different, as well as the soil, from what they had been in the habit of cultivating, and they were not much more successful in the business than the people of the country. We must not, however, from hence conclude that good wine can never be manufactured upon these mountains. It is well known that the vines, and the mode of cultivating them, vary as much in different parts of Europe as the soil in one country differs from that in another. It will require some time, therefore, and different experiments, to ascertain the particular kind of vine, and the mode of cultivating it, best adapted

adapted to the soil of these mountains. This, however, having been once ascertained, there is every reason to suppose that the grape may be cultivated to the greatest perfection, as the climate is as favourable for the purpose as that of any country in Europe. By experiments also it is by no means improbable, that they will in process of time learn the best method of converting the juice of the fruit into wine.

L E T T E R XVI.

Of the Country between the South-west and Blue Mountains.—Copper and Iron Mines.—Lynchburgh.—New London.—Armoury here.—Description of the Road over the Blue Mountains.—Peaks of Otter, highest of the Mountains.—Supposed Height.—Much over-rated.—German Settlers numerous beyond the Blue Mountains.—Singular Contrast between the Country and the Inhabitants on each Side of the Mountains.—Of the Weevil.—Of the Hessian Fly.—Bottetourt County.—Its Soil.—Salubrity of the Climate.—Medicinal Springs here.—Much frequented.

Fincaſtle, May.

THE country between the South-west Mountains and the Blue Ridge is very fertile, and it is much more thickly inhabited than the lower parts of Virginia. The climate is good, and the people have a healthy and robust appearance. Several valuable mines of iron and copper have been discovered here, for the working of some of which works have been established; but till the country becomes more populous it cannot be expected that they will be carried on with much spirit.

Having crossed the South-west Mountains, I passed along through this county to Lynchburgh, a town situated on the south side of Fluvanna River, one hundred and fifty miles above Richmond. This town contains about one hundred houses, and a warehouse for the inspection of tobacco, where about two thousand hogsheds are annually inspected.

It has been built entirely within the last fifteen years, and is rapidly increasing, from its advantageous situation for carrying on trade with the adjacent country. The boats, in which the produce is conveyed down the river, are from forty-eight to fifty-four feet long, but very narrow in proportion to their breadth. Three men are sufficient to navigate one of these boats, and they can go to Richmond and back again in ten days. They fall down with the stream, but work their way back again with poles. The cargo carried in these boats is always proportionate to the depth of water in the river, which varies very much. When I passed it to Lynchburgh, there was no difficulty in riding across, yet when I got upon the opposite banks I observed great quantities of weeds hanging upon the trees, considerably above my head though on horseback, evidently left there by a flood. This flood happened in the preceding September, when the waters rose fifteen feet above their usual level.

A few miles from Lynchburgh, towards the Blue Mountains, is a small town called New London, in which there is a magazine, and also an armoury, erected during the war. About fifteen men were here employed, as I passed through, repairing old arms and refurbishing up others; and indeed, from the slovenly manner in which they keep their arms, I should imagine that the same number must be constantly employed all the year round. At one end of the room lay the musquets, to the amount of about five thousand, all together in a large heap, and at the opposite end lay a pile of leathern accoutrements, absolutely rotting for want of common attention. All the armouries throughout the United States are kept much in the same style.

Between this place and the Blue Mountains the country is rough and hilly, and but very thinly inhabited. The few inhabitants, however, met with here are uncommonly robust and tall; it is rare to see a man amongst them who is not six feet high. These people entertain a high opinion of their own superiority in point of bodily strength over the inhabitants of the low country. A similar race of men is found all along the Blue Mountains.

The Blue Ridge is thickly covered with large trees to the very summit; some of the mountains are rugged and extremely stony, others are not so, and on these last the soil is found to be rich and fertile. It is only in particular places that this ridge of mountains can be crossed, and at some of the gaps the ascent is steep and difficult; but at the place where I crossed it, which was near the Peak of Otter, on the south side, instead of one great mountain to pass over, as might be imagined from an inspection of the map, there is a succession of small hills, rising imperceptibly one above the other, so that you get upon the top of the ridge before you are aware of it.

The Peaks of Otter are the highest mountains in the Blue Ridge, and, measured from their bases, are supposed to be more lofty than any others in North America. According to Mr. Jefferson, whose authority has been quoted nearly by every person that has written on the subject since the publication of his Notes on Virginia, the principal peak is about four thousand feet in perpendicular height; but it must be observed, that Mr. Jefferson does not say that he measured the height himself; on the contrary, he acknowledges that the height of the mountains in America has never yet been ascertained with any degree of exactness; it is only from certain data, from which he says a tolerable conjecture may be formed, that he supposes this to be the height of the loftiest peak. Positively to assert that this peak is not so high, without having measured it in any manner, would be absurd; as I did not measure it, I do not therefore pretend to contradict Mr. Jefferson; I have only to say, that the most elevated of the peaks of Otter appeared to me but a very insignificant mountain in comparison with Snowden, in Wales; and every person that I conversed with that had seen both, and I conversed with many, made the same remark. Now the highest peak of Snowden is found by triangular admeasurement to be no more than three thousand five hundred and sixty-eight feet high, reckoning from the quay at Carnarvon. None of the other mountains in the Blue Ridge are supposed, from the same data, to be more than two thousand feet in perpendicular height.

Beyond.

Beyond the Blue Ridge, after crossing by this route near the Peaks of Otter, I met with but very few settlements till I drew near to Fincaſtle, in Bottetourt County. This town ſtands about twenty miles diſtant from the mountain, and about fifteen ſouth of Fluvanna River. It was only begun about the year 1790, yet it already contains fixty houſes, and is moſt rapidly increaſing. The improvement of the adjacent country has likewiſe been very rapid, and land now bears nearly the ſame price that it does in the neighbourhood of York and Lancaſter, in Pennſylvania. The inhabitants conſiſt principally of Germans, who have extended their ſettlements from Pennſylvania along the whole of that rich track of land which runs through the upper part of Maryland, and from thence behind the Blue Mountains to the moſt ſouthern parts of Virginia. Theſe people, as I before mentioned, keep very much together, and are never to be found but where the land is remarkably good. It is ſingular, that although they form three fourths of the inhabitants on the weſtern ſide of the Blue Ridge, yet not one of them is to be met with on the eaſtern ſide, notwithstanding that land is to be purchaſed in the neighbourhood of the South-weſt Mountains for one fourth of what is paid for it in Bottetourt County. They have many times, I am told, croſſed the Blue Ridge to examine the land, but the red ſoil which they found there was different from what they had been accuſtomed to, and the injury it was expoſed to from the mountain torrents always appeared to them an inſuperable objection to ſettling in that part of the country. The difference indeed between the country on the eaſtern and on the weſtern ſide of the Blue Ridge, in Bottetourt County, is aſtoniſhing, when it is conſidered that both are under the ſame latitude, and that this difference is perceptible within the ſhort diſtance of thirty miles.

On the eaſtern ſide of the ridge cotton grows extremely well, and in winter the ſnow ſcarcely ever remains more than a day or two upon the ground. On the other ſide cotton never comes to perfection, the winters are ſevere, and the fields covered with ſnow for weeks together. In every farm yard you ſee ſleighs or ſledges, carriages uſed to run upon the ſnow. Wherever theſe carriages are met with, it may be taken for granted that the winter laſts in that part of the country for a

considerable length of time, for the people would never go to the expence of building them, without being tolerably certain that they would be useful. On the eastern side of the Blue Ridge, in Virginia, not one of these carriages is to be met with.

It has already been mentioned, that the predominant soil to the eastward of the Blue Ridge is a red earth, and that it is always a matter of some difficulty to lay down a piece of land in grass, on account of the rains, which are apt to wash away the seeds, together with the mould on the surface. In Bottetourt County, on the contrary, the soil consists chiefly of a rich brown mould, and throws up white clover spontaneously. To have a rich meadow, it is only necessary to leave a piece of ground to the hand of nature for one year. Again, on the eastern side of the Blue Mountains, scarcely any limestone is to be met with; on the opposite one, a bed of it runs entirely through the country, so that by some it is emphatically called the limestone county. In sinking wells, they have always to dig fifteen or twenty feet through a solid rock to get at the water.

Another circumstance may also be mentioned, as making a material difference between the country on one side of the Blue Ridge and that on the other, namely, that behind the mountains the weevil is unknown. The weevil is a small insect of the moth kind, which deposits its eggs in the cavity of the grain, and particularly in that of wheat; and if the crops are stacked or laid up in the barn in sheaves, these eggs are there hatched, and the grain is in consequence totally destroyed. To guard against this in the lower parts of Virginia, and the other states where the weevil is common, they always thresh out the grain as soon as the crops are brought in, and leave it in the chaff, which creates a degree of heat sufficient to destroy the insect, at the same time that it does not injure the wheat. This insect has been known in America but a very few years; according to the general opinion, it originated on the eastern shore of Maryland, where a person, in expectation of a great rise in the price of wheat, kept over all his crops for the space of six years, when they were found full of these insects; from thence they have spread gradually over different parts of the country. For a considerable
time

time the Patowmac River formed a barrier to their progress, and while the crops were entirely destroyed in Maryland, they remained secure in Virginia; but these insects at last found their way across the river. The Blue Mountains at present serve as a barrier, and secure the country to the westward from their depredations*.

Bottetourt County is entirely surrounded by mountains; it is also crossed by various ridges of mountains in different directions, a circumstance which renders the climate particularly agreeable. It appears to me, that there is no part of America where the climate would be more congenial to the constitution of a native of Great Britain or Ireland. The frost in winter is more regular, but not severer than commonly takes place in those islands. In summer the heat is, perhaps, somewhat greater; but there is not a night in the year that a blanket is not found very comfortable. Before ten o'clock in the morning the heat is greatest; at that hour a breeze generally springs up from the mountains, and renders the air agreeable the whole day. Fever and ague are disorders unknown here, and the air is so salubrious, that persons who come hither afflicted with it from the low country, towards the sea, get rid of it in a very short time.

In the western part of the county are several medicinal springs, whereto numbers of people resort towards the latter end of summer, as much for the sake of escaping the heat in the low country, as for drinking the waters. Those most frequented are called the sweet

* There is another insect, which in a similar manner made its appearance, and afterwards spread through a great part of the country, very injurious also to the crops. It is called the Hessian fly, from having been brought over, as is supposed, in some forage belonging to the Hessian troops, during the war. This insect lodges itself in different parts of the stalk, while green, and makes such rapid devastations, that a crop which appears in the best possible state will, perhaps, be totally destroyed in the course of two or three days. In Maryland, they say, that if the land is very highly manured, the Hessian fly never attacks the grain; they also say, that crops

raised upon land that has been worked for a long time are much less exposed to injury from these insects than the crops raised upon new land. If this is really the case, the appearance of the Hessian fly should be considered as a circumstance rather beneficial than otherwise to the country, as it will induce the inhabitants to relinquish that ruinous practice of working the same piece of ground year after year till it is entirely worn out, and then leaving it waste, instead of taking some pains to improve it by manure. This fly is not known at present south of the Patowmac River, nor behind the Blue Ridge.

springs.

springs, and are situated at the foot of the Alleghany Mountains. During the last season upwards of two hundred persons resorted to them with servants and horses. The accommodations at the springs are most wretched at present; but a set of gentlemen from South Carolina have, I understand, since I was there, purchased the place, and are going to erect several commodious dwellings in the neighbourhood, for the reception of company. Besides these springs there are others in Jackson's Mountains, a ridge which runs between the Blue Mountains and the Alleghany. One of the springs here is warm, and another quite hot; a few paces from the latter a spring of common water issues from the earth, but which, from the contrast, is generally thought to be as remarkable for its coldness as the water of the adjoining one is for its heat: there is also a sulphur spring near these; leaves of trees falling into it become thickly incrusted with sulphur in a very short time, and silver is turned black almost immediately. At a future period the medicinal qualities of all these springs will probably be accurately ascertained; at present they are but very little known. As for the relief obtained by those persons that frequent the sweet springs in particular, it is strongly conjectured that they are more indebted for it to the change of the climate than to the rare qualities of the water.

L E T T E R XVII.

*Description of the celebrated Rock Bridge, and of an immense Cavern.—
Description of the Shenandoah Valley.—Inhabitants mostly Germans.—
Soil and Climate.—Observations on American Landscapes.—Mode of cutting
down Trees.—High Road to Kentucky, behind Blue Mountains.—Much
frequented.—Uncouth, inquisitive People.—Lexington.—Staunton.—
Military Titles very common in America.—Causes thereof.—Winchester.*

Winchester, May.

AFTER remaining a considerable time in Bottetourt County, I again crossed Fluvanna River into the county of Rockbridge, so called from the remarkable natural bridge of rock that is in it. This bridge stands about ten miles from Fluvanna River, and nearly the same distance from the Blue Ridge. It extends across a deep cleft in a mountain, which, by some great convulsion of nature, has been split asunder from top to bottom, and it seems to have been left there purposely to afford a passage from one side of the chasm to the other. The cleft or chasm is about two miles long, and is in some places upwards of three hundred feet deep; the depth varies according to the height of the mountain, being deepest where the mountain is most lofty. The breadth of the chasm also varies in different places; but in every part it is uniformly wider at top than towards the bottom. That the two sides of the chasm were once united appears very evident, not only from projecting rocks on the one side corresponding with suitable cavities on the other, but also from the different strata of earth, sand, clay, &c. being exactly similar from top to bottom on both sides; but by what great agent they were separated, whether by fire or by water, remains hidden amongst those arcana of nature which we vainly endeavour to develop.

The arch consists of a solid mass of stone, or of several stones cemented so strongly together, that they appear but as one. This mass, it is to be supposed, at the time that the hill was rent asunder, was drawn

*

across.

across the fissure from adhering closely to one side, and being loosened from its bed of earth at the opposite one. It seems as probable, I think, that the mass of stone forming the arch was thus forcibly plucked from one side, and drawn across the fissure, as that the hill should have remained disunited at this one spot from top to bottom, and that a passage should afterwards have been forced through it by water. The road leading to the bridge runs through a thick wood, and up a hill, having ascended which, nearly to the top, you pause for a moment at finding a sudden discontinuance of the trees at one side; but the amazement which fills the mind is great indeed, when, on going a few paces towards the part which appears thus open, you find yourself on the brink of a tremendous precipice. You involuntarily draw back, stare around, then again come forward to satisfy yourself that what you have seen is real, and not the illusions of fancy. You now perceive, that you are upon the top of the bridge, to the very edge of which, on one side, you may approach with safety, and look down into the abyss, being protected from falling by a parapet of fixed rocks. The walls, as it were, of the bridge at this side are so perpendicular, that a person leaning over the parapet of rock might let fall a plummet from the hand to the very bottom of the chasm. On the opposite side this is not the case, nor is there any parapet; but from the edge of the road, which runs over the bridge, is a gradual slope to the brink of the chasm, upon which it is somewhat dangerous to venture. This slope is thickly covered with large trees, principally cedars and pines. The opposite side was also well furnished with trees formerly, but all those that grew near the edge of the bridge have been cut down by different people, for the sake of seeing them tumble to the bottom. Before the trees were destroyed in this manner, you might have passed over the bridge without having had any idea of being upon it; for the breadth of it is no less than eighty feet. The road runs nearly in the middle, and is frequented daily by waggons.

At the distance of a few yards from the bridge, a narrow path appears, winding along the sides of the fissure, amidst immense rocks and trees, down to the bottom of the bridge. Here the stupendous arch
 appears

appears in all its glory, and seems to touch the very skies. To behold it without rapture, indeed, is impossible; and the more critically it is examined, the more beautiful and the more surprising does it appear. The height of the bridge to the top of the parapet is two hundred and thirteen feet by admeasurement with a line, the thickness of the arch forty feet, the span of the arch at top ninety feet, and the distance between the abutments at bottom fifty feet. The abutments consist of a solid mass of limestone on either side, and, together with the arch, seem as if they had been chiseled out by the hand of art. A small stream, called Cedar Creek, running at the bottom of the fissure, over a bed of rocks, adds much to the beauty of the scene.

The fissure takes a very sudden turn just above the bridge, according to the course of the stream, so that when you stand below, and look under the arch, the view is intercepted at the distance of about fifty yards from the bridge. Mr. Jefferson's statement, in his Notes, that the fissure continues straight, terminating with a pleasing view of the North Mountains, is quite erroneous. The sides of the chasm are thickly covered in every part with trees, excepting where the huge rocks of limestone appear.

Besides this view from below, the bridge is seen to very great advantage from a pinnacle of rocks, about fifty feet below the top of the fissure; for here not only the arch is seen in all its beauty, but the spectator is impressed in the most forcible manner with ideas of its grandeur, from being enabled at the same time to look down into the profound gulph over which it passes.

About fifty miles to the northward of the Rock Bridge, and also behind the Blue Mountains, there is another very remarkable natural curiosity; this is a large cavern, known in the neighbourhood by the name of Maddison's Cave. It is in the heart of a mountain, about two hundred feet high, and which is so steep on one side, that a person standing on the top of it, might easily throw a pebble into the river, which flows round the base; the opposite side of it is, however, very easy of ascent, and on this side the path leading to the cavern runs, excepting for the last twenty yards, when it suddenly turns

along the steep part of the mountain, which is extremely rugged, and covered with immense rocks and trees from top to bottom. The mouth of the cavern, on this steep side, about two thirds of the way up, is guarded by a huge pendent stone, which seems ready to drop every instant, and it is hardly possible to stoop under it, without reflecting with a certain degree of awe, that were it to drop, nothing could save you from perishing within the dreary walls of that mansion to which it affords an entrance.

Preparatory to entering, the guide, whom I had procured from a neighbouring house, lighted the ends of three or four splinters of pitch pine, a large bundle of which he had brought with him: they burn out very fast, but while they last are most excellent torches. The fire he brought along with him, by means of a bit of green hiccory wood, which, when once lighted, will burn slowly without any blaze till the whole is consumed.

The first apartment you enter is about twenty-five feet high, and fifteen broad, and extends a considerable way to the right and left, the floor ascending towards the former; here it is very moist, from the quantity of water continually trickling from the roof. Fahrenheit's thermometer, which stood at 67° in the air, fell to 61° in this room. A few yards to the left, on the side opposite to you on entering, a passage presents itself, which leads to a sort of anti-chamber as it were, from whence you proceed into the sound room, so named from the prodigious reverberation of the sound of a voice or musical instrument at the inside. This room is about twenty feet square; it is arched at top, and the sides of it, as well as of that apartment which you first enter, are beautifully ornamented with stalactites. Returning from hence into the antichamber, and afterwards taking two or three turns to the right and left, you enter a long passage about thirteen feet wide, and perhaps about fifteen in height perpendicularly; but if it was measured from the floor to the highest part of the roof obliquely, the distance would be found much greater, as the walls on both sides slope very considerably, and finally meet at top. This passage descends very rapidly, and is, I should suppose, about sixty yards long. Towards the end it narrows considerably, and
terminates

terminates in a pool of clear water, about three or four feet deep. How far this pool extends it is impossible to say. A canoe was once brought down by a party, for the purpose of examination, but they said, that after proceeding a little way upon the water the canoe would not float, and they were forced to return. Their fears, most probably, led them to fancy it was so. I fired a pistol with a ball over the water, but the report was echoed from the after part of the cavern, and not from that part beyond the water, so that I should not suppose the passage extended much farther than could be traced with the eye. The walls of this passage consist of a solid rock of limestone on each side, which appears to have been separated by some convulsion. The floor is of a deep sandy earth, and it has repeatedly been dug up for the purpose of getting saltpetre, with which the earth is strongly impregnated. The earth, after being dug up, is mixed with water, and when the grosser particles fall to the bottom, the water is drawn off and evaporated; from the residue the saltpetre is procured. There are many other caverns in this neighbourhood, and also farther to the westward, in Virginia; from all of them great quantities of saltpetre are thus obtained. The gunpowder made with it, in the back country, forms a principal article of commerce, and is sent to Philadelphia in exchange for European manufactures.

About two thirds of the way down this long passage, just described, is a large aperture in the wall on the right, leading to another apartment, the bottom of which is about ten feet below the floor of the passage, and it is no easy matter to get down into it, as the sides are very steep and extremely slippery. This is the largest and most beautiful room in the whole cavern; it is somewhat of an oval form, about sixty feet in length, thirty in breadth, and in some parts nearly fifty feet high. The petrifications formed by the water dropping from above are most beautiful, and hang down from the ceiling in the form of elegant drapery, the folds of which are similar to what those of large blankets or carpets would be if suspended by one corner in a lofty room. If struck with a stick a deep hollow sound is produced, which echoes through the vaults of the cavern. In other parts of this room the petrifications have commenced at the bottom, and formed in pillars of

different heights; some of them reach nearly to the roof. If you go to a remote part of this apartment, and leave a person with a lighted torch moving about amidst these pillars, a thousand imaginary forms present themselves, and you might almost fancy yourself in the infernal regions, with spectres and monsters on every side. The floor of this room slopes down gradually from one end to the other, and terminates in a pool of water, which appears to be on a level with that at the end of the long passage; from their situation it is most probable that they communicate together. The thermometer which I had with me stood, in the remotest part of this chamber, at 55°. From hence we returned to the mouth of the cavern, and on coming into the light it appeared as if we really had been in the infernal regions, for our faces, hands, and clothes were smutted all over, every part of the cave being covered with soot from the smoke of the pine torches which are so often carried in. The smoke from the pitch pine is particularly thick and heavy. Before this cave was much visited, and the walls blackened by the smoke, its beauty, I was told by some of the old inhabitants, was great indeed, for the petrifications on the roof and walls are all of the dead white kind.

The country immediately behind the Blue Mountains, between Bottetourt County and the Patowmac River, is agreeably diversified with hill and dale, and abounds with extensive tracts of rich land. The low grounds bordering upon the Shenandoah River, which runs contiguous to the Blue Ridge for upwards of one hundred miles, are in particular distinguished for their fertility. These low grounds are those which, strictly speaking, constitute the Shenandoah Valley, though in general the country lying for several miles distant from the river, and in some parts very hilly, goes under that name. The natural herbage is not so fine here as in Bottetourt County, but when clover is once sown it grows most luxuriantly; wheat also is produced in as plentiful crops as in any part of the United States. Tobacco is not raised excepting for private use, and but little Indian corn is sown, as it is liable to be injured by the nightly frosts, which are common in the spring.

The climate here is not so warm as in the lower parts of the country, on the eastern side of the mountains; but it is by no means so temperate

as in Bottetourt County, which, from being environed with ridges of mountains, is constantly refreshed with cooling breezes during summer, and in the winter is sheltered from the keen blasts from the north west.

The whole of this country, to the west of the mountains, is increasing most rapidly in population. In the neighbourhood of Winchester it is so thickly settled, and consequently so much cleared, that wood is now beginning to be thought valuable; the farmers are obliged frequently to send ten or fifteen miles even for their fence rails. It is only, however, in this particular neighbourhood that the country is so much improved; in other places there are immense tracts of woodlands still remaining, and in general the hills are all left uncleared. The hills being thus left covered with trees is a circumstance which adds much to the beauty of the country, and intermixed with extensive fields clothed with the richest verdure, and watered by the numerous branches of the Shenandoah River, a variety of pleasing landscapes are presented to the eye in almost every part of the route from Bottetourt to the Patowmac, many of which are considerably heightened by the appearance of the Blue Mountains in the back ground.

With regard to these landscapes however, and to American landscapes in general, it is to be observed, that their beauty is much impaired by the unpicturesque appearance of the angular fences, and of the stiff wooden houses, which have at a little distance a heavy, dull, and gloomy aspect. The stumps of the trees also, on land newly cleared, are most disagreeable objects, wherewith the eye is continually assailed. When trees are felled in America, they are never cut down close to the ground, but the trunks are left standing two or three feet high; for it is found that a woodman can cut down many more in a day, standing with a gentle inclination of the body, than if he were to stoop so as to apply his axe to the bottom of the tree; it does not make any difference either to the farmer, whether the stump is left two or three feet high, or whether it is cut down level with the ground, as in each case it would equally be a hindrance to the plough. These stumps usually decay in the course of seven or eight years; sometimes however sooner, sometimes later, according
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ing to the quality of the timber. They never throw up suckers, as stumps of trees would do in England if left in that manner.

The cultivated lands in this country are mostly parcelled out in small portions; there are no persons here, as on the other side of the mountains, possessing large farms; nor are there any eminently distinguished by their education or knowledge from the rest of their fellow-citizens. Poverty also is as much unknown in this country as great wealth. Each man owns the house he lives in and the land which he cultivates, and every one appears to be in a happy state of mediocrity, and unambitious of a more elevated situation than what he himself enjoys.

The free inhabitants consist for the most part of Germans, who here maintain the same character as in Pennsylvania and the other states where they have settled. About one sixth of the people, on an average, are slaves, but in some of the counties the proportion is much less; in Rockbridge the slaves do not amount to more than an eleventh, and in Shenandoah County not to more than a twentieth part of the whole.

Between Fincastle and the Patowmac there are several towns, as Lexington, Staunton, Newmarket, Woodstock, Winchester, Strasburgh, and some others. These towns all stand on the great road, running north and south behind the Blue Mountains, and which is the high road from the northern states to Kentucky.

As I passed along it, I met with great numbers of people from Kentucky and the new state of Tennessee going towards Philadelphia and Baltimore, and with many others going in a contrary direction, "to explore," as they call it, that is, to search for lands conveniently situated for new settlements in the western country. These people all travel on horseback, with pistols or swords, and a large blanket folded up under their saddle, which last they use for sleeping in when obliged to pass the night in the woods. There is but little occasion for arms now that peace has been made with the Indians; but formerly it used to be a very serious undertaking to go by this route to Kentucky; and travellers were always obliged to go forty or fifty in a party, and well prepared for defence. It would be still dangerous for any person to venture singly; but if five or six travel together,

they

they are perfectly secure. There are houses now scattered along nearly the whole way from Fincastle to Lexington in Kentucky, so that it is not necessary to sleep more than two or three nights in the woods in going there. Of all the uncouth human beings I met with in America, these people from the western country were the most so; their curiosity was boundless. Frequently have I been stopped abruptly by one of them in a solitary part of the road, and in such a manner, that had it been in another country, I should have imagined it was a highwayman that was going to demand my purse, and without any further preface, asked where I came from? if I was acquainted with any news? where bound to? and finally, my name?—"Stop, Mifter! why I guess now you be coming from the new state." "No, Sir,"—"Why then I guess as how you be coming from Kentuc*." "No, Sir,"—"Oh! why then, pray now where might you be coming from?" "From the low country."—"Why you must have heard all the news then; pray now, Mifter, what might the price of bacon be in those parts?" "Upon my word, my friend, I can't inform you."—"Aye, aye; I see, Mifter, you be'n't one of us; pray now, Mifter, what might your name be?"—A stranger going the same way is sure of having the company of these worthy people, so desirous of information, as far as the next tavern, where he is seldom suffered to remain for five minutes, till he is again assailed by a fresh set with the same questions.

The first town you come to, going northward from Bottetourt County, is Lexington, a neat little place, that did contain about one hundred houses, a court-house, and gaol; but the greater part of it was destroyed by fire just before I got there. Great numbers of Irish are settled in this place. Thirty miles farther on stands Staunton. This town carries on a considerable trade with the back country, and contains nearly two hundred dwellings, mostly built of stone, together with a church. This was the first place on the entire road from Lynchburgh, one hundred and fifty miles distant, and which I was about ten days in travelling, where I was able to get a bit of fresh meat, excepting indeed on passing the Blue Mountains, where they brought me some ve-

* Kentucky.

nison that had been just killed. I went on fifty miles further, from Staunton, before I got any again. Salted pork, boiled with turnip tops by way of greens, or fried bacon, or fried salted fish, with warm fallad, dressed with vinegar and the melted fat which remains in the frying-pan after dressing the bacon, is the only food to be got at most of the taverns in this country; in spring it is the constant food of the people in the country; and indeed, throughout the whole year, I am told, salted meat is what they most generally use.

In every part of America a European is surpris'd at finding so many men with military titles, and still more so at seeing such numbers of them employed in capacities apparently so inconsistent with their rank; for it is nothing uncommon to see a captain in the shape of a waggoner, a colonel the driver of a stage coach, or a general dealing out penny ribbon behind his counter; but no where, I believe, is there such a superfluity of these military personages as in the little town of Staunton; there is hardly a decent person in it, excepting lawyers and medical men, but what is a colonel, a major, or a captain. This is to be accounted for as follows: in America, every freeman from the age of sixteen to fifty years, whose occupation does not absolutely forbid it, must enrol himself in the militia. In Virginia alone, the militia amounts to about sixty-two thousand men, and it is divided into four divisions and seventeen brigades, to each of which there is a general and other officers. Were there no officers therefore, excepting those actually belonging to the militia, the number must be very great; but independent of the militia, there are also volunteer corps in most of the towns, which have likewise their respective officers. In Staunton there are two of these corps, one of cavalry, the other of artillery. These are formed chiefly of men who find a certain degree of amusement in exercising as soldiers, and who are also induced to associate, by the vanity of appearing in regimentals. The militia is not assembled oftener than once in two or three months, and as it rests with every individual to provide himself with arms and accoutrements, and no stress being laid upon coming in uniform, the appearance of the men is not very military. Numbers also of the officers of these volunteer corps, and of the militia, are resigning
every

every day; and if a man has been a captain or a colonel but one day, either in the one body or the other, it seems to be an established rule that he is to have nominal rank the rest of his life. Added to all, there are several officers of the old continental army neither in the militia nor in the volunteer corps.

Winchester stands one hundred miles to the northward of Staunton, and is the largest town in the United States on the western side of the Blue Mountains. The houses are estimated at three hundred and fifty, and the inhabitants at two thousand. There are four churches in this town, which, as well as the houses, are plainly built. The streets are regular, but very narrow. There is nothing particularly deserving of attention in this place, nor indeed in any of the other small towns which have been mentioned, none of them containing more than seventy houses each.

L E T T E R XVIII.

Description of the Passage of Patowmac and Shenandoah Rivers through a Break in the Blue Mountains.—Some Observations on Mr. Jefferson's Account of the Scene.—Summary Account of Maryland.—Arrival at Philadelphia.—Remarks on the Climate of the United States.—State of the City of Philadelphia during the Heat of Summer.—Difficulty of preserving Butter, Milk, Meat, Fish, &c.—General Use of Ice.—Of the Winds.—State of Weather in America depends greatly upon them.

Philadelphia, June.

HAVING traversed, in various directions, the country to the west of the Blue Mountains in Virginia, I came to the Patowmac, at the place where that river passes through the Blue Ridge, which Mr. Jefferson, in his Notes upon Virginia, has represented as one of the most "stupendous scenes in nature, and worth a voyage across the Atlantic." The approach

proach towards the place is wild and romantic. After crossing a number of small hills, which rise one above the other in succession, you at last perceive the break in the Blue Ridge; at the same time the road suddenly turning, winds down a long and steep hill, shaded with lofty trees, whose branches unite over your head. On one side of the road there are large heaps of rocks above you, which seem to threaten destruction to any one that passes under them; on the other, a deep precipice presents itself, at the bottom of which is heard the roaring of the waters, that are concealed from the eye by the thickness of the foliage. Towards the end of this hill, about sixty feet above the level of the water, stands a tavern and a few houses, and from some fields in the rear of them the passage of the river through the mountain is, I think, seen to the best advantage.

The Patowmac on the left comes winding along through a fertile country towards the mountain; on the right flows the Shenandoah: uniting together at the foot of the mountain, they roll on through the gap; then suddenly expanding to the breadth of about four hundred yards, they pass on towards the sea, and are finally lost to the view amidst surrounding hills. The rugged appearance of the sides of the mountain towards the river, and the large rocks that lie scattered about at the bottom, many of which have evidently been split asunder by some great convulsion, "are monuments," as Mr. Jefferson observes, "of the war that has taken place at this spot between rivers and mountains; and at first sight they lead us into an opinion that mountains were created before rivers began to flow; that the waters of the Patowmac and Shenandoah were dammed up for a time by the Blue Ridge, but continuing to rise, that they at length broke through at this spot, and tore the mountain asunder from its summit to its base." Certain it is, that if the Blue Ridge could be again made entire, an immense body of water would be formed on the western side of it, by the Shenandoah and Patowmac rivers, and this body of water would be deepest, and consequently would act with more force in rapping a passage for itself through the mountain at the identical spot where the gap now is than at any other, for this is the lowest spot in a very extended tract

tract of country. A glance at the map will be sufficient to satisfy any person on this point; it will at once be seen, that all the rivers of the adjacent country bend their courses hitherwards. Whether the ridge, however, was left originally entire, or whether a break was left in it for the passage of the rivers, it is impossible at this day to ascertain; but it is very evident that the sides of the gap have been reduced to their present rugged state by some great inundation. Indeed, supposing that the Patowmac and Shenandoah ever rose during a flood, a common circumstance in spring and autumn, only equally high with what James River did in 1795, that is fifteen feet above their usual level, such a circumstance might have occasioned a very material alteration in the appearance of the gap.

The Blue Ridge, on each side of the Patowmac, is formed, from the foundation to the summit, of large rocks deposited in beds of rich soft earth. This earth is very readily washed away, and in that case the rocks consequently become loose; indeed, they are frequently loosened even by heavy showers of rain. A proof of this came within my own observation, which I shall never forget. It had been raining excessively hard the whole morning of that day on which I arrived at this place; the evening however was very fine, and being anxious to behold the scene in every point of view, I crossed the river, and ascended the mountain at a steep part on the opposite side, where there was no path, and many large projecting rocks. I had walked up about fifty yards, when a large stone that I set my foot upon, and which appeared to me perfectly firm, all at once gave way; it had been loosened by the rain, and brought down such a heap of others with it in its fall, with such a tremendous noise at the same time, that I thought the whole mountain was coming upon me, and expected every moment to be dashed to pieces. I slid down about twenty feet, and then luckily caught hold of the branch of a tree, by which I clung; but the stones still continued to roll down heap after heap; several times, likewise, after all had been still for a minute or two, they again began to fall with increased violence. In this state of suspense I was kept for a considerable time, not knowing but that some stone larger than the rest might give

give way, and carry down with it even the tree by which I held. Unacquainted also with the paths of the mountain, there seemed to me to be no other way of getting down, excepting over the fallen stones, a way which I contemplated with horror. Night however was coming on very fast; it was absolutely necessary to quit the situation I was in, and fortunately I got the bottom without receiving any further injury than two or three slight contusions on my hips and elbows. The people congratulated me when I came back on my escape, and informed me, that the stones very commonly gave way in this manner after heavy falls of rain; but on the dissolution of a large body of snow, immense rocks, they said, would sometimes roll down with a crash that might be heard for miles. The consequences then of a large rock towards the bottom of the mountain being undermined by a flood, and giving way, may be very readily imagined: the rock above it, robbed of its support, would also fall; this would bring down with it numbers of others with which it was connected, and thus a disruption would be produced from the base to the very summit of the mountain.

The passage of the rivers through the ridge at this place is certainly a curious scene, and deserving of attention; but I am far from thinking with Mr. Jefferson, that it is "one of the most stupendous scenes in nature, and worth a voyage across the Atlantic;" nor has it been my lot to meet with any person that had been a spectator of the scene, after reading his description of it, but what also differed with him very materially in opinion. To find numberless scenes more stupendous, it would be needless to go farther than Wales. A river, it is true, is not to be met with in that country, equal in size to the Patowmac; but many are to be seen there rushing over their stony beds with much more turbulence and impetuosity than either the Patowmac or Shenandoah: the rocks, the precipices, and the mountains of the Blue Ridge at this place are diminutive and uninteresting also, compared with those which abound in that country. Indeed, from every part of Mr. Jefferson's description, it appears as if he had beheld the scene, not in its present state, but at the very moment when the disruption happened, and when every thing was in a state of tumult and confusion.

After

After crossing the Patowmac, I passed on to Frederic in Maryland, which has already been mentioned, and from thence to Baltimore. The country between Frederic and Baltimore is by no means so rich as that west of the Blue Ridge, but it is tolerably well cultivated. Iron and copper are found here in many places. No works of any consequence have as yet been established for the manufacture of copper, but there are several extensive iron works. The iron is of a remarkably tough quality; indeed, throughout the states of Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, it is generally so; and the utensils made of it, as pots, kettles, &c. though cast much thinner than usual in England, will admit of being pitched into the carts, and thrown about, without any danger of being broken. The forges and furnaces are all worked by negroes, who seem to be particularly suited to such an occupation, not only on account of their sable complexions, but because they can sustain a much greater degree of heat than white persons without any inconvenience. In the hottest days in summer they are never without fires in their huts.

The farms and plantations in Maryland consist, in general, of from one hundred to one thousand acres. In the upper parts of the state, towards the mountains, the land is divided into small portions. Grain is what is principally cultivated, and there are few slaves. In the lower parts of the state, and in this part of the country between Frederic and Baltimore, the plantations are extensive; large quantities of tobacco are raised, and the labour is performed almost entirely by negroes. The persons residing upon these large plantations live very similar to the planters in Virginia: all of them have their stewards and overseers, and they give themselves but little trouble about the management of the lands. As in Virginia, the clothing for the slaves, and most of the implements for husbandry, are manufactured on each estate. The quarters of the slaves are situated in the neighbourhood of the principal dwelling house, which gives the residence of every planter the appearance of a little village, just the same as in Virginia. The houses are for the most part built of wood, and painted with Spanish brown; and in front there is generally a long porch, painted white.

From

From Baltimore I returned to Philadelphia, where I arrived on the fourteenth day of June, after having been absent about three months. During the whole of that period the weather had been extremely variable, scarcely ever remaining alike four days together. As early as the fourteenth of March, in Pennsylvania, Fahrenheit's thermometer stood at 65° at noon day, though not more than a week before it had been so low as 14° . At the latter end of the month, in Maryland, I scarcely ever observed it higher than 50° at noon: the evenings were always cold, and the weather was squally and wet. In the northern neck of Virginia, for two or three days together, during the second week in April, it rose from 80° to 84° , in the middle of the day; but on the wind suddenly shifting, it fell again, and remained below 70° for some days. As I passed along through the lower parts of Virginia, I frequently afterwards observed it as high as 80° during the month of April; but on no day in the month of May, previous to the fourteenth, did it again rise to the same height; indeed, so far from it, many of the days were too cold to be without fires; and on the night of the ninth instant, when I was in the neighbourhood of the South-west Mountains, so sharp a frost took place, that it destroyed all the cherries, and also most of the early wheat, and of the young shoots of Indian corn; in some particular places, for miles together, the young leaves of the forest trees even were all withered, and the country had exactly the appearance of November. On the tenth instant, the day after the frost, the thermometer was as low as 46° in the middle of the day; yet four days afterwards it stood at 81° . During the remainder of the month, and during June, until I reached Philadelphia, it fluctuated between 60° and 80° ; the weather was on the whole fine, but frequently for a day or two together the air felt extremely raw and disagreeable. The changes in the state of the atmosphere were also sometimes very sudden. On the sixth day of June, when on my way to Frederic Town, after passing the Patowmac River, the most remarkable change of this nature took place which I ever witnessed. The morning had been oppressively hot; the thermometer at 81° , and the wind S. S. W. About one o'clock in the afternoon, a black cloud appeared in the horizon, and a tremendous gust came on, accompanied by

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thunder and lightning; several large trees were torn up by the roots by the wind; hailstones, about three times the size of an ordinary pea, fell for a few minutes; and afterwards a torrent of rain came pouring down, nearly as if a water-spout had broken over head. Just before the gust came on, I had suspended my thermometer from a window with a northern aspect, when it stood at 81° ; but on looking at it at the end of twenty-three minutes, by which time the gust was completely over, I found it down to 59° , a change of 22° . A north-west wind now set in, the evening was most delightful, and the thermometer again rose to 65° . In Pennsylvania the thermometer has been known to vary fifty degrees in the space of twenty-six hours.

The climate of the middle and southern states is extremely variable; the seasons of two succeeding years are seldom alike; and it scarcely ever happens that a month passes over without very great vicissitudes in the weather taking place. Doctor Rittenhouse remarked, that whilst he resided in Pennsylvania, he discovered nightly frosts in every month of the year excepting July, and even in that month, during which the heat is always greater than at any other time of the year, a cold day or two sometimes intervene, when a fire is found very agreeable.

The climate of the state of New York is very similar to that of Pennsylvania, excepting that in the northern parts of that state, bordering upon Canada, the winters are always severe and long. The climate of New Jersey, Delaware, and the upper parts of Maryland, is also much the same with that of Pennsylvania; in the lower parts of Maryland the climate does not differ materially from that of Virginia to the eastward of the Blue Ridge, where it very rarely happens that the thermometer is as low as 6° above cipher.

In Pennsylvania, the range of the mercury in Fahrenheit's thermometer has been observed to be from 24° below cipher to 105° above it; but it is an unusual occurrence for the mercury to stand at either of these extreme points; in its approach towards them it commonly draws much nearer to the extreme of heat than to that of cold. During the winter of 1795, and the three preceding years, it did not sink lower than 10° above cipher; a summer however seldom passes over that it does not rise to

56°. It was mentioned as a singular circumstance, that in 1789 the thermometer never rose higher than 90°.

Of the oppression that is felt from the summer heats in America, no accurate idea can be formed without knowing the exact state of the hygrometer as well as the height of the thermometer. The moisture of the air varies very much in different parts of the country; it also varies in all parts with the winds; and it is surprising to find what a much greater degree of heat can be borne without inconvenience when the air is dry than when it is moist. In New England, in a remarkably dry air, the heat is not found more insupportable when the thermometer stands at 100°, than it is in the lower parts of the southern states, where the air is moist, when the thermometer stands perhaps at 90°, that is, supposing the wind to be in the same quarter in both places. In speaking of Virginia I have taken notice of the great difference that is found between the climate of the mountains and the climate of the low country in that state. The case is the same in every other part of the country. From the mountains in New England, along the different ridges which run through New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the southern states, even to the extremity of Georgia, the heat is never found very oppressive; whilst as far north as Pennsylvania and New York, the heat in the low parts of the country, between the mountains and the ocean, is frequently intolerable.

In the course of the few days that I have spent in Philadelphia during this month, the thermometer has risen repeatedly to 86° and for two or three days it stood at 93°. During these days no one stirred out of doors that was not compelled to do so; those that could make it convenient with their business always walked with umbrellas to shade them from the sun; light white hats were universally worn, and the young men appeared dressed in cotton or linen jackets and trowsers; every gleam of sunshine seemed to be considered as baneful and destructive; the window shutters of each house were closed early in the morning, so as to admit no more light than what was absolutely necessary for domestic business; many of the houses, indeed, were kept so dark, that on going into them from the street, it was impossible at first entrance to perceive who was present.

present. The best houses in the city are furnished with Venetian blinds, at the outside, to the windows and hall doors, which are made to fold together like common window shutters. Where they had these they constantly kept them closed, and the windows and doors were left open behind them to admit air. A very different scene was presented in the city as soon as the sun was set; every house was then thrown open, and the inhabitants all crowded into the streets to take their evening walks, and visit their acquaintance. It appeared every night as if some grand spectacle was to be exhibited, for not a street or alley was there but what was in a state of commotion. This varied scene usually lasted till about ten o'clock; at eleven there is no city in the world, perhaps, so quiet all the year round; at that hour you may walk over half the town without seeing the face of a human being, except the watchmen. Very heavy dews sometimes fall after these hot days, as soon as the sun is down, and the nights are then found very cold; at other times there are no dews, and the air remains hot all the night through. For days together in Philadelphia, the thermometer has been observed never to be lower than 80° during any part of the twenty-four hours.

I observe now that meat can never be kept, but in an ice house or a remarkable cold cellar, for one day, without being tainted. Milk generally turns sour in the course of one or two hours after it comes from the cow. Fish is never brought to market without being covered with lumps of ice, and notwithstanding that care, it frequently happens that it is not fit to be eat. Butter is brought to market likewise in ice, which they generally have in great plenty at every farm house; indeed it is almost considered as a necessary of life in these low parts of the country. Poultry intended for dinner is never killed till about four hours before the time it is wanted, and then it is kept immersed in water, without which precaution it would be tainted. Notwithstanding all this, I have been told, that were I to stay in Philadelphia till the latter end of July or beginning of August, I should find the heat much more intolerable than it has been hitherto. Most of the other large sea port towns, south of Philadelphia, are equally hot and disagreeable in summer; and Baltimore, Norfolk, and some others, even more so.

The winds in every part of the country make a prodigious difference in the temperature of the air. When the north-west wind blows, the heat is always found more tolerable than with any other, although the thermometer should be at the same height. This wind is uncommonly dry, and brings with it fresh animation and vigour to every living thing. Although this wind is so very piercing in winter, yet I think the people never complain so much of cold as when the north-east wind blows; for my own part I never found the air so agreeable, let the season of the year be what it would, as with the north-west wind. The north-east wind is also cold, but it renders the air raw and damp. That from the south-east is damp but warm. Rain or snow usually falls when the wind comes from any point towards the east. The south-west wind, like the north-west, is dry; but it is attended generally with warm weather. When in a southerly point, gusts, as they are called, that is, storms attended with thunder, lightning, hail, and rain, are common.

It is a matter of no difficulty to account for these various effects of the winds in America. The north-west wind, from coming over such an immense tract of land, must necessarily be dry; and coming from regions eternally covered with mounds of snow and ice, it must also be cold. The north-east wind, from traversing the frozen seas, must be cold likewise; but from passing over such a large portion of the watry main afterwards, it brings damps and moistures with it. All those from the east are damp, and loaded with vapours, from the same cause. Southerly winds, from crossing the warm regions between the tropics, are attended with heat; and the south-west wind, from passing, like the north-west, over a great extent of land, is dry at the same time; none however is so dry as that from the north-west. It is said, but with what truth I cannot take upon me to say, that west of the Alleghany and Appalachian mountains, which are all in the same range, the south-west winds are cold and attended with rain. Those great extremes of heat and cold, observable on the eastern side of the mountains, are unknown to the westward of them.

LETTER XIX.

Travelling in America without a Companion not pleasant.—Meet two English Gentlemen.—Set out together for Canada.—Description of the Country between Philadelphia and New York.—Bristol.—Trenton.—Princeton.—College there.—Some Account of it.—Brunswick.—Potsdam Water-fall.—Copper Mine.—Singular Discovery thereof.—New York.—Description of the City.—Character and Manners of the Inhabitants.—Leave it abruptly on Account of the Fevers.—Passage up North River from New York to Albany.—Great Beauty of the North River.—West Point.—Highlands.—Gusts of Wind common in passing them.—Albany.—Description of the City and Inhabitants.—Celebration of the 4th of July.—Anniversary of American Independence.

MY DEAR SIR,

Albany, July.

I Was on the point of leaving Philadelphia for New York, intending from thence to proceed to Canada, when chance brought me into the company of two young gentlemen from England, each of whom was separately preparing to set off on a similar excursion. A rational and agreeable companion, to whom you might communicate the result of your observations, and with whom you might interchange sentiments on all occasions, could not but be deemed a pleasing acquisition, I should imagine, by a person on a journey through a foreign land. Were any one to be found, however, of a different opinion, I should venture to affirm, that ere he travelled far through the United States of America, where there are so few inhabitants in proportion to the extent of the country; where, in going from one town to another, it is frequently necessary to pass for many miles together through dreary woods; and where, even in the towns, a few of those sea-ports indeed excepted which are open to the Atlantic, there is such sameness in the customs, manners, and conversation of the inhabitants, and so little amongst them that interests either the head or the heart; he would not only be induced

to think that a companion must add to the pleasure of a journey, but were absolutely necessary to prevent its appearing insipid, and at times highly irksome to him.

For my own part, I had fully determined in my own mind, upon returning from my tour beyond the Blue Mountains, never again to set out on a journey alone through any part of America, if I could possibly procure an agreeable companion. The gentlemen I met with had, as well as myself, travelled widely through different parts of the United States, and formed nearly the same resolution; we accordingly agreed to go forward to Canada together, and having engaged a carriage for ourselves as far as New York, we quitted the close and disagreeable city of Philadelphia on the twentieth of June.

The road, for the first twenty-five miles, runs very near the River Delaware, which appears to great advantage through openings in the woods that are scattered along its shores. From the town of Bristol in particular, which stands on an elevated part of the banks, twenty miles above Philadelphia, it is seen in a most pleasing point of view. The river, here about one mile wide, winds majestically round the point whereon the town is built, and for many miles, both upwards and downwards, it may be traced through a rich country, flowing gently along: in general it is covered with innumerable little sloops and schooners. Opposite to Bristol stands the city of Burlington, one of the largest in New Jersey, built partly upon an island and partly on the main shore. It makes a good appearance, and adds considerably to the beauty of the prospect from Bristol.

Ten miles farther on, opposite to Trenton, which stands at the head of the sloop navigation, you cross the river. The falls or rapids, that prevent boats from ascending any higher, appear in full view as you pass, but their prospect is in no way pleasing; beyond them, the navigation may be pursued for upwards of one hundred miles in small boats. Trenton is the capital of New Jersey, and contains about two hundred houses, together with four churches. The streets are commodious, and the houses neatly built. The state-house, in which congress met for some time during the war, is a heavy clumsy edifice.

Twelve

Twelve miles from Trenton, stands Princeton, a neat town, containing about eighty dwellings in one long street. Here is a large college, held in much repute by the neighbouring states. The number of students amounts to upwards of seventy; from their appearance, however, and the course of studies they seem to be engaged in, like all the other American colleges I ever saw, it better deserves the title of a grammar school than a college. The library, which we were shewn, is most wretched, consisting, for the most part, of old theological books, not even arranged with any regularity. An orrery, contrived by Mr. Rittenhouse, whose talents are so much boasted of by his countrymen, stands at one end of the apartment, but it is quite out of repair, as well as a few detached parts of a philosophical apparatus, enclosed in the same glass case. At the opposite end of the room are two small cupboards, which are shewn as the museum. These contain a couple of small stuffed alligators, and a few singular fishes, in a miserable state of preservation, the skins of them being tattered in innumerable places, from their being repeatedly tossed about. The building is very plain, and of stone; it is one hundred and eighty feet in front, and four stories high.

The next stage from Princeton is Brunswick, containing about two hundred houses; there is nothing very deserving of attention in it, excepting it be the very neat and commodious wooden bridge that has been thrown across the Raritan River, which is about two hundred paces over. The part over the channel is contrived to draw up, and on each side is a footway guarded by rails, and ornamented with lamps. Elizabeth Town and Newark, which you afterwards pass through in succession, are both of them cheerful lively looking places: neither of them is paved. Newark is built in a straggling manner, and has very much the appearance of a large English village: there is agreeable society in this town. These two towns are only eight miles apart, and each of them has one or two excellent churches, whose tall spires appear very beautiful as you approach at a distance, peeping up above the woods by which they are encircled.

The state of New Jersey, measured from north to south, is about one hundred

hundred and sixty miles in length; it varies in breadth from forty to eighty miles. The northern part of it is crossed by the blue ridge of mountains, running through Pennsylvania; and shooting off in different directions from this ridge, there are several other small mountains in the neighbourhood. The southern part of the state, on the contrary, which lies towards the sea, is extremely flat and sandy; it is covered for miles together with pine trees alone, usually called pine barrens, and is very little cultivated. The middle part, which is crossed in going from Philadelphia to New York, abounds with extensive tracts of good land; the soil varies, however, considerably, in some places being sandy, in others stoney, and in others consisting of a rich brown mould. This part of the state, as far as Newark, is on the whole well cultivated, and scattered about in different places are some excellent farm houses; a good deal of uncleared land, however, still remains. Beyond Newark the country is extremely flat and marshy. Between the town and the Posaick River there is one marsh, which alone extends upwards of twenty miles, and is about two miles wide where you pass over it. The road is here formed with large logs of wood laid close together, and on each side are ditches to keep it dry. This was the first place where we met with musquitoes, and they annoyed us not a little in passing. Towards the latter end of the summer Philadelphia is much infested with them; but they had not made their appearance when we left that city. The Posaick River runs close upon the borders of this marsh, and there is an excellent wooden bridge across it, somewhat similar to that at New Brunswick over the Raritan River. About fifteen miles above it there is a very remarkable fall in the river. The river, at the fall, is about forty yards wide, and flows with a gentle current till it comes within a few perches of the edge of the fall, when it suddenly precipitates itself, in one entire sheet, over a ledge of rocks of nearly eighty feet in perpendicular height; below, it runs on through a chasm, formed of immense rocks on each side; they are higher than the fall, and seem to have been once united together.

In this neighbourhood there is a very rich copper mine: repeated attempts have been made to work it; but whether the price of labour be

too

too great for such an undertaking, or the proprietors have not proceeded with judgment, certain it is, that they have always miscarried, and sustained very considerable losses thereby. This mine was first discovered in 1751, by a person who, passing along about three o'clock in the morning, observed a blue flame, about the size of a man, issuing from the earth, which afterwards soon died away : he marked the place with a stake, and when the hill was opened, several large lumps of virgin copper were found. The vein of copper in the mine is said to be much richer now than when first opened.

From the Posaik to the North River the country is hilly, barren, and uninteresting, till you come very near the latter, when a noble view opens all at once of the city of New York on the opposite shore, of the harbour, and shipping. The river, which is very grand, can be traced for several miles above the city ; the banks are very steep on the Jersey side, and beautifully wooded, the trees almost dipping into the water : numbers of vessels plying about in every part render the scene extremely sprightly and interesting.

New York is built on an island of its own name, formed by the North and the East Rivers, and a creek or inlet connecting both of these together. The island is fourteen miles long, and, on an average, about one mile in breadth ; at its southern extremity stands the city, which extends from one river to the other. The North, or Hudson River, is nearly two miles wide ; the East, or the North-east one, as it should rather be called, is not quite so broad. The depth of water in each, close to the city, is sufficient for the largest merchant vessels. The principal seat of trade, however, is on the East River, and most of the vessels lie there, as during winter the navigation of that river is not so soon impeded by the ice. At this side of the town the houses and stores are built as closely as possible. The streets are narrow and inconvenient, and, as but too commonly is the case in seaport towns, very dirty, and, consequently, during the summer season, dreadfully unhealthy. It was in this part of the town that the yellow fever raged with such violence in 1795 ; and during 1796, many persons that remained very constantly there also fell victims to a fever, which, if not the yellow
fever,

fever, was very like it. The streets near the North River are much more airy; but the most agreeable part of the town is in the neighbourhood of the battery, on the southern point of the island, at the confluence of the two rivers. When New York was in possession of the English, this battery consisted of two or more tiers of guns, one above the other; but it is now cut down, and affords a most charming walk, and, on a summer's evening, is crowded with people, as it is open to the breezes from the sea, which render it particularly agreeable at that season. There is a fine view from it of the roads, Long and Staten Islands, and Jersey shore. At the time of high water the scene is always interesting on account of the number of vessels sailing in and out of port; such as go into the East River pass within a few yards of the walls of the battery.

From the battery a handsome street, about seventy feet wide, called Broadway, runs due north through the town; between it and the North River run several streets at right angles, as you pass which you catch a view of the water, and boats plying up and down; the distant shore of the river also is seen to great advantage. Had the streets on the opposite side of Broadway been also carried down to the East River, the effect would have been beautiful, for Broadway runs along a ridge of high ground between the two rivers; it would have contributed also very much to the health of the place; if, added to this, a spacious quay had been formed the entire length of the city, on either side, instead of having the borders of the rivers crowded with confused heaps of wooden store houses, built upon wharfs projecting one beyond another in every direction, New York would have been one of the most beautiful sea-ports in the world. All the sea-ports in America appear to great disadvantage from the water, when you approach near to them, from the shores being crowded in this manner with irregular masses of wooden houses, standing as it were in the water. The federal city, where they have already begun to erect the same kind of wooden wharfs and store-houses without any regularity, will be just the same. It is astonishing, that in laying out that city a grand quay was not thought of in the plan; it would certainly have afforded equal, if not greater accommodation

tion for the shipping, and it would have added wonderfully to the embellishment of the city.

Many of the private houses in New York are very good, particularly those in Broadway. Of the public buildings there are none which are very striking. The churches and houses for public worship amount to no less than twenty-two; four of them are for Presbyterians, three for Episcopalians of the church of England, three for Dutch Reformists, two for German Lutherans and Calvinists, two for Quakers, two for Baptists, two for Methodists, one for French Protestants, one for Moravians, one for Roman Catholics, and one for Jews.

According to the census in 1790, the number of inhabitants in New York was found to be thirty thousand one hundred and forty-eight free persons, and two thousand one hundred and eighty slaves; but at present the number is supposed to amount at least to forty thousand. The inhabitants have long been distinguished above those of all the other towns in the United States, except it be the people of Charleston, for their politeness, gaiety, and hospitality; and, indeed, in these points they are most strikingly superior to the inhabitants of the other large towns. Their public amusements consist in dancing and card assemblies, and theatrical exhibitions; for the former a spacious suite of rooms has lately been erected. The theatre is of wood, and a most miserable edifice it is; but a new one is now building on a grand scale, which, it is thought, will be as much too large for the town as the other is too small.

Being anxious to proceed on our journey before the season was too far advanced, and also particularly desirous of quitting New York on account of the fevers, which, it was rumoured, were increasing very fast, we took our passage for Albany in one of the sloops trading constantly on the North River, between New York and that place, and embarked on the second day of July, about two o'clock in the afternoon. Scarcely a breath of air was stirring at the time; but the tide carried us up at the rate of about two miles and a half an hour. The sky remained all day as serene as possible, and as the water was perfectly smooth, it reflected in a most beautiful manner the images of the various objects on the shore, and of the numerous vessels dispersed along

the river at different distances, and which seemed to glide along, as it were, by the power of magic, for the sails all hung down loose and motionless. The sun, setting in all his glory, added fresh beauties to this calm and peaceable scene, and permitted us for the last time to behold the distant spires of New York, illumined by his parting rays. To describe all the grand and beautiful prospects presented to the view on passing along this noble river, would be an endless task; all the various effects that can be supposed to arise from a happy combination of wood and water, of hill and dale, are here seen in the greatest perfection. In some places the river expands to the breadth of five or six miles, in others it narrows to that of a few hundred yards, and in various parts it is interspersed with islands; in some places again its course can be traced as far as the eye can reach, whilst in others it is suddenly lost to the view, as it winds between its lofty banks; here mountains covered with rocks and trees rise almost perpendicularly out of the water; there a fine champaign country presents itself, cultivated to the very margin of the river, whilst neat farm houses and distant towns embellish the charming landscapes.

After sunset, a brisk wind sprang up, which carried us on at the rate of six or seven miles an hour for a considerable part of the night; but for some hours we had to lie at anchor at a place where the navigation of the river was too difficult to proceed in the dark. Our sloop was no more than seventy tons burthen by register; but the accommodations she afforded were most excellent, and far superior to what might be expected on board so small a vessel; the cabin was equally large with that in a common merchant vessel of three hundred tons, built for crossing the ocean. This was owing to the great breadth of her beam, which was no less than twenty-two feet and a half although her length was only fifty-five feet. All the sloops engaged in this trade are built nearly on the same construction; short, broad, and very shallow, few of them draw more than five or six feet water, so that they are only calculated for sailing upon smooth water.

Early the next morning we found ourselves opposite to West Point, a place rendered remarkable in history by the desertion of General Arnold,

nold, during the American war, and the consequent death of the unfortunate Major André. The fort stands about one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the water, on the side of a barren hill; no human creature appearing in it except the solitary centinel, who marched backwards and forwards on the ramparts overgrown with long grass, it had a most melancholy aspect that perhaps was heightened by the gloominess of the morning, and the recollection of all the circumstances attending the unhappy fate of poor André.

Near West Point there is also another post, called Fort Putnam, which, since the peace, has been suffered to get very much out of repair; however, steps are now taking to have it put in good order. Supposing that a rupture should ever unfortunately again take place between Great Britain and the United States of America, these posts would be of the greatest consequence, as they form a link in that chain of posts which extend the whole way along the navigable waters that connect the British settlements with New York.

In this neighbourhood the highlands, as they are called, commence, and extend along the river on each side for several miles. The breadth of the river is here considerably contracted, and such sudden gusts of wind, coming from between the mountains, sometimes blow through the narrow passes, that vessels frequently have their topmasts carried away. The captain of the sloop we were in, said, that his mainmast was once blown into tatters in an instant, and a part of it carried on shore. When the sky is lowering, they usually take in sail going along this part of the river.

About four o'clock in the morning of the fourth of July we reached Albany, the place of our destination, one hundred and sixty miles distant from New York.

Albany is a city, and contains about eleven hundred houses; the number however is increasing fast, particularly since the removal of the state government from New York. In the old part of the town the streets are very narrow and the houses are frightful; they are all built in the old Dutch taste, with the gable end towards the street, and ornamented on the top with large iron weather cocks; but in that part which has been

lately erected, the streets are commodious, and many of the houses are handsome. Great pains have been taken to have the streets well paved and lighted. Here are four places for public worship, and an hospital. Albany is in summer time a very disagreeable place; it stands in a low situation, just on the margin of the river, which runs very slowly here, and towards the evening often exhales clouds of vapours; immediately behind the town, likewise, is a large sand bank, that prevents a free circulation of air, while at the same time it powerfully reflects the rays of the sun, which shines in full force upon it the whole day. Notwithstanding all this, however, the climate is deemed very salubrious.

The inhabitants of this place, a few years ago, were almost entirely of Dutch extraction; but now strangers are flocking to it from all quarters, as there are few places in America more advantageously situated for commerce. The flourishing state of its trade has already been mentioned; it bids fair to rival that of New York in process of time.

The fourth of July, the day of our arrival at Albany, was the anniversary of the declaration of American independence, and on our arrival we were told that great preparations were making for its celebration*. A drum and trumpet, towards the middle of the day, gave notice of the commencement of the rejoicings, and on walking to a hill about a quarter of a mile from the town, we saw sixty men drawn up, partly militia, partly volunteers, partly infantry, partly cavalry; the latter were clothed in scarlet, and mounted on horses of various descriptions. About three hundred spectators attended. A few rounds were fired from a three pounder, and some volleys of small arms. The firing was finished before one hour was expired, and then the troops returned to town, a party of militia officers in uniform marching in the rear, under the shade of umbrellas, as the day was excessively hot. Having

* Our landlord, as soon as he found out who we were, immediately came to us, to request that we would excuse the confused state in which his house was, as this was the anniversary day of "American Independence," or, as some, indeed, more properly called it, of "American Repentance." We were all of us not a little surprised at this address, and from such a person; instances, how-

ever, are not wanting of people openly declaring, that they have never enjoyed so much quiet and happiness in their own homes since the revolution as they did when the states were the colonies of Great Britain. Amongst the planters in Virginia I heard language of this sort more than once.

reached

reached town, the whole body immediately dispersed. The volunteers and militia officers afterwards dined together, and so ended the rejoicings of the day; no public ball, no general entertainment was there of any description. A day still fresh in the memory of every American, and which appears so glorious in the annals of their country, would, it might be expected, have called forth more brilliant and more general rejoicings; but the downright phlegmatic people in this neighbourhood, intent upon making money, and enjoying the solid advantages of the revolution, are but little disposed to waste their time in what they consider idle demonstrations of joy.

LETTER XX.

Departure from Albany.—Difficulty of hiring a Carriage.—Arrival at Cohoz.—Description of the curious Fall there of the Mohawk River.—Still-water.—Saratoga.—Few of the Works remaining there.—Singular Mineral Springs near Saratoga.—Fort Edward.—Miss M'Grea cruelly murdered there by Indians.—Fort Ann, wretched Road thither.—Some Observations on the American Woods.—Horses jaded.—Difficulty of getting forward.—Arrive at Skenesborough.—Dreadfully infested by Musquitoes.—Particular Description of that Insect.—Great Danger ensues sometimes from their Bite.—Best Remedy.

MY DEAR SIR,

Skenesborough, July.

WE remained in Albany for a few days, and then set off for Skenesborough, upon Lake Champlain, in a carriage hired for the purpose. The hiring of this vehicle was a matter attended with some trouble, and detained us longer in the town than we wished to stay. There were only two carriages to be had in the whole place, and the owners having an understanding with each other, and thinking that we should be forced to give whatever price they asked, positively refused to let us have

have either of them for less than seventy dollars, equal to fifteen guineas. We on our part as positively refused to comply with a demand which we knew to be exorbitant, and resolved to wait patiently in Albany for some other conveyance, rather than submit to such an imposition. The fellows held out for two days, but at the end of that time one of them came to tell us we might have his carriage for half the price, and accordingly we took it.

Early the next morning we set off, and in about two hours arrived at the small village of Cohoz, close to which is the remarkable fall in the Mohawk River. This river takes its rise to the north-east of Lake Oneida, and after a course of one hundred and forty miles, disembogues into the Hudson or North River, about ten miles above Albany. The Cohoz Fall is about three miles distant from its mouth. The breadth of the river is three hundred yards; a ledge of rocks extends quite across, and from the top of them the water falls about fifty feet perpendicular; the line of the fall from one side of the river to the other is nearly straight. The appearance of this fall varies very much, according to the quantity of water; when the river is full, the water descends in an unbroken sheet from one bank to the other, whilst at other times the greater part of the rocks are left uncovered. The rocks are of a remarkable dark colour, and so also is the earth in the banks, which rise to a great height on either side. There is a very pleasing view of this cataract as you pass over the bridge across the river, about three quarters of a mile lower down.

From hence we proceeded along the banks of the Hudson River, through the town of Stillwater, which receives its name from the uncommon stillness of the river opposite to it, and late in the evening reached Saratoga, thirty-five miles from Albany. This place contains about forty houses, and a Dutch reformed church, but they are so scattered about that it has not the smallest appearance of a town.

In this neighbourhood, upon the borders of a marsh, are several very remarkable mineral springs; one of them, in the crater of a rock, of a pyramidal form, about five feet in height, is particularly curious. This rock seems to have been formed by the petrification of the water:

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all the other springs are likewise surrounded with petrifications of the same kind. The water in the principal spring, except at the beginning of the summer, when it regularly overflows, remains about eight inches below the rim of the crater, and bubbles up as if boiling. The crater is nine inches in diameter. The various properties of the water have not been yet ascertained with any great accuracy; but it is said to be impregnated with a fossil acid and some saline substance; there is also a great portion of fixed air in it. An opportunity is here afforded for making some curious experiments.

If animals be put down into the crater, they will be immediately suffocated; but if not kept there too long they recover again upon being brought into the open air.

If a lighted candle be put down, the flame will be extinguished in an instant, and not even the smallest spark left in the wick.

If the water immediately taken from the spring be put into a bottle, closely corked, and then shaken, either the cork will be forced out with an explosion, or the bottle will be broken; but if left in an open vessel it becomes vapid in less than half an hour. The water is very pungent to the taste, and acts as a cathartic on some people, as an emetic on others.

Of the works thrown up at Saratoga by the British and American armies during the war, there are now scarcely any remains. The country round about is well cultivated, and the trenches have been mostly levelled by the plough. We here crossed the Hudson River, and proceeded along its eastern shore as far as Fort Edward, where it is lost to the view, for the road still runs on towards the north, whilst the river takes a sudden bend to the west.

Fort Edward was dismantled prior to the late American war; but the opposite armies, during that unhappy contest, were both in the neighbourhood. Many of the people, whom we found living here, had served as soldiers in the army, and told us a number of interesting particulars relative to several events which happened in this quarter. The landlord of the tavern where we stopped, for one, related all the circumstances attending Miss M' Crea's death, and pointed out on a hill, not far from
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the house, the very spot where she was murdered by the Indians, and the place of her interment. This beautiful young lady had been engaged to an officer in General Burgoyne's army, who, anxious for her safety, as there were several marauding parties going about in the neighbourhood where she lived, sent a party of trusty Indians to escort her to the camp. These Indians had partly executed their commission, and were approaching with their charge in sight of the British camp, when they were met by another set of Indians belonging to a different tribe, that was also attending the British army at this time. In a few minutes it became a matter of dispute between them which should have the honour of conducting her to the camp; from words they came to blows, and blood was on the point of being drawn, when one of their chiefs, to settle the matter without farther mischief, went up to Miss M'Crea, and killed her on the spot with a blow of his tomahawk. The object of contention being thus removed, the Indians returned quietly to the camp. The enormity of the crime, however, was too great not to attract public notice, and it turned the minds of every person against the Indians, who had not before witnessed their ferocity on occasions equally shocking to humanity. The impolicy of employing such barbarians was now strongly reprobated, and in a short time afterwards most of them were dismissed from our army.

Fort Edward stands near the river. The town of the same name, is at the distance of one or two hundred yards from it, and contains about twenty houses. Thus far we had got on tolerably well; but from hence to Fort Anne, which was also dismantled prior to the late war, the road is most wretched, particularly over a long causeway between the two forts, formed originally for the transporting of cannon, the soil here being extremely moist and heavy. The causeway consists of large trees laid side by side transversely, some of which having decayed, great intervals are left, wherein the wheels of the carriage were sometimes locked so fast that the horses alone could not possibly extricate them. To have remained in the carriage over this part of the road would really have been a severe punishment; for although boasted of as being the very best in Albany, it had no sort of springs, and
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was in fact little better than a common waggon; we therefore alighted, took our guns, and amused ourselves with shooting as we walked along through the woods. The woods here had a much more majestic appearance than any that we had before met with on our way from Philadelphia; this, however, was owing more to the great height than to the thickness of the trees, for I could not see one that appeared more than thirty inches in diameter; indeed, in general, the girth of the trees in the woods of America is but very small in proportion to their height, and trifling in comparison of that of the forest trees in Great Britain. The thickest tree I ever saw in the country was a sycamore, which grew upon the banks of the Shenandoah River, just at its junction with the Patowmac, in a bed of rich earth, close to the water; yet this tree was no more than about four feet four inches in diameter. On the low grounds in Kentucky, and on some of the bottoms in the western territory, it is said that trees are commonly to be met with seven and eight feet in diameter. Where this is the case, the trees must certainly grow much farther apart than they do in the woods in the middle states, towards the Atlantic, for there they spring up so very close to each other, that it is absolutely impossible for them to attain to a great diameter.

The woods here were composed chiefly of oaks*, hickory, hemlock, and beech trees, intermixed with which, appeared great numbers of the smooth bark or Weymouth pines, as they are called, that seem almost peculiar to this part of the country. A profusion of wild raspberries were growing in the woods here, really of a very good flavour: they are commonly found in the woods to the northward of this; in Canada they abound every where.

Beyond Fort Anne, which is situated at the distance of eight miles from Fort Edward, the roads being better, we once more mounted into our vehicle; but the miserable horses, quite jaded, now made a dead stop; in vain the driver bawled, and stamped, and swore; his whip had been previously worn out some hours, owing to the frequent use he had

* There are upwards of twenty different kinds of oaks in America.

made of it, and the animals no longer feeling its heavy lash, seemed as determined as the mules of the abbess of Andouilletts to go no farther. In this situation we could not help bantering the fellow upon the excellence of his cattle, which he had boasted so much of at setting out, and he was ready to cry with vexation at what we said; but having accidentally mentioned the sum we had paid for the carriage, his passion could no longer be restrained, and it broke forth in all its fury. It appeared that he was the owner of two of the horses, and for the use of them, and for driving the carriage, was to have had one half of the hire; but the man whom we had agreed with, and paid at Albany, had given him only ten dollars as his moiety, assuring him, at the same time, that it was exactly the half of what we had given, although in reality it fell short of the sum by seven dollars and a half. Thus cheated by his companion, and left in the lurch by his horses, he vowed vengeance against him on his return; but as protestations of this nature would not bring us any sooner to our journey's end, and as it was necessary that something should be immediately done, if we did not wish to remain all night in the woods, we suggested the idea, in the mean time, of his conducting the foremost horses as postillion, whilst one of our servants should drive the pair next to the wheel. This plan was not started with any degree of seriousness, for we could not have supposed that a tall meagre fellow, upwards of six feet high, and clad in a pair of thin nankeen breeches, would very readily bestride the raw boned back of a horse, covered with the profuse exudations which the intense heat of the weather, and the labour the animal had gone through, necessarily excited. As much tired, however, of our pleasantries as we were of his vehicle, and thinking of nothing, I believe, but how he could best get rid of us, he eagerly embraced the proposal, and accordingly, having furnished himself with a switch from the adjoining thicket, he mounted his harnessed Rosinante. In this style we proceeded; but more than once did our gigantic postillion turn round to bemoan the sorry choice he had made; as often did we urge the necessity of getting out of the woods; he could make no answer; so jogging slowly along, we at last reached the little town of Skenesborough, much to the amusement of every one
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who beheld our equipage, and much to our own satisfaction; for, owing to the various accidents we had met with, such as traces breaking, bridles slipping off the heads of the horses, and the noble horses themselves sometimes slipping down, &c. &c. we had been no less than five hours in travelling the last twelve miles.

Skenesborough stands just above the junction of Wood Creek with South River, as it is called in the best maps, but which, by the people in the neighbourhood, is considered as a part of Lake Champlain. At present there are only about twelve houses in the place; but if the navigation of Wood Creek is ever opened, so as to connect Lake Champlain with the North River, a scheme which has already been seriously thought of, it will, doubtless, soon become a trading town of considerable importance, as all the various productions of the shores of the lake will then be collected there for the New York and Albany markets. Notwithstanding all the disadvantages of a land carriage of forty miles to the North River, a small portion of flour and pot-ash, the staple commodities of the state of New York, is already sent to Skenesborough from different parts of the lake, to be forwarded to Albany. A considerable trade also is carried on through this place, and over Lake Champlain, between New York and Canada. Furs and horses principally are sent from Canada, and in return they get East Indian goods and various manufactures. Lake Champlain opens a very ready communication between New York and the country bordering on the St. Lawrence; it is emphatically called by the Indians, Caniad—Eri Guarunte, the mouth or door of the country.

Skenesborough is most dreadfully infested with musquitoes; so many of them attacked us the first night of our sleeping there, that when we arose in the morning our faces and hands were covered all over with large pustules, precisely like those of a person in the small pox. This happened too notwithstanding that the people of the house, before we went to bed, had taken all the pains possible to clear the room of them, by fumigating it with the smoke of green wood, and afterwards securing the windows with gauze blinds; and even on the second night, although we destroyed many dozens of them on the walls, after a simi-

lar fumigation had been made, yet we suffered nearly as much. These insects were of a much larger size than any I ever saw elsewhere, and their bite was uncommonly venomous. General Washington told me, that he never was so much annoyed by musquitoes in any part of America as in Skenesborough, for that they used to bite through the thickest boot. The situation of the place is indeed peculiarly favourable for them, being just on the margin of a piece of water, almost stagnant, and shaded with thick woods. The musquito is of the same species with the common gnat in England, and resembles it very closely both in size and shape. Like the gnat it lays its eggs on the surface of the water, where they are hatched in the course of a few days, unless the water is agitated, in which last case they are all destroyed. From the egg is produced a grub, which changes to a chrysalis, and afterwards to a musquito; this last change takes place on the surface of the water, and if at the moment that the insect first spreads its wings the water is not perfectly still and the air calm, it will be inevitably destroyed; at those parts of the lake, therefore, which are most exposed, and where the water is often agitated, no such thing as a musquito is ever seen; neither are they ever found along a large and rapid river, where the shores are lofty and dry; but in the neighbourhood of marshes, low grounds, and stagnant waters, they always abound. Musquitoes appear to be particularly fond of the fresh blood of Europeans, who always suffer much more the first year of their arrival in America than they do afterwards. The people of the country seem quite to disregard their attacks. Wherever they fix their sting, a little tumor or pustule usually arises, supposed to be occasioned by the fermentation, when mixed with the blood, of a small quantity of liquor which the insect always injects into the wound it makes with its spicula, as may be seen through a microscope, and which it probably does to render the blood more fluid. The disagreeable itching this excites is most effectually allayed by the application of volatile alkali; or if the part newly stung be scratched, and immediately bathed in cold water, that also affords considerable relief; but after the venom has been lodged for any time, scratching only increases the itching, and it may be attended with great danger. Repeated instances

instances have occurred of people having been laid up for months, and narrowly escaping the loss of a limb, from imprudently rubbing a part which had been bitten for a long time. Great ease is also derived from opening the pustules on the second day with a lancet, and letting out the blood and watery matter.

LETTER XXI.

Embark on Lake Champlain.—Difficulty of procuring Provisions at Farms bordering upon it.—Ticonderoga.—Crown Point.—Great Beauty of the Scenery.—General Description of Lake Champlain and the adjacent Country. Captain Thomas and his Indians arrive at Crown Point.—Character of Thomas.—Reach St. John's.—Description of that Place.—Great Difference observable in the Face of the Country, Inhabitants, &c. in Canada and in the States.—Chambly Castle.—Calashes.—Bons Dieux.—Town of La Prairie.—Great Rapidity of the River Saint Lawrence.—Cross it to Montreal.—Astonishment on seeing large Ships at Montreal.—Great Depth of the River.

Montreal, July.

SHORTLY after our arrival in Skenesborough, we hired a small boat of about ten tons for the purpose of crossing Lake Champlain. It was our wish to proceed on the voyage immediately; but the owner of the boat asserting that it was impossible to go out with the wind then blowing, we were for three days detained in Skenesborough, a delicious feast for the hungry musquitoes. The wind shifted again and again, still it was not fair in the opinion of our boatman. At last, being most heartily tired of our quarters, and suspecting that he did not understand his business as well as he ought to have done, we resolved not to abide by his opinion any longer, but to make an attempt at beating out, and we had great reason to be pleased with having done so, as we arrived in
Canada

Canada three days before any of the other boats, that did not venture to move till the wind was quite aft.

We set off about one o'clock; but from the channel being very narrow, it was impossible to make much way by tacking. We got no farther than six miles before sun-set. We then stopped, and having landed, walked up to some farm houses, which appeared at a distance, on the Vermont shore, to procure provisions; for the boatman had told us it was quite unnecessary to take in any at Skenesborough, as there were excellent houses close to the shore the whole way, where we could get whatever we wished. At the first we went to, which was a comfortable log-house, neither bread, nor meat, nor milk, nor eggs, were to be had; the house was crowded with children of all ages, and the people, I suppose, thought they had but little enough for themselves. At a second house, we found a venerable old man at the door, reading a newspaper, who civilly offered it to us for our perusal, and began to talk upon the politics of the day; we thanked him for his offer, and gave him to understand, at the same time, that a loaf would be much more acceptable. Bread there was none; we got a new Vermont cheese, however. A third house now remained in sight, and we made a third attempt at procuring something to eat. This one was nearly half a mile off, but alas! it afforded still less than the last; the people had nothing to dispose of but a little milk. With the milk and the cheese, therefore, we returned to our boat, and adding thereto some biscuits and wine, which we had luckily on board, the whole afforded us a frugal repast.

The people at the American farm houses will cheerfully lie three in a bed, rather than suffer a stranger to go away who comes to seek for a lodging. As all these houses, however, which we had visited, were crowded with inhabitants, we felt no great inclination to ask for accommodation at any of them, but determined to sleep on board our little vessel. We accordingly moored her at a convenient part of the shore, and each of us having wrapped himself up in a blanket, which we had been warned to provide on leaving New York, we laid ourselves down to sleep. The boat was decked two thirds of her length forward, and had

had a commodious hold; we gave the preference, however, because more airy, to the cabin or after part, fitted up with benches, and covered with a wooden awning, under which a man could just sit upright, provided he was not very tall. The benches, which went lengthwise, accommodated two of us; and the third was obliged to put up with the cabin floor; but a blanket and a bare board, out of the way of musquitoes, were luxuries after our accommodations at Skenesborough; our ears were not assailed by the noise even of a single one the whole night, and we enjoyed sounder repose than we had done for many nights preceding.

The wind remained nearly in the same point the next morning, but the lake being wider, we were enabled to proceed faster. We stopped at one house to breakfast, and at another to dine. At neither of these, although they bore the name of taverns, were we able to procure much more than at the houses where we had stopped the preceding evening. At the first we got a little milk, and about two pounds of bread, absolutely the whole of what was in the house; and at the second, a few eggs, and some cold salted fat pork; but not a morsel of bread was to be had. The wretched appearance also of this last habitation was very striking; it consisted of a wooden frame, merely with a few boards nailed against it, the crevices between which were the only apertures for the admission of light, except the door; and the roof was so leaky, that we were sprinkled with the rain even as we sat at the fire side. That people can live in such a manner, who have the necessaries and conveniencies of life within their reach, as much as any others in the world, is really most astonishing! It is, however, to be accounted for, by that desire of making money, which is the predominant feature in the character of the Americans in general, and leads the petty farmer in particular to suffer numberless inconveniencies, when he can gain by so doing. If he can sell the produce of his land to advantage, he keeps as small a part of it as possible for himself, and lives the whole year round upon salt provisions, bad bread, and the fish he can catch in the rivers or lakes in the neighbourhood; if he has built a comfortable house for himself, he readily quits it, as soon as finished, for money, and

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goes to live in a mere hovel in the woods till he gets time to build another. Money is his idol, and to procure it he gladly foregoes every self-gratification.

From this miserable habitation, just mentioned, we departed as soon as the rain was over, and the wind coming round in our favour, we got as far as Ticonderoga that night. The only dwelling here is the tavern, which is a large house built of stone. On entering it we were shewn into a spacious apartment, crowded with boatmen and people that had just arrived from St. John's, in Canada. Seeing such a number of guests in the house, we expected nothing less than to be kept an hour or two till sufficient supper was prepared for the whole company, so that all might sit down at once together, which, as I have before said, is the custom in the country parts of the United States. Our surprise therefore was great at perceiving a neat table and a comfortable little supper speedily laid out for us, and no attempts made at serving the rest of the company till we had quite finished. This was departing from the system of equality in a manner which we had never witnessed before, and we were at a loss for some time to account for it; but we presently heard that the woman of the house had kept a tavern for the greater part of her life at Quebec, which resolved the knotty point. The wife is generally the active person in managing a country tavern, and the husband attends to his farm, or has some independent occupation. The man of this house was a judge, a fullen demure old gentleman, who sat by the fire *, with tattered clothes and dishevelled locks, reading a book, totally regardless of every person in the room.

The old fort and barracks of Ticonderoga are on the top of a rising ground, just behind the tavern; they are quite in ruins, and it is not likely that they will ever be rebuilt, for the situation is very insecure, being commanded by a lofty hill called Mount Defiance. The British got possession of the place the last war by dragging cannon and mortars up the hill, and firing down upon the fort.

* Though this was the 14th day of July, the weather was so cold that we found a fire extremely agreeable.

Early the next morning we left Ticonderoga, and pursued our voyage to Crown Point, where we landed to look at the old fort. Nothing is to be seen there, however, but a heap of ruins; for shortly before it was given up by the British, the powder magazine blew up, by which accident a great part of the works was destroyed; since the evacuation of it also, the people in the neighbourhood have been continually digging in different parts, in hopes of procuring lead and iron shot; a considerable quantity was in one instance got out of the stores that had been buried by the explosion. The vaults, which were bomb proof, have been demolished for the sake of the bricks for building chimneys. At the south side alone the ditches remain perfect; they are wide and deep, and cut through immense rocks of limestone; and from being overgrown towards the top with different kinds of shrubs, have a grand and picturesque appearance. The view from this spot of the fort, and the old buildings in it overgrown with ivy, of the lake, and of the distant mountains beyond it, is indeed altogether very fine. The fort, and seven hundred acres of good cleared land adjoining to it, are the property of the state of New York, and are leased out at the rate of one hundred and fifty dollars, equal to £. 33. 10 s. sterling per annum, which is appropriated for the use of a college. The farmer who rented it told us, he principally made use of the land for grazing cattle; these, in the winter season, when the lake was frozen, he drove over the ice to Albany, and there disposed of.

Crown Point is the most advantageous spot on the shores of Lake Champlain for a military post, not being commanded by any rising grounds in the neighbourhood, as Ticonderoga is, and as the lake is so narrow here, owing to another point running out on the opposite side, that it would be absolutely impossible for a vessel to pass, without being exposed to the fire of the fort. The Indians call this place Tek-ya-dough-nigarigee, that is, the two points immediately opposite to each other: the one opposite to Crown Point is called Chimney Point; upon it are a few houses, one of which is a tavern. While we staid there we were very agreeably surpris'd, for the first time, with the sight of a large birch canoe upon the lake, navigated by two or three Indians in the dresses of
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their nation. They made for the shore and soon landed; and shortly after another party, amounting to six or seven, arrived, that had come by land.

On board our little vessel we had a poor Canadian, whom we took in at Skenesborough. Tempted by the accounts he had heard of the United States, he quitted his own home in Canada, where he lived under one of the seigniors, and had gone as far as Albany, in the neighbourhood of which place he had worked for some time with a farmer; but finding, that although he got higher wages, he had to pay much more for his provisions than in Canada, and that he was also most egregiously cheated by the people, and particularly by his employer, from whom he could not get even the money he had earned; finding likewise that he was unable to procure any redress, from being ignorant of the English language, the poor fellow determined to return to Canada, and on his way thither we met him, without a shilling in his pocket.

Having asked this little fellow, as we sailed along, some questions about the Indians, he immediately gave us a long account of a Captain Thomas, a chief of the Cacheonaga nation, in the neighbourhood of whose village he said he lived. Thomas, he told us, was a very rich man, and had a most excellent house, in which he said he lived as well as a seignior, and he was sure we should be well received if we went to see him; he told us also that he had built a church, and was a christian; that he was very charitable, and that if he were acquainted with his present distress he would certainly make him a present of four or five dollars. "Oh je vous assure, messieurs, que c'est un bon sauvage." It was impossible not to smile at the little Canadian, who, half naked himself, and nearly as dark as a mulatto, concluded his panegyric upon Thomas, by assuring us, "he was a good savage;" at the same time we felt a strong desire to behold this chief, of whom we had heard so much. It was not long before we were gratified, for the party of Indians that arrived whilst we were at Chimney Point were from the Cacheonaga village, and at their head was Captain Thomas.

Thomas appeared to be about forty-five years of age; he was nearly six feet high, and very bulky in proportion: this is a sort of make
uncommon

uncommon among the Indians, who are generally slender. He was dressed like a white man, in boots; his hair untied, but cut short; the people who attended him were all in the Indian habit. Not one of his followers could speak a word of English or French; Thomas, however, could himself speak both languages. English he spoke with some little hesitation, and not correctly; but French seemed as familiar to him as his native tongue. His principal attention seemed to be directed towards trade, which he had pursued with great success, so much so, indeed, that, as we afterwards heard, he could get credit in any store in Montreal for five hundred pounds. He had along with him at Chimney Point thirty horses and a quantity of furs in the canoe, which he was taking for sale to Albany. His people, he told us, had but very few wants; he took care to have these always supplied; in return they brought him furs, taken in hunting; they attended his horses, and voluntarily accompanied him when he went on a trading expedition: his profits therefore must be immense. During the course of conversation he told us, that if we came to see him he would make us very happy; that there were some very handsome squaws * in his village, and that each of us should have a wife: we promised to visit him if it was in our power, and parted very good friends. Thomas, as we afterwards found, is not a man respected among the Indians in general, who think much more of a chief that is a good warrior and hunter, and that retains the habits of his nation, than of one that becomes a trader, and assimilates his manners to those of the whites.

Lake Champlain is about one hundred and twenty miles in length, and is of various breadths: for the first thirty miles, that is, from South River to Crown Point, it is in no place more than two miles wide; beyond this, for the distance of twelve miles, it is five or six miles across, but then again it narrows, and again at the end of a few miles expands. That part called the Broad Lake, because broader than any other, commences about twenty-five miles north of Crown Point, and is eighteen miles across in the widest part. Here the lake is interspersed with a great number of islands, the largest of which, formerly called Grande Isle, now South Hero, is fifteen miles in length, and, on an

* Female Indians.

average, about four in breadth. The soil of this island is fertile, and it is said that five hundred people are settled upon it. The Broad Lake is nearly fifty miles in length, and gradually narrows till it terminates in a large river called Chambly, Richlieu, or Sorelle, which runs into the St. Lawrence.

The soundings of Lake Champlain, except at the narrow parts at either end, are in general very deep; in many places sixty and seventy, and in some even one hundred fathoms. In proportion to its breadth and depth, the water is more or less clear; in the broad part it is as pure and transparent as possible. On the west side, as far as Cumberland Bay, the lake is bounded for the most part by steep mountains close to the edge of the water; at Cumberland Bay the ridge of mountains runs off to the north west, and the shore farther on is low and swampy. The East or Vermont shore is not much elevated, except in a few particular places; at the distance of twelve miles, however, from the lake is a considerable mountain. The shores on both sides are very rocky; where there are mountains these rocks jut out very boldly; but at the east side, where the land is low, they appear but a little above the water. The islands also, for the most part, are surrounded with rocks, in some parts, shelving down into the lake, so that it is dangerous to approach within one or two miles of them at particular sides. From some parts of the eastern shore the rocks also run out in the same manner for a considerable distance. Sailing along the shore when a breeze is blowing, a hollow murmuring noise is always heard from the waters splashing into the crannies of these rocks. There are many streams which fall into the lake: the mouths of all those on the western side are obstructed by falls, so that none of them are navigable. Of those on the eastern or Vermont side, a few only are navigable for small boats, and that for a short distance.

The scenery along various parts of the lake is extremely grand and picturesque, particularly beyond Crown Point; the shores are there beautifully ornamented with hanging woods and rocks, and the mountains on the western side rise up in ranges one behind the other in the most magnificent manner. It was on one of the finest evenings possible
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that we passed along this part of the lake, and the sun setting in all his glory behind the mountains, spread the richest tints over every part of the prospect; the moon also appearing nearly in the full, shortly after the day had closed, afforded us an opportunity of beholding the surrounding scenery in fresh though less brilliant colours. Our little bark was now gliding smoothly along, whilst every one of us remained wrapt up in silent contemplation of the solemn scene, when suddenly she struck upon one of the shelving rocks: nothing but hurry and confusion was now visible on board, every one lending his assistance; however, at last, with some difficulty, we got her off; but in a minute she struck a second time, and after we had again extricated her, even a third and a fourth time; at last she stuck so fast that for a short time we despaired of being able to move her. At the end of a quarter of an hour, however, we again fortunately got her into deep water. We had before suspected that our boatman did not know a great deal about the navigation of the lake, and on questioning him now, it came out, that he had been a cobbler all his life, till within the last nine months, when he thought proper to change his business, and turn sailor. All the knowledge he had of the shores of the lake, was what he had picked up during that time, as he sailed straight backward and forward between St. John's and Skeneborough. On the present occasion he had mistaken one bay for another, and had the waves been as high as they sometimes are, the boat would inevitably have been dashed to pieces.

The humble roof of another judge, a plain Scotch labourer, afforded us shelter for this night. It was near eleven o'clock, however, when we got there, and the family having retired to rest we had to remain rapping and calling at the door for half an hour at least, before we could get admittance. The people at last being roused, opened their doors, cheerfully got us some supper, and prepared their best beds for us. In the morning, having paid our reckoning to the judge, he returned to his plough, and we to our boat to prosecute our voyage.

We set off this day with a remarkable fine breeze, and being desirous of terminating our voyage as soon as possible, of which we began now to be somewhat tired, we stopped but once in the course of the day, and determined.

determined to sail on all night. A short time after sun-set we passed the boundary between the British dominions and the United States. Here we were brought to by an armed brig of twenty guns, under English colours, stationed for the purpose of examining all boats passing up and down the lake: the answers which we gave to the several questions asked being satisfactory, we were accordingly suffered to proceed. Since the surrender of the posts, pursuant to the late treaty with the United States, this brig has been removed, and laid up at St. John's. When night came on, we wrapped ourselves up in our blankets, as we had done on the first night of our voyage, and laid down upon the cabin floor, where we might possibly have slept until we got to St. John's, had we not been awakened at midnight by the loud hollas of the sentinel at the British fort on Isle aux Noix. On examining into the matter, it appeared that the boat had been driven on shore, while our sleepy pilot enjoyed his nap at the helm; and the centinel, unable to imagine what we were about, seeing the boat run up close under the fort, and suspicious of some attack, I suppose, had turned out the whole guard, by whom, after being examined and re-examined, we were finally dismissed. We now took the command of the boat upon ourselves, for the boatman, although he was more anxious to get to St. John's than any one of us, and though he had himself in some measure induced us to go on, was so sleepy that he could not keep his eyes open; relieving each other at the helm, we reached St. John's by day-break, one hundred and fifty miles distant from Skeneborough.

Immediately on our landing we were conducted to the guard house, where we had to deliver to the serjeant on duty, to be by him forwarded to the commanding officer, an account of our names, occupation, and place of abode, the strictest orders having been issued by the governor not to suffer any Frenchmen or other foreigners, or any people who could not give an exact account of their business in Canada, to enter into the country.

St. John's is a garrison town; it contains about fifty miserable wooden dwellings, and barracks, in which a whole regiment is generally quartered. The fortifications are entirely out of order, so much so that it would be
cheaper

cheaper to erect fresh works than to attempt to repair them. There is a king's dock yard here, well stored with timber, at least, when we saw it; but in the course of the summer, after the armed brig which I mentioned was laid up, all the timber was sold off. The old hulks of several vessels of force were lying opposite the yard. In proportion to the increase of trade between New York and Lower Canada this town must improve, as it is the British port of entry on Lake Champlain.

The country about St. John's is flat, and very bare of trees, a dreadful fire in the year 1788 having done great mischief, and destroyed all the woods for several miles: in some parts of the neighbourhood the people suffer extremely during winter from the want of fuel.

At St. John's we hired a light waggon, similar to those made use of in the United States, and set off about noon for La Prairie, on the banks of the river St. Lawrence. By the direct road, this is only eighteen miles distant; but the most agreeable way of going thither is by Chambly, which is a few miles farther, on account of seeing the old castle built there by the French. The castle stands close to the rapids in Chambly or Sorelle River, and at a little distance has a grand appearance; the adjacent country also being very beautiful, the whole together forms a most interesting scene. The castle is in tolerably good repair, and a garrison is constantly kept in it.

As you travel along this road to La Prairie, after having just arrived from the United States over Lake Champlain, a variety of objects forcibly remind you of your having got into a new country. The British flag, the soldiers on duty, the French inhabitants running about in their red nightcaps, the children coming to the doors to salute you as you pass, a thing unknown in any part of the United States, the compact and neat exterior appearance of the houses, the calashes, the bons dieux, the large Roman Catholic churches and chapels, the convents, the priests in their robes, the nuns, the friars, all serve to convince you that you are no longer in any part of the United States: the language also differs, French being here universally spoken.

The calash is a carriage very generally used in Lower Canada; there is scarcely a farmer indeed in the country who does not possess one; it is:

is a sort of one horse chaise, capable of holding two people besides the driver, who sits on a kind of box placed over the foot board, expressly for his accommodation. The body of the calash is hung upon broad straps of leather, round iron rollers that are placed behind, by means of which they are shortened or lengthened. On each side of the carriage is a little door about two feet high, whereby you enter it, and which is useful when shut, in preventing any thing from slipping out. The harness for the horse is always made in the old French taste, extremely heavy; it is studded with brass nails, and to particular parts of it are attached small bells, of no use that I could ever discover but to annoy the passenger.

The bons dieux are large wooden crucifixes, sometimes upwards of twenty feet in height, placed on the highway; some of them are highly ornamented and painted: as the people pass they pull off their hats, or in some other way make obeisance to them.

La Prairie de la Madelene contains about one hundred houses: after stopping an hour or two there we embarked in a bateau for Montreal.

Montreal is situated on an island of the same name, on the opposite side of the River St. Lawrence to that on which la Prairie stands, but somewhat lower down. The two towns are nine miles apart, and the river is about two miles and a quarter wide. The current here is prodigiously strong, and in particular places as you cross, the boats are hurried down the stream, in the midst of large rocks, with such impetuosity that it seems as if nothing could save them from being dashed to pieces; indeed this would certainly be the case if the men were not uncommonly expert; but the Canadians are the most dexterous people perhaps in the world at the management of bateaux in rapid rivers. After such a prospect of the River St. Lawrence, it was not without astonishment that on approaching the town of Montreal we beheld ships of upwards of four hundred tons burthen lying close to the shore. The difficulties which vessels have to encounter in getting to Montreal are immense; I have myself seen them with all their sails set, and with a smart and favourable breeze, stationary for an hour together in the stream, unable to stem it, between the island of St. Helene and the main land, just below
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the town: to stem the current at this place it is almost necessary that the vessel should be aided by a storm. The ascent is equally difficult in several other parts of the river. Owing to this it is, that the passage from Quebec to Montreal is generally more tedious than that across the Atlantic; those ships, therefore, which trade between Europe and Montreal, never attempt to make more than one voyage during the year. Notwithstanding the rapidity of the stream, the channel of the river is very deep, and in particular just opposite to the town. The largest merchant vessels can there lie so close to the banks, which are in their natural state, that you may nearly touch them with your hand as you stand on the shore.

L E T T E R XXII.

Description of the Town of Montreal.—Of the public Buildings.—Churches.—Funeral Ceremonies.—Convents.—Barracks.—Fortifications.—Inhabitants mostly French.—Their Character and Manners.—Charming Prospects in the Neighbourhood of the Town.—Amusements during Summer.—Parties of Pleasure up the Mountain.—Of the Fur Trade.—The Manner in which it is carried on.—Great Enterprize of the North West Company of Merchants.—Sketch of Mr. M^rKenzie's Expeditions over Land to the Pacific Ocean.—Differences between the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies.

Montreal, July.

THE town of Montreal was laid out pursuant to the orders of one of the kings of France, which were, that a town should be built as high up on the St. Lawrence as it were possible for vessels to go by sea. In fixing upon the spot where it stands, his commands were complied with in the strictest sense. The town at present contains about twelve hundred houses, whereof five hundred only are within the walls; the rest are in the suburbs, which commence from the north, east, and west

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gates.

gates. The houses in the suburbs are mostly built of wood, but the others are all of stone; none of them are elegant, but there are many very comfortable habitations. In the lower part of the town, towards the river, where most of the shops stand, they have a very gloomy appearance, and look like so many prisons, being all furnished at the outside with sheet iron shutters to the doors and windows, which are regularly closed towards evening, in order to guard against fire. The town has suffered by fire very materially at different times, and the inhabitants have such a dread of it, that all who can afford it cover the roofs of their houses with tin-plates instead of shingles. By law they are obliged to have one or more ladders, in proportion to the size of the house, always ready on the roofs.

The streets are all very narrow; three of them run parallel to the river, and these are intersected by others at right angles, but not at regular distances. On the side of the town farthest from the river, and nearly between the northern and southern extremities, there is a small square, called La Place d'Armes, which seems originally to have been left open to the walls on one side, and to have been intended for the military to exercise in; the troops, however, never make use of it now, but parade on a long walk, behind the walls, nearer to the barracks. On the opposite side of the town, towards the water, is another small square, where the market is held.

There are six churches in Montreal; one for English Episcopalians, one for Presbyterians, and four for Roman Catholics. The cathedral church belonging to the latter, which occupies one side of La Place d'Armes, is a very spacious building, and contains five altars, all very richly decorated. The doors of this cathedral are left open the greater part of the day, and there are, generally, numbers of old people in it at their prayers, even when no regular service is going on. On a fine Sunday in the summer season such multitudes flock to it, that even the steps at the outside are covered with people, who, unable to get in, remain there kneeling with their hats off during the whole time of divine service. Nearly all the christenings, marriages, and burials of the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Montreal are performed in this church, on
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which occasions, as well as before and during the masses, they always ring the bells, to the great annoyance of every person that is not a lover of discords; for instead of pulling the bells, which are five in number, and really well toned, with regularity, they jingle them all at once, without any sort of cadence whatever. Our lodgings happened to be in La Place d'Armes, and during three weeks that we remained there, I verily believe the bells were never suffered to remain still for two hours together, at any one time, except in the night.

The funerals, as in other Roman Catholic countries, are conducted with great ceremony; the corpse is always attended to the church by a number of priests chanting prayers, and by little boys in white robes and black caps carrying wax lights. A morning scarcely ever passed over that one or more of these processions did not pass under our windows whilst we were at breakfast; for on the opposite side of the square to that on which the cathedral stood, was a sort of chapel, to which the bodies of all those persons, whose friends could not afford to pay for an expensive funeral, were brought, I suppose, in the night, for we could never see any carried in there, and from thence conveyed in the morning to the cathedral. If the priests are paid for it they go to the house of the deceased, though it be ever so far distant, and escort the corpse to the church. Until within a few years past it was customary to bury all the bodies in the vaults underneath the cathedral; but now it is prohibited, lest some putrid disorder should break out in the town in consequence of such numbers being deposited there. The burying grounds are all without the walls at present.

There are in Montreal four convents, one of which is of the order of St. Francis; the number of the friars, however, is reduced now to two or three, and as by the laws of the province men can no longer enter into any religious order, it will of course in a few years dwindle entirely away. On the female orders there is no restriction, and they are still well filled. The Hotel Dieu, founded as early as 1644, for the relief of the sick poor, and which is the oldest of the convents, contains thirty "religieuses"—nuns; La Congregation de Notre-Dame, instituted for the instruction of young girls, contains fifty-seven sœurs,

another fort of nuns; and L'Hospital Generale, for the accommodation of the infirm poor, contains eighteen sœurs.

The barracks are agreeably situated near the river, at the lower end of the town; they are surrounded by a lofty wall, and calculated to contain about three hundred men.

The walls round the town are mouldering away very fast, and in some places are totally in ruins; the gates, however, remain quite perfect. The walls were built principally as a defence against the Indians, by whom the country was thickly inhabited when Montreal was founded, and they were found necessary, to repel the open attacks of these people as late as the year 1736. When the large fairs used to be held in Montreal, to which the Indians from all parts resorted with their furs, they were also found extremely useful, as the inhabitants were thereby enabled to shut out the Indians at night, who, had they been suffered to remain in the town, addicted as they are to drinking, might have been tempted to commit great outrages, and would have kept the inhabitants in a continual state of alarm. In their best state the walls could not have protected the town against cannon, not even against a six pounder; nor, indeed, would the strongest walls be of any use in defending it against artillery, as it is completely commanded by the eminences in the island of St. Helene*, in the River St. Lawrence. Montreal has always been an easy conquest to regular troops.

By far the greater number of the inhabitants of Montreal are of French extraction; all the eminent merchants, however, and principal people in the town, are either English, Scotch, Irish, or their descendants, all of whom pass for English with the French inhabitants. The French retain, in a great measure, the manners and customs of their ancestors, as well as the language; they have an unconquerable aversion to learn English, and it is very rare to meet with any person amongst them that can speak it in any manner; but the English inhabitants are, for the most part, well acquainted with the French language.

* This island was the last place which the French surrendered to the British.

The people of Montreal, in general, are remarkably hospitable and attentive to strangers; they are sociable also amongst themselves, and fond in the extreme of convivial amusements. In winter, they keep up such a constant and friendly intercourse with each other, that it seems then as if the town were inhabited but by one large family. During summer they live somewhat more retired; but throughout that season a club, formed of all the principal inhabitants, both male and female, meet every week or fortnight, for the purpose of dining at some agreeable spot in the neighbourhood of the town.

The island of Montreal is about twenty-eight miles in length and ten in breadth; it is the largest of several islands which are situated in the St. Lawrence, at the mouth of the Utawa River. Its soil is luxuriant, and in some parts much cultivated and thickly inhabited. It is agreeably diversified with hill and dale, and towards its center, in the neighbourhood of Montreal, there are two or three considerable mountains. The largest of these stands at the distance of about one mile from the town, which is named from it. The base of this mountain is surrounded with neat country houses and gardens, and partial improvements have been made about one third of the way up; the remainder is entirely covered with lofty trees. On that side towards the river is a large old monastery, with extensive inclosures walled in, round which the ground has been cleared for some distance. This open part is covered with a rich verdure, and the woods encircling it, instead of being overrun with brushwood, are quite clear at bottom, so that you may here roam about at pleasure for miles together, shaded, by the lofty trees, from the rays of the sun.

The view from hence is grand beyond description. A prodigious expanse of country is laid open to the eye, with the noble river St. Lawrence winding through it, which may be traced from the remotest part of the horizon. The river comes from the right, and flows smoothly on after passing down the tremendous rapids above the town, where it is hurried over huge rocks with a noise that is heard even up the mountain. On the left below you appears the town of Montreal, with its churches, monasteries, glittering spires, and the shipping under its old
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walls; several little islands in the river near the town, partly improved, partly overgrown with wood, add greatly to the beauty of the scene. La Prarie with its large church on the distant side of the river, is seen to the greatest advantage, and beyond it is a range of lofty mountains which terminates the prospect. Such an endless variety and such a grandeur is there in the view from this part of the mountain, that even those who are most habituated to the view always find it a fresh subject of admiration whenever they contemplate it; and on this part of the mountain it is that the club which I mentioned generally assembles. Two stewards are appointed for the day, who always chuse some new spot where there is a spring or rill of water, and an agreeable shade: each family brings cold provisions, wine, &c.; the whole is put together, and the company, often amounting to one hundred persons, sits down to dinner.

The fur trade is what is chiefly carried on at Montreal, and it is there that the greater part of the furs are shipped, which are sent from Canada to England.

This very lucrative trade is carried on, partly by what is called the North West Company, and partly by private individuals on their own account. The company does not possess any particular privileges by law, but from its great capital merely it is enabled to trade to certain remote parts of the continent, to the exclusion of those who do not hold any shares in it. It was formed originally by the merchants of Montreal themselves, who wisely considered that the trade could be carried on to those distant parts of the continent, inhabited solely by Indians, with more security and greater profit, if they joined together in a body, than if they continued to trade separately. The stock of the company was divided into forty shares, and as the number of merchants in the town at that time was not very great, this arrangement afforded an opportunity to every one of them to join in the company if he thought proper. At present these shares have all fallen into the hands of a few persons.

The company principally carries on its trade by means of the Utawas or Grand River, that falls into the St. Lawrence about thirty miles above Montreal, and which forms, by its confluence with that river, "Le Lac de Deux Montagnes et le Lac St. Louis,"—the lake of the Two Mountains

Mountains and the Lake of St. Louis, wherein are several large islands. To convey the furs down this river, they make use of canoes, formed of the bark of the birch tree, some of which are upon such a large scale that they are capable of containing two tons, but they seldom put so much in them, especially on this river, it being in many places shallow, rapid, and full of rocks, and contains no less than thirty-two portages.

The canoes are navigated by the French Canadians, who are particularly fond of the employment, preferring it in general to that of cultivating the ground. A fleet of them sets off from Montreal about the month of May, laden with provisions, consisting chiefly of biscuit and salt pork, sufficient to last the crews till their return, and also with the articles given in barter to the Indians. At some of the shallow places in the river, it is sufficient if the men merely get out of the canoes, and push them on into the deep water; but at others, where there are dangerous rapids and sharp rocks, it is necessary for the men to unlade the canoes, and carry both them and the cargoes on their shoulders, till they come again to a safe part of the river. At night they drag the canoes upon shore, light a fire, cook their provisions for the following day, and sleep upon the ground wrapped up in their blankets. If it happens to rain very hard, they sometimes shelter themselves with boughs of trees, but in general they remain under the canopy of heaven, without any covering but their blankets: they copy exactly the Indian mode of life on these occasions, and many of them even wear the Indian dresses, which they find more convenient than their own.

Having ascended the Utawas River for about two hundred and eighty miles, which it takes them about eighteen days to perform, they then cross by a portage into Lake Nispissing, and from this lake by another portage they get upon French River, that falls into Lake Huron on the north-east side; then coasting along this last lake they pass through the Straits of St. Mary, where there is another portage into Lake Superior; and coasting afterwards along the shores of Lake Superior, they come to the Grand Portage on the north-west side of it; from hence by a chain of small lakes and rivers they proceed on to the Rainy Lake;

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to the Lake of the Woods, and for hundreds of miles beyond it, through Lake Winnipeg, &c.

The canoes, however, which go so far up the country, never return the same year; those intended to bring back cargoes immediately, stop at the Grand Portage, where the furs are collected ready for them by the agents of the company. The furs are made up in packs of a certain weight, and a particular number is put into each canoe. By knowing thus the exact weight of every pack, there can be no embezzlement; and at the portages there is no time wasted in allotting to each man his load, every one being obliged to carry so many packs.

At the Grand Portage, and along that immense chain of lakes and rivers, which extend beyond Lake Superior, the company has regular posts, where the agents reside; and with such astonishing enterprise and industry have the affairs of this company been carried on, that trading posts are now established within five hundred miles of the Pacific Ocean. One gentleman, indeed, a partner in the house at Montreal, which now holds the greatest part of the shares of the company, has even penetrated to the Pacific Ocean itself. The journal kept by this gentleman upon the expedition is, it is said, replete with information of the most interesting nature. That it has not been laid before the public long ago, together with an accurate map of his track, is to be imputed solely to an unfortunate misunderstanding which took place between him and a noble lord high in the confidence of government.

In the first attempt which this adventurous gentleman, a Mr. M'Kenzie, made to penetrate to the ocean, he set out early in the spring from the remotest of the posts belonging to the company. He took with him a single canoe, and a party of chosen men; and after passing over prodigious tracts of land, never before traversed by any white person, at last came to a large river. Here the canoe, which was carried by the men on their shoulders, was launched, and having all embarked, they proceeded down the stream. From the course this river took for a very great distance, Mr. M'Kenzie was led to imagine that it was one of those rivers he was in quest of; namely, one
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which emptied itself into the Pacific Ocean; but at the end of several weeks, during which they had worked their way downward with great eagerness, he was convinced, from the gradual inclination of the river towards another quarter, that he must have been mistaken; and that it was one of those immense rivers, so numerous on the continent of North America, that ran into Baffin's Bay, or the Arctic Ocean.

The party was now in a very critical situation; the season was far advanced, and the length of way which they had to return was prodigious. If they attempted to go back, and were overtaken by winter, they must in all probability perish for want of provisions in an uninhabited country; if, on the contrary, they made up their minds to spend the winter where they were, they had no time to lose in building huts, and going out to hunt and fish, that they might have sufficient stores to support them through that dreary season. Mr. M'Kenzie represented the matter, in the most open terms, to his men, and left it to themselves to determine the part they would take. The men were for going back at all hazards; and the result was, that they reached their friends in safety. The difficulties they had to contend with, and the exertions they made in returning, were almost surpassing belief.

The second expedition entered upon by Mr. M'Kenzie, and which succeeded to his wishes, was undertaken about three years ago. He set out in the same manner, but well provided with several different things, which he found the want of in the first expedition. He was extremely well furnished this time with astronomical instruments, and in particular with a good time-piece, that he procured from London. He took a course somewhat different from the first, and passed through many nations of Indians who had never before seen the face of a white man, amongst some of whom he was for a time in imminent danger; but he found means at last to conciliate their good will. From some of these Indians he learned, that there was a ridge of mountains at a little distance, beyond which the rivers all ran in a western direction. Having engaged some of them therefore for guides, he proceeded according to their directions until he came to the mountains, and after ascending them with prodigious labour, found, to his great satisfaction, that the

account the Indians had given was true, and that the rivers on the opposite side did indeed all run to the west. He followed the course of one of them, and finally came to the Pacific Ocean, not far from Nootka Sound.

Here he was given to understand by the natives, and their account was confirmed by the sight of some little articles they had amongst them, that an English vessel had quitted the coast only six weeks before. This was a great mortification to Mr. M'Kenzie; for had there been a ship on the coast, he would most gladly have embarked in it rather than encounter the same difficulties, and be exposed to the same perils, which he had experienced in getting there; however there was no alternative; he set out after a short time on his journey back again, and having found his canoe quite safe under some bushes, near the head of the river, where he had hid it, together with some provisions, lest on going down to the coast the natives might have proved unfriendly, and have cut off his retreat by seizing upon it, he finally arrived at one of the trading posts in security. When I was at Montreal Mr. M'Kenzie was not there, and I never had an opportunity of seeing him afterwards. What I have here related respecting his two expeditions is the substance, to the best of my recollection, of what I heard from his partners.

Many other individuals belonging to the North West Company, before Mr. M'Kenzie set out, penetrated far into the country in different directions, and much beyond what any person had done before them, in order to establish posts. In some of these excursions they fell in with the agents of the Hudson Bay Company, who were also extending their posts from another quarter; this unexpected meeting between the two companies, at one time gave rise to some very unpleasant altercations, and the Hudson Bay Company threatened the other with an immediate prosecution for an infringement of its charter.

By its charter, it seems, the Hudson Bay Company was allowed the exclusive privilege of trading to the Bay, and along all the rivers and waters connected with it. This charter, however, was granted at a time when the northern parts of the continent were much less known than they are now, for to have the exclusive trade along all the waters connected

connected with Hudson Bay was, literally speaking, to have the exclusive trade of the greater part of the continent of North America. Hudson Bay, by a variety of rivers and lakes, is closely connected with Lake Superior, and from that chain of lakes, of which Lake Superior is one, there is a water communication throughout all Canada, and a very great part of the United States; however, when the agents of the North-west Company were fixing trading posts upon some rivers which ran immediately into Hudson's Bay, it undoubtedly appeared to be an infringement of the charter, and so indeed it must strictly have been, had not the Hudson's Bay Company itself infringed its own charter in the first instance, or at least neglected to comply with all the stipulations contained therein. A clause seems to have been in the charter, which, at the same time that it granted to the company the exclusive privilege of trading to Hudson's Bay, and along all the waters connected with it, bound it to erect a new post twelve miles farther to the westward every year, otherwise the charter was to become void. This had not been done; the North-west Company therefore rested perfectly easy about the menaces of a prosecution, satisfied that the other company did not in fact legally possess those privileges to which it laid claim.

The Hudson's Bay Company, though it threatened, never indeed attempted to put its threats into execution, well knowing the weakness of its cause, but continued nevertheless to watch the motions of its rival with a most jealous eye; and as in extending their respective trades, the posts of the two companies were approximating nearer and nearer to each other every year, there was great reason to imagine that their differences, instead of abating, would become still greater than they were, and finally, perhaps, lead to consequences of the most serious nature. A circumstance, however, unexpectedly took place, at a time when the greatest enmity subsisted between the parties, which happily reconciled them to each other, and terminated all their disputes.

A very powerful nation of Indians, called the Assiniboins, who inhabit an extended tract of country to the south-west of Lake Winnipeg, conceiving that the Hudson's Bay Company had encroached unreasonably upon their territories, and had otherwise maltreated a part of their tribe, formed

the resolution of instantly destroying a post established by that company in their neighbourhood. A large body of them soon collected together, and breathing the fiercest spirit of revenge, marched unperceived and unsuspected by the party against whom their expedition was planned, till within a short distance of their post. Here they halted according to custom, waiting only for a favourable moment to pounce upon their prey. Some of the agents of the North-west Company, however, who were scattered about this part of the country, fortunately got intelligence of their design. They knew the weakness of the place about to be attacked, and forgetting the rivalry subsisting between them, and thinking only how to save their countrymen, they immediately dispatched a messenger to give the party notice of the assault that was meditated; they at the same time sent another messenger to one of their own posts, desiring that instant succour might be sent to that belonging to the Hudson Bay Company, which the Indians were about to plunder. The detachment arrived before the attack commenced, and the Indians were repulsed; but had it not been for the timely assistance their rivals had afforded, the Hudson Bay people were fully persuaded that they must have fallen victims to the fury of the Indians.

This signal piece of service was not undervalued or forgotten by those who had been saved; and as the North-west Company was so much stronger, and on so much better terms with the Indians in this part of the country than its rivals, it now evidently appeared to be the interest of the latter to have the posts of the North-west Company established as near its own as possible. This is accordingly done for their mutual safety, and the two companies are now on the most friendly terms, and continue to carry on their trade close to each other.

About two thousand men are employed by the North-west Company in their posts in the upper country. Those who are stationed at the remote trading posts lead a very savage life, but little better indeed than that of Indians: some of them remain far up in the country for four or five years together. The head clerk or principal agent generally marries an Indian girl, the daughter of some eminent chief, by which he gains in a peculiar manner the affections of the whole tribe, a matter of great importance.

portance. These marriages, as may be supposed, are not considered as very binding by the husband; but that is nothing in the opinion of an Indian chief, who readily brings his sister or daughter to you; at the same time he can only be appeased by blood if a person attempts to take any improper liberties with his wife. Amongst no people are the wives more chaste, or more devoted to their husbands.

Besides the furs and pelts, thus conveyed down to Montreal from the north-western parts of the continent, by means of the Utawas River, there are large quantities also brought there across the lakes, and down the River St. Lawrence. These are collected at the various towns and posts along the Lakes Huron, Erie, and Ontario, where the trade is open to all parties, the several posts being protected by regular troops, at the expence of the government. Added likewise to what are thus collected by the agents of the company, and of private merchants, there are considerable quantities brought down to Montreal for sale by traders, on their own account. Some of these traders come from parts as remote as the Illinois Country, bordering on the Mississippi. They ascend the Mississippi as far as Onisconsing River, and from that by a portage of three miles get upon Fox River, which falls into Lake Michigan. In the fall of the year, as I have before mentioned, these two rivers overflow, and it is then sometimes practicable to pass in a light canoe from one river to the other, without any portage whatsoever. From Lake Michigan they get upon Lake Huron, afterwards upon Lake Erie, and so on to the St. Lawrence. Before the month of September is over, the furs are all brought down to Montreal; as they arrive they are immediately shipped, and the vessels dispatched in October, beyond which month it would be dangerous for them to remain in the river on account of the setting in of winter.

Furs are also shipped in considerable quantities at Quebec, and at the town of Trois Rivieres. These furs are brought down the rivers that fall into the St. Lawrence, on the north side, by Indians.

L E T T E R XXIII.

Voyage to Quebec down the St. Lawrence.—A Bateau preferable to a Keel Boat.—Town of Sorelle.—Ship-building there.—Description of Lake St. Pierre.—Balifcon.—Charming Scenery along the Banks of St. Lawrence.—In what respects it differs from the Scenery along any other River in America.—Canadian Houses.—Sketch of the Character and manners of the lower Classes of Canadians.—Their Superstition.—Anecdote.—St. Augustin Calvaire.—Arrive at Quebec.

Quebec, August.

WE remained in Montreal until the first day of August, when we set off in a bateau for Quebec, about one hundred and sixty miles lower down the St. Lawrence. A bateau is a particular kind of boat, very generally used upon the large rivers and lakes in Canada. The bottom of it is perfectly flat, and each end is built very sharp, and exactly alike. The sides are about four feet high, and for the convenience of the rowers, four or five benches are laid across, sometimes more, according to the length of the bateau. It is a very heavy awkward sort of vessel, either for rowing or sailing, but it is preferred to a boat with a keel for two very obvious reasons; first, because it draws less water, at the same time that it carries a larger burthen; and secondly, because it is much safer on lakes or wide rivers, where storms are frequent: a proof of this came under our observation the day of our leaving Montreal. We had reached a wide part of the river, and were sailing along with a favourable wind, when suddenly the horizon grew very dark, and a dreadful storm arose, accompanied with loud peals of thunder and torrents of rain. Before the sail could be taken in, the ropes which held it were snapped in pieces, and the waves began to dash over the sides of the bateau, though the water had been quite smooth five minutes before. It was impossible now to counteract the force of the wind with oars, and the bateau was consequently driven on shore, but the bottom of it being quite flat, it was carried smoothly upon the beach without sustaining any injury,

injury, and the men leaping out drew it up on dry land, where we remained out of all danger till the storm was over. A keel boat, however, of the same size, could not have approached nearer to the shore than thirty feet, and there it would have stuck fast in the sand, and probably have been filled with water. From being fitted up as it was, our bateau proved to be a very pleasant conveyance: it was one of a large size, and over the widest part of it an oilcloth awning was thrown, supported by hoops similar to the roof of a waggon: thus a most excellent cabin was formed, large enough to contain half a dozen chairs and a table, and which, at the same time it afforded shelter from the inclemency of the weather, was airy, and sufficiently open to let us see all the beauties of the prospect on each shore to the greatest advantage.

It was about eleven o'clock in the morning when we left Montreal, and at five in the afternoon we reached the town of Sorelle, fifteen leagues distant. The current is very strong the whole way between the two places. Sorelle stands at the mouth of the river of the same name, which runs from Lake Champlain into the St. Lawrence. It was laid out about the year 1787, and on an extensive plan, with very wide streets and a large square, but at present it contains only one hundred houses, are all very indifferent, and standing widely asunder. This is the only town on the St. Lawrence, between Montreal and Quebec, wherein English is the predominant language. The inhabitants consist principally of loyalists from the United States, who took refuge in Canada. The chief business carried on here is that of ship-building; there are several vessels annually launched from fifty to two hundred tons burthen; these are floated down to Quebec, and there rigged. Ship-building is not carried on to so much advantage in Canada as might be imagined, all the bolts and other articles of iron, the blocks, and the cordage, being imported; so that what is gained by having excellent timber on the spot is lost in bringing over these different articles, which are so bulky, from Europe. The river of Sorelle is deep at the mouth, and affords good shelter for ships from the ice, at the breaking up of winter: it is not navigable far beyond the town, even in boats, on account of the rapids.

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The next morning we left Sorelle, beyond which place the St. Lawrence expands to a great breadth. Here it abounds with small islands, situated so closely to each other, that it is impossible to think without astonishment of large vessels, like those that go to Montreal, passing between them: the channel through them is very intricate. This wide part of the river is called Lac St. Pierre; the greatest breadth of it is about four leagues and a half, and its length from the islands at the head of the lake downwards about eight leagues. From hence to Quebec the river is in no place more than two miles across, and in some parts it narrows to the breadth of three quarters of a mile. The tide ebbs and flows in the river within a few leagues of Lac St. Pierre; the great expansion of the water at the lake, and the strong current which sets out from it, prevents its action higher up.

From Montreal as far as the town of Trois Rivieres, which stands about four leagues below Lac St. Pierre, the shores on each side of the St. Lawrence are very flat; the land then begins to rise, and on the south-east side it continues lofty the whole way down to Quebec. On the opposite side, however, below Trois Rivieres, the banks vary considerably; in some places they are high, in others very low, until you approach within a few leagues of Quebec, when they assume a bold and grand appearance on each side. The scenery along various parts of the river is very fine: it is impossible, indeed, but that there must be a variety of pleasing views along a noble river like the St. Lawrence, winding for hundreds of miles through a rich country, diversified with rising grounds, woodlands, and cultivated plains. What particularly attracts the attention, however, in going down this river, is, the beautiful disposition of the towns and villages on its banks. Nearly all the settlements in Lower Canada are situated close upon the borders of the rivers, and from this circumstance the scenery along the St. Lawrence and others differs materially from that along the rivers in the United States. The banks of the Hudson river, which are more cultivated than those of any of the other large rivers there, are wild and desolate in comparison with those of the St. Lawrence. For several leagues below Montreal the houses stand so closely together, that it appears as if it were but one village,

village, which extended the whole way. All the houses have a remarkably neat appearance at a distance, and in each village, though it be ever so small, there is a church. The churches are kept in the neatest repair, and most of them have spires, covered, according to the custom of the country, with tin, that, from being put on in a particular manner, never becomes rusty *. It is pleasing beyond description to behold one of these villages opening to the view, as you sail round a point of land covered with trees, the houses in it overhanging the river, and the spires of the churches sparkling through the groves with which they are encircled, before the rays of the setting sun.

There is scarcely any part of the river, where you pass along, for more than a league, without seeing a village and church.

The second night of our voyage we landed at the village of Batiscan. It stands on the north-west side of the river, about eighty miles below Montreal. Here the shore is very flat and marshy, and for a considerable distance from it the water is so shallow when the tide is out, that a bateau even, cannot at that time come within one hundred yards of the dry ground. Lower down the river the shore is in some places extremely rocky.

The first habitation we came to at Batiscan was a farm house, where we readily got accommodation for the night. The people were extremely civil, and did all in their power to serve us. A small table was quickly set out, covered with a neat white tablecloth, and bread, milk, eggs, and butter, the best fare which the house afforded, were brought to us. These things may always be had in abundance at every farm house; but it is not often that you can procure meat of any sort; in going through Canada, therefore it is customary for travellers to carry a provision basket with them. The houses in Lower Canada are in general well furnished with beds, all in the French style, very large, and raised four or five feet high, with a paillasse, a mattrafs, and a feather bed.

* The square plates of tin are nailed on diagonally, and the corners are carefully folded over the heads of the nails, so as to prevent any moisture from getting to them.

The houses for the most part are built of logs; but they are much more compact and better built than those in the United States; the logs are made to fit more closely together, and instead of being left rough and uneven on the outside, are planed and whitewashed. At the inside also the walls are generally lined with deal boards, whereas in the United States the common log-houses are left as rough within as they are without. One circumstance, however, renders the Canadian houses very disagreeable, and that is the inattention of the inhabitants to air them occasionally by opening the windows, in consequence of which they have a close heavy smell within doors. As we travelled by land from Quebec to Montreal, we scarcely observed ten houses the whole way with the windows open, notwithstanding that the weather was very warm. If you ask the people why they don't let a little fresh air into their houses, their constant answer is, as it is to all questions of a similar tendency, "Ce n'est pas la maniere des habitants"—It is not the custom of the people of the country.

Some of the lower classes of the French Canadians have all the gaiety and vivacity of the people of France; they dance, they sing, and seem determined not to give way to care; others, to appearance, have a great deal of that fullness and bluntness in their manners characteristic of the people of the United States; vanity, however, is the ascendant feature in the character of all of them, and by working upon that you may make them do what you please. Few of the men can read or write; the little learning there is amongst the inhabitants is confined to the women: a Canadian never makes a bargain, or takes any step of importance, without consulting his wife, whose opinion is generally abided by. Both men and women are sunk in ignorance and superstition, and blindly devoted to their priests. The following anecdote may serve to shew how much they are so.

On the evening before we reached Quebec, we stopped at the village of St. Augustin Calvaire, and after having strolled about for some time, returned to the farm-house where we had taken up our quarters for the night. The people had cooked some fish, that had been just caught, while we had been walking about, and every thing being ready on our
return,

return, we sat down to supper by the light of a lamp, which was suspended from the ceiling. The glimmering light, however, that it afforded, scarcely enabled us to see what was on the table; we complained of it to the man of the house, and the lamp was in consequence trimmed; it was replenished with oil; taken down and set on the table; still the light was very bad. "Sacre Dieu!" exclaimed he, "but you shall not eat your fish in the dark;" so saying, he stepped aside to a small cupboard, took out a candle, and having lighted it, placed it beside us. All was now going on well, when the wife, who had been absent for a few minutes, suddenly returning, poured forth a volley of the most terrible execrations against her poor husband for having presumed to have acted as he had done. Unable to answer a single word, the fellow stood aghast, ignorant of what he had done to offend her; we were quite at a loss also to know what could have given rise to such a sudden storm; the wife, however, snatching up the candle, and hastily extinguishing it, addressed us in a plaintive tone of voice, and explained the whole affair. It was the holy candle—"La chandelle benite," which her giddy husband had set on the table; it had been consecrated at a neighbouring church, and supposing there should be a tempest at any time, with thunder and lightning ever so terrible, yet if the candle were but kept burning while it lasted, the house, the barn, and every thing else belonging to it, were to be secured from all danger. If any of the family happened to be sick, the candle was to be lighted, and they were instantly to recover. It had been given to her that morning by the priest of the village, with an assurance that it possessed the miraculous power of preserving the family from harm, and she was confident that what he told her was true. To have contradicted the poor woman would have been useless; for the sake of our ears, however, we endeavoured to pacify her, and that being accomplished, we sat down to supper, and e'en made the most of our fish in the dark.

The village of St. Augustin Calvaire is about five leagues from Quebec, at which last place we arrived early on the next morning, the fourth of our voyage. When the wind is fair, and the tide favourable also, it does not take more than two days to go from Montreal to Quebec.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Situation of the City of Quebec.—Divided into Upper and Lower Town.—Description of each.—Great Strength of the Upper Town.—Some Observations on the Capture of Quebec by the English Army under General Wolfe.—Observations on Montgomery's and Arnold's Attack during the American War.—Census of Inhabitants of Quebec.—The Chateau.—The Residence of the Governor.—Monastery of the Recollects.—College of the Jesuits.—One Jesuit remaining of great Age.—His great Wealth.—His Character.—Nunneries.—Engineer's Drawing Room.—State House.—Armoury.—Barracks.—Market-place.—Dogs used in Carts.—Grandeur of the Prospects from Parts of the Upper Town.—Charming Scenery of the Environs.—Description of Montmorenci Water Fall.—Of La Chaudiere Water Fall.

Quebec, August.

THE city of Quebec is situated on a very lofty point of land, on the north-west side of the River St. Lawrence. Nearly facing it, on the opposite shore, there is another point, and between the two the river is contracted to the breadth of three quarters of a mile, but after passing through this strait it expands to the breadth of five or six miles, taking a great sweep behind that point whereon Quebec stands. The city derives its name from the word Quebec or Quebeio, which signifies in the Algonquin tongue, a sudden contraction of a river. The wide part of the river, immediately before the town, is called The Basin, and it is sufficiently deep and spacious to float upwards of one hundred sail of the line.

Quebec is divided into two parts; the upper town, situated on a rock of limestone, on the top of the point; and the lower town, built round the bottom of the point, close to the water. The rock whereon the upper town stands, in some places towards the water rises nearly perpendicularly, so as to be totally inaccessible; in other places it is not so steep but that there is a communication between the two towns,

towns, by means of streets winding up the side of it, though even here the ascent is so great, that there are long flights of stairs at one side of the streets for the accommodation of foot passengers.

The lower town lies very much exposed to an enemy, being defended merely by a small battery towards the basin, which at the time of high tides is nearly on a level with the water, and by barriers towards the river, in which guns may be planted when there is any danger of an attack.

The upper town, however, is a place of immense strength. Towards the water it is so strongly guarded by nature, that it is found unnecessary to have more than very slight walls; and in some particular places, where the rock is inaccessible, are no walls at all. There are several redoubts and batteries however here. The principal battery, which points towards the basin, consists of twenty-two twenty-four pounders, two French thirty-six pounders, and two large iron mortars; this battery is flanked by another of six guns, that commands the passes from the lower town.

On the land side, the town owes its strength solely to the hand of art, and here the fortifications are stupendous. Considerable additions and improvements have been made to them since the place has been in the possession of Great Britain; but even at the time when it belonged to France, the works were so strong, that had it not been for the conduct of M. de Montcalm, the French general, it is almost doubtful whether the genius of the immortal Wolfe himself would not have been baffled in attempting to reduce it.

Had M. de Montcalm, when the first intelligence of the British army's having ascended the Heights of Abraham was carried to him, instead of disbelieving the account, and laughing at it as a thing impossible, marched immediately to the attack, without giving General Wolfe time to form his men; or had he, when the account was confirmed of the enemy's procedure, and of their having formed on the plain, waited for a large division of his troops, whose station was below the town, and who might have joined him in two hours, instead of marching out to give General Wolfe battle with the troops he had with him at the time, the
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fate of the day might have turned out very differently; or had he, instead of hazarding a battle at all, retired within the walls of the city and defended it, the place was so strong that there is reason to think it might have held out until the approach of winter, when the British ships must have quitted the river, and General Wolfe would consequently have been under the necessity of raising the siege.

General Wolfe thought it a vain attempt to make an assault on the side of the town which lies towards the water, where the rock is so steep, and so easily defended; his object was to get behind it, and to carry on the attack on the land side, where there is an extensive plain adjoining the town, and not a great deal lower than the highest part of the point. In order to do so, he first of all attempted to land his troops some miles below the town, near the Falls of Montmorenci. Here the banks of the river are by no means so difficult of ascent as above the town; but they were defended by a large division of the French forces, which had thrown up several strong redoubts, and in attempting to land Wolfe was repulsed with loss.

Above Quebec, the banks of the river are extremely high, and so steep at the same time, that by the French they were deemed inaccessible. Foiled, however, in his first attempt to get on shore, General Wolfe formed the bold design of ascending to the top of these banks, commonly called the Heights of Abraham. To prepare the way for it, possession was taken of Point Levi, the point situated opposite to that on which Quebec stands, and from thence a heavy bombardment was commenced on the town, in order to deceive the enemy. In the mean time boats were prepared; the troops embarked; they passed the town with muffled oars, in the night, unobserved, and landed at a cove, about two miles above. The soldiers clambered up the heights with great difficulty, and the guns were hauled up by means of ropes and pulleys fixed round the trees, with which the banks are covered from top to bottom. At the top the plain commences, and extends close under the walls of the city; here it was that the memorable battle was fought, in which General Wolfe unhappily perished, at the very moment when all his noble exertions were about to be crowned with
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that success which they so eminently deserved. The spot where the illustrious hero breathed his last is marked with a large stone, on which a true meridional line is drawn.

Notwithstanding that the great Wolfe found it such a very difficult task to get possession of Quebec, and that it has been rendered so much stronger since his time, yet the people of the United States confidently imagine, at this day, that if there were a rupture with Great Britain, they need only send an army thither, and the place must fall into their hands immediately. Arnold, after his return from the expedition against the place, under Montgomery, in the year 1775, used frequently to declare, that if he had not been wounded he should certainly have carried it. But however that expedition may be admired for its great boldness, it was, in reality, far from being so nearly attended with success as the vanity of Arnold has led his countrymen to imagine.

All thoughts of taking the city by a regular siege were abandoned by the Americans, when they came before it; it was only by attempting to storm it at an unexpected hour that they saw any probability of wresting it from the British. The night of the thirty-first of December was accordingly fixed upon, and the city was attacked at the same moment in three places. But although the garrison were completely surprised, and the greater part of the rampart guns had been dismounted, and laid up for the winter, during which season it was thought impossible for an army to make an attack so vigorous that cannon would be wanting to repel it, yet the Americans were at once baffled in their attempt. Arnold, in endeavouring to force St. John's Gate, which leads out on the back part of the town, not far from the plains of Abraham, was wounded, and repulsed with great loss. Montgomery surprised the guard of the first barrier, at one end of the lower town, and passed it; but at the second he was shot, and his men were driven back. The third division of the Americans entered the lower town in another quarter, which, as I have before said, lies very much exposed, by passing over the ice: they remained there for a day or two, and during that time they set fire to some buildings, amongst which was one of the religious houses; but they were finally dislodged without much difficulty. The two divisions
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under Montgomery and Arnold were repulsed with a mere handful of men: the different detachments, sent down from the upper town against the former, did not altogether amount, it is said, to two hundred men. Arnold's attack was the maddest possible; for St. John's Gate, and the walls adjoining, are stupendous, and a person need but see them to be convinced that any attempt to storm them must be fruitless without the aid of heavy artillery, which the Americans had not.

Independent of what it owes to its fortifications, and situation on the top of a rock, Quebec is indebted for much of its strength to the severity and great length of the winter, as in that season it is wholly impracticable for a besieging army either to carry on any works or blockade the town.

It requires about five thousand soldiers to man the works at Quebec completely. A large garrison is always kept in it, and abundance of stores of every description. The troops are lodged partly in barracks, and partly in block houses near Cape Diamond, which is the most elevated part of the point, and is reckoned to be upwards of one thousand feet above the level of the river. The Cape is strongly fortified, and may be considered as the citadel of Quebec; it commands the town in every direction, and also the plains at the outside of the walls. The evening and morning guns, and all salutes and signals, are fired from hence. Notwithstanding the great height of the rock above the river, water may readily be had even at the very top of it, by sinking wells of a moderate depth, and in some particular places, at the sides of the rock, it gushes out in large streams. The water is of a very good quality.

No census has been lately taken of the number of houses and inhabitants in Quebec; but it is supposed that, including the upper and lower towns and suburbs, there are at least two thousand dwellings; at the rate of six therefore to each house, the number of inhabitants would amount to twelve thousand. About two thirds of the inhabitants are of French extraction. The society in Quebec is agreeable, and very extensive for a place of the size, owing to its being the capital of the lower province, and therefore the residence
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of the governor, different civil officers, principal lawyers, &c. &c. The large garrison constantly kept in it makes the place appear very gay and lively.

The lower town of Quebec is mostly inhabited by the traders who are concerned with the shipping, and it is a very disagreeable place. The streets are narrow and dirty, and owing to the great height of the houses in most of them, the air is much confined; in the streets next to the water also, there is oftentimes an intolerable stench from the shore when the tide is out. The upper town, on the contrary, is extremely agreeable: from its elevated situation the air is as pure as possible, and the inhabitants are never oppressed with heat in summer; it is far, however, from being well laid out, the streets being narrow and very irregular. The houses are for the most part built of stone, and except a few, erected of late years, small, ugly, and inconvenient.

The chateau, wherein the governor resides, is a plain building of common stone, situated in an open place, the houses round which, form three sides of an oblong square. It consists of two parts. The old and the new are separated from each other by a spacious court. The former stands just on the verge of an inaccessible part of the rock; behind it, on the outside, there is a long gallery, from whence, if a pebble were let drop, it would fall at least sixty feet perpendicularly. This old part is chiefly taken up with the public offices, and all the apartments in it are small and ill contrived; but in the new part, which stands in front of the other, facing the square, they are spacious, and tolerably well finished, but none of them can be called elegant. This part is inhabited by the governor's family. The chateau is built without any regularity of design, neither the old nor the new part having even an uniform front. It is not a place of strength, as commonly represented. In the garden adjoining to it is merely a parapet wall along the edge of the rock, with embrasures, in which a few small guns are planted, commanding a part of the lower town. Every evening during summer, when the weather is fine, one of the regiments of the garrison parades in the open place before the chateau, and the band plays for an hour or two, at which

time the place becomes the resort of numbers of the most genteel people of the town, and has a very gay appearance.

Opposite to the chateau there is a monastery belonging to the Recollets or Franciscan friars; a very few only of the order are now left. Contiguous to this building is the college belonging to the Jesuits, whose numbers have diminished even still faster than that of the Recollets; one old man alone of the brotherhood is left, and in him are centered the immense possessions of that once powerful body in Canada, bringing in a yearly revenue of £.10,000 sterling. This old man, whose lot it has been to outlive all the rest of the order, is by birth a Swiss: in his youth he was no more than a porter to the college, but having some merit he was taken notice of, promoted to a higher situation, and in the end created a lay brother. Though a very old man he is extremely healthy; he possesses an amiable disposition, and is much beloved on account of the excellent use he makes of his large fortune, which is chiefly employed in charitable purposes. On his death the property falls to the crown.

The nunneries are three in number, and as there is no restriction upon the female religious orders, they are all well filled. The largest of them, called L'Hospital General, stands in the suburbs, outside of the walls; another, of the order of St. Ursule, is not far distant from the chateau.

The engineer's drawing room, in which are kept a variety of models, together with plans of the fortifications of Quebec and other fortresses in Canada, is an old building, near the principal battery. Adjoining thereto stands the house where the legislative council and assembly of representatives meet, which is also an old building, that has been plainly fitted up to accommodate the legislature.

The armoury is situated near the artillery barrack, in another part of the town. About ten thousand stand of arms are kept in it, arranged in a similar manner with the arms in the Tower of London, but, if possible, with greater neatness and more fancy.

The artillery barracks are capable of containing about five hundred men, but the principal barracks are calculated to contain a much larger number;

ber; they stand in the market place, not far distant from the square in which the chateau is situated, but more in the heart of the town.

The market of Quebec is extremely well supplied with provisions of every kind, which may be purchased at a much more moderate price than in any town I visited in the United States. It is a matter of curiosity to a stranger to see the number of dogs yoked in little carts, that are brought into this market by the people who attend it. The Canadian dogs are found extremely useful in drawing burthens, and there is scarcely a family in Quebec or Montreal, that does not keep one or more of them for that purpose. They are somewhat similar to the Newfoundland breed, but broader across the loins, and have shorter and thicker legs; in general they are handsome, and wonderfully docile and sagacious; their strength is prodigious; I have seen a single dog, in more than one instance, draw a man for a considerable distance that could not weigh less than ten stone. People, during the winter season, frequently perform long journeys on the snow with half a dozen or more of these animals yoked in a cariole or sledge.

I must not conclude this letter without making mention of the scenery that is exhibited to the view, from various parts of the upper town of Quebec, which, for its grandeur, its beauty, and its diversity, surpasses all that I have hitherto seen in America, or indeed in any other part of the globe. In the variegated expanse that is laid open before you, stupendous rocks, immense rivers, trackless forests and cultivated plains, mountains, lakes, towns, and villages, in turn strike the attention, and the senses are almost bewildered in contemplating the vastness of the scene. Nature is here seen on the grandest scale; and it is scarcely possible for the imagination to paint to itself any thing more sublime than are the several prospects presented to the sight of the delighted spectator. From Cape Diamond, situated one thousand feet above the level of the river, and the loftiest part of the rock on which the city is built, the prospect is considered by many as superior to that from any other spot. A greater extent of country opens upon you, and the eye is here enabled to take in more at once, than at any other place; but to me it appears, that the view from the cape is by no means so

fine as that, for instance, from the battery; for in surveying the different objects below you from such a stupendous height, their magnitude is in a great measure lost, and it seems as if you were looking at a draft of the country more than at the country itself. It is the upper battery that I allude to, facing the basin, and is about three hundred feet above the level of the water. Here, if you stand but a few yards from the edge of the precipice, you may look down at once upon the river, the vessels upon which, as they sail up to the wharfs before the lower town, appear as if they were coming under your very feet. The river itself, which is between five and six miles wide, and visible as far as the distant end of the island of Orleans, where it loses itself amidst the mountains that bound it on each side, is one of the most beautiful objects in nature, and on a fine still summer's evening it often wears the appearance of a vast mirror, where the varied rich tints of the sky, as well as the images of the different objects on the banks, are seen reflected with inconceivable lustre. The southern bank of the river, indented fancifully with bays and promontories, remains nearly in a state of nature, clothed with lofty trees; but the opposite shore is thickly covered with houses, extending as along other parts of the river already mentioned, in one uninterrupted village, seemingly, as far as the eye can reach. On this side the prospect is terminated by an extensive range of mountains, the flat lands situated between and the villages on the banks not being visible to a spectator at Quebec, it seems as if the mountains rose directly out of the water, and the houses were built on their steep and rugged sides.

Beautiful as the environs of the city appear when seen at a distance, they do not appear less so on a more close inspection, and in passing through them the eye is entertained with a most pleasing variety of fine landscapes, whilst the mind is equally gratified with the appearance of content and happiness that reigns in the countenances of the inhabitants. Indeed, if a country as fruitful as it is picturesque, a genial and healthy climate, and a tolerable share of civil and religious liberty, can make people happy, none ought to appear more so than the Canadians, during this delightful season of the year.

Before

Before I dismiss this subject entirely, I must give you a brief account of two scenes in the vicinity of Quebec, more particularly deserving of attention than any others. The one is the Fall of the River Montmorenci; the other, that of the Chaudiere. The former stream runs into the St. Lawrence, about seven miles below Quebec; the latter joins the same river nearly at an equal distance above the city.

The Montmorenci River runs in a very irregular course, through a wild and thickly wooded country, over a bed of broken rocks, till it comes to the brink of a precipice, down which it descends in one uninterrupted and nearly perpendicular fall of two hundred and forty feet. The stream of water in this river, except at the time of floods, is but scanty, but being broken into foam by rushing with such rapidity as it does over the rocks at the top of the precipice, it is thereby much dilated, and in its fall appears to be a sheet of water of no inconsiderable magnitude. The breadth of the river at top, from bank to bank, is about fifty feet only. In its fall, the water has the exact appearance of snow, as when thrown in heaps from the roof of a house, and it seemingly descends with a very slow motion. The spray at the bottom is considerable, and when the sun happens to shine bright in the middle of the day, the prismatic colours are exhibited in it in all their variety and lustre. At the bottom of the precipice the water is confined in a sort of basin, as it were, by a mass of rock, extending nearly across the fall, and out of this it flows with a gentle current to the St. Lawrence, which is about three hundred yards distant. The banks of the Montmorenci, below the precipice, are nearly perpendicular on one side, and on both, inaccessible, so that if a person be desirous of getting to the bottom of the fall, he must descend down the banks of the St. Lawrence, and walk along the margin of that river till he comes to the chasm through which the Montmorenci flows. To a person sailing along the St. Lawrence, past the mouth of the chasm, the fall appears in great beauty.

General Haldimand, formerly governor of Canada, was so much delighted with this cataract, that he built a dwelling house close to it, from the parlour windows of which it is seen in a very advantageous point of view. In front of the house is a neat lawn, that runs down the
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whole way to the St. Lawrence, and in various parts of it little summer-houses have been erected, each of which commands a view of the fall. There is also a summer-house, situated nearly at the top of the fall, hanging directly over the precipice, so that if a bullet were dropped from the window, it would descend in a perpendicular line at least two hundred feet. This house is supported by large beams of timber, fixed into the sides of the chasm, and in order to get to it you have to pass over several flights of steps, and one or two wooden galleries, which are supported in the same manner. The view from hence is tremendously grand. It is said, that the beams whereon this little edifice is erected are in a state of decay, and many persons are fearful of entering into it, lest they should give way; but being ignorant of the danger, if indeed there was any, our whole party ventured into it at once, and staid there a considerable time, notwithstanding its tremulous motion at every step we trod. That the beams cannot last for ever is certain; it would be a wise measure, therefore, to have them removed or repaired in proper time, for as long as they remain standing, persons will be found that will venture into the unsteady fabric they support, and should they give way at a moment when any persons are in it, the catastrophe must inevitably be fatal.

The fall in the River Chaudiere is not half the height of that of the Montmorenci, but then it is no less than two hundred and fifty feet in breadth. The scenery round this cataract is much superior in every respect to that in the neighbourhood of the Montmorenci. Contiguous to the latter there are few trees of any great magnitude, and nothing is near it to relieve the eye; you have the fall, and nought but the fall, to contemplate. The banks of La Chaudiere, on the contrary, are covered with trees of the largest growth, and amidst the piles of broken rocks, which lie scattered about the place, you have some of the wildest and most romantic views imaginable. As for the fall itself, its grandeur varies with the season. When the river is full, a body of water comes rushing over the rocks of the precipice, that astonishes the beholder; but in dry weather, and indeed during the greater part of the summer, we may say, the quantity of water is but trifling. At this season there
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are few but what would prefer the falls of the Montmorenci River, and I am tempted to imagine that, upon the whole, the generality of people would give it the preference at all times.

L E T T E R XXV.

Of the Constitution, Government, Laws, and Religion of the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.—Estimate of the Expenses of the Civil List, of the Military Establishment, and the Presents to the Indians.—Salaries of certain Officers of the Crown.—Imports and Exports.—Taxes.

Quebec.

FROM the time that Canada was ceded to Great Britain until the year 1774, the internal affairs of the province were regulated by the ordinance of the governor alone. In pursuance of the Quebec Bill, which was then passed, a legislative council was appointed by his Majesty in the country; the number of members was limited to twenty-three. This council had full power to make all such ordinances and regulations as were thought expedient for the welfare of the province; but it was prohibited from levying any taxes, except for the purpose of making roads, repairing public buildings, or the like. Every ordinance was to be laid before the governor, for his Majesty's approbation, within six months from the time it was passed, and no ordinance, imposing a greater punishment on any person or persons than a fine, or imprisonment for three months, was valid without his Majesty's assent, signified to the council by the governor.

Thus were the affairs of the province regulated until the year 1791, when an act was passed in the British parliament, repealing so much of the Quebec Bill as related to the appointment of a council, and to the powers that had been granted to it; and which established the present form of government.

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The country, at the same time, was divided into two distinct provinces; the province of Lower Canada, and the province of Upper Canada. The former is the eastern part of the old province of Canada; the latter, the western part, situated on the northern sides of the great lakes and rivers through which the boundary line runs, that separates the British territories from those of the United States. The two provinces are divided from each other by a line, which runs north, 24° west, commencing at Point au Baudet, in that part of the river St. Lawrence called Lake Francis, and continuing on from thence to the Utawas or Grand River. The city of Quebec is the capital of the lower province, as the town of Niagara is of the upper one.

The executive power in each province is vested in the governor, who has for his advice an executive council appointed by his Majesty. The legislative power of each province is vested in the governor, a legislative council, and an assembly of the representatives of the people. Their acts, however, are subject to the controul of his Majesty, and in some particular cases to the controul of the British parliament.

Bills are passed in the council and in the assembly in a form somewhat similar to that in which bills are carried through the British houses of parliament; they are then laid before the governor, who gives or withholds his assent, or reserves them for his Majesty's pleasure.

Such bills as he assents to are put in force immediately; but he is bound to transmit a true copy of them to the King, who in council may declare his disallowance of them within two years from the time of their being received, in which case they become void.

Such as are reserved for his Majesty's assent are not to be put in force until that is received.

Moreover, every act of the assembly and council, which goes to repeal or vary the laws or regulations that were in existence at the time the present constitution was established in the country respecting tithes; the appropriation of land for the support of a protestant clergy; the constituting and endowing of parsonages or rectories; the right of presentation to the same, and the manner in which the incumbents shall hold them; the enjoyment and exercise of any form or mode of worship;

ship; the imposing of any burdens and disqualifications on account of the same; the rights of the clergy to recover their accustomed dues; the imposing or granting of any further dues or emoluments to any ecclesiastics; the establishment and discipline of the church of England; the King's prerogative, touching the granting of waste lands of the crown within the province; every such act, before it receives the royal assent, must be laid before both houses of parliament in Great Britain, and the King must not give his assent thereto until thirty days after the same has been laid before parliament; and in case either house of parliament presents an address to the King to withhold his assent to any such act or acts, it cannot be given.

By an act passed in the eighteenth year of his present Majesty's reign, the British parliament has also the power of making any regulations which may be found expedient, respecting the commerce and navigation of the province, and also of imposing import and export duties; but all such duties are to be applied solely to the use of the province, and in such a manner only as the laws made in the council and assembly direct.

The legislative council of Lower Canada consists of fifteen members; that of Upper Canada of seven. The number of the members in each province must never be less than this; but it may be increased whenever his Majesty thinks fit.

The counsellors are appointed for life, by an instrument under the great seal of the province, signed by the governor, who is invested with powers for that purpose by the King. No person can be a counsellor who is not twenty-one years of age, nor any one who is not a natural born subject, or who has not been naturalized according to act of parliament.

Whenever his Majesty thinks proper, he may confer on any persons hereditary titles of honour, with a right annexed to them of being summoned to sit in this council, which right the heir may claim at the age of twenty-one; the right, however, cannot be acknowledged if the heir has been absent from the province without leave of his Majesty, signified to the council by the governor, for four years together, between

the time of his succeeding to the right and the time of his demanding it. The right is forfeited also, if the heir takes an oath of allegiance to any foreign power before he demands it, unless his Majesty, by an instrument under the great seal of the province, should decree to the contrary.

If a counsellor, after having taken his seat, absent himself from the province for two years successively, without leave from his Majesty, signified to the council by the governor, his seat is also thereby vacated.

All hereditary rights, however, of sitting in council, so forfeited, are only to be suspended during the life of the defaulters, and on their death they descend with the titles to the next heirs*.

In cases of treason, both the title and right of sitting in the council are extinguished.

All questions concerning the right of being summoned to the council are to be determined by the council; but an appeal may be had from their decision to his Majesty in his parliament of Great Britain.

The governor has the power of appointing and removing the speaker of the council.

The assembly of Lower Canada consists of fifty members, and that of Upper Canada of sixteen; neither assembly is ever to consist of a less number.

The members for districts, circles, or counties, are chosen by a majority of the votes of such persons as are possessed of lands or tenements in freehold, in fief, in boture, or by certificate derived under the authority of the governor and council of Quebec, of the yearly value of forty shillings, clear of all rents, charges, &c. The members for towns or townships are chosen by a majority of the votes of such persons as possess houses and lands for their own use, of the yearly value of five pounds sterling, or as have resided in the town or township for one year, and paid a rent for a house during the time, at the rate of ten pounds yearly.

* No hereditary titles, with this right annexed, have yet been conferred on any persons in Canada by his Britannic Majesty.

No person is eligible to serve as a member of the assembly, who is a member of the legislative council, or a minister, priest, ecclesiastic, or religious personage of the church of England, Rome, or of any other church.

No person is qualified to vote or serve, who is not twenty-one years of age; nor any person, not a natural born subject, or who has not been naturalized, either by law or conquest; nor any one who has been attainted of treason in any court in his Majesty's dominions, or who has been disqualified by an act of assembly and council.

Every voter, if called upon, must take an oath, either in French or English, that he is of age; that he is qualified to vote according to law; and that he has not voted before at that election.

The governor has the power of appointing the place of session, and of calling together, of proroguing, and of dissolving the assembly.

The assembly is not to last longer than four years, but it may be dissolved sooner. The governor is bound to call it at least once in each year.

The oath of a member, on taking his seat, is comprised in a few words: he promises to bear true allegiance to the King, as lawful sovereign of Great Britain, and the province of Canada dependant upon it; to defend him against all traitorous conspiracies and attempts against his person; and to make known to him all such conspiracies and attempts, which he may at any time be acquainted with; all which he promises without mental evasion, reservation, or equivocation, at the same time renouncing all pardons and dispensations from any person or power whatsoever.

The governors of the two provinces are totally independent of each other in their civil capacity: in military affairs, the governor of the lower province takes precedence, as he is usually created captain general of his Majesty's forces in North America.

The present system of judicature in each province was established by the Quebec bill of 1774. By this bill it was enacted, that all persons in the country should be entitled to hold their lands or possessions in the same manner as before the conquest, according to the laws and usages

then existing in Canada; and that all controversies relative to property or civil rights should also be determined by the same laws and usages. These old laws and usages, however, were not to extend to the lands which might thereafter be granted by his Britannic Majesty in free and common socage: here English laws were to be in full force; so that the * English inhabitants, who have settled for the most part on new lands, are not subject to the controul of these old French laws, that were existing in Canada when the country was conquered, except a dispute concerning property or civil rights should arise between any of them and the French inhabitants, in which case the matter is to be determined by the French laws. Every friend to civil liberty would wish to see these laws abolished, for they weigh very unequally in favour of the rich and of the poor; but as long as the French inhabitants remain so wedded as they are at present to old customs, and so very ignorant, there is little hope of seeing any alteration of this nature take place. At the same time that the French laws were suffered by the Quebec bill to exist, in order to conciliate the affections of the French inhabitants, who were attached to them, the criminal law of England was established throughout every part of the country; "and this was one of the "happiest circumstances," as the Abbé Raynal observes, "that Canada "could experience, as deliberate, rational, public trials took place of "the impenetrable mysterious transactions of a cruel inquisition; and "as a tribunal, that had theretofore been dreadful and sanguinary, was "filled with humane judges, more disposed to acknowledge innocence "than to suppose criminality."

The governor, the lieutenant governor, or the person administering the government, the members of the executive council, the chief justices of the province, and the judges of the court of king's bench, or any five of them, form a court of appeal, the judges however excepted of that district from whence the appeal is made. From the decision

* I must observe here once for all that by English inhabitants I mean all those whose native language is English, in contradistinction to the Canadians of French extraction, who universally speak the French language, and no other.

of this court an appeal may be had in certain cases to the King in council.

Every religion is tolerated, in the fullest extent of the word, in both provinces; and no disqualifications are imposed on any persons on account of their religious opinions. The Roman Catholic religion is that of a great majority of the inhabitants; and by the Quebec bill of 1774, the ecclesiastics of that persuasion are empowered by law to recover all the dues which, previous to that period, they were accustomed to receive, as well as tithes, that is, from the Roman Catholic inhabitants; but they cannot exact any dues or tithes from Protestants, or off lands held by Protestants, although formerly such lands might have been subjected to dues and tithes for the support of the Roman Catholic church. The dues and tithes from off these lands are still, however, to be paid; but they are to be paid to persons appointed by the governor, and the amount of them is to be reserved, in the hands of his Majesty's receiver general, for the support of the Protestant clergy actually residing in the province.

By the act of the year 1791, also, it was ordained, that the governor should allot out of all lands belonging to the crown, which should be granted after that period, one-seventh for the benefit of a Protestant clergy, to be solely applicable to their use, and all such allotments must be particularly specified in every grant of waste lands, otherwise the grant is void.

With the advice of the executive council, the governor is authorized to constitute or erect parsonages or rectories, and to endow them out of these appropriations, and to present incumbents to them, ordained according to the rites of the church of England, which incumbents are to perform the same duties, and to hold their parsonages or rectories in the same manner as incumbents of the church of England do in that country.

The clergy of the church of England, in both provinces, consists at present of twelve persons only, including the bishop of Quebec; that of the church of Rome, however, consists of no less than one hundred and twenty-six; viz. a bishop, who takes his title from Quebec,

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his "coadjuteur élu," who is bishop of Canathe, three vicars general, and one hundred and sixteen curates and missionaries, all of whom are resident in the lower province, except five curates and missionaries.

The number of the dissenting clergy, in both provinces, is considerably smaller than that of the clergy of the church of England.

The expences of the civil list in Lower Canada are estimated at £. 20,000 sterling per annum, one half of which is defrayed by Great Britain, and the remainder by the province, out of the duties paid on the importation of certain articles. The expence of the civil list in Upper Canada is considerably less; perhaps not so much as a fourth of that of the lower province.

The military establishment in both provinces, together with the repairs of fortifications, &c. are computed to cost Great Britain annually £. 100,000 sterling.

The presents distributed amongst the Indians, and the salaries paid to the different officers in the Indian department, are estimated at £. 100,000 sterling more, annually.

Amongst the officers in the Indian department are, superintendants general, deputy superintendants, inspectors general, deputy inspectors general, secretaries, assistant secretaries, storekeepers, clerks, agents, interpreters, issuers of provisions, surgeons, gunsmiths, &c. &c. &c. most of whom, in the lower province, have now sinecure places, as there are but few Indians in the country; but in the upper province they have active service to perform. Of the policy of issuing presents to such a large amount amongst the Indians, more will be said in the afterpart of this work.

The following is a statement of some of the salaries paid to the officers of government in Lower Canada.

	£.	s.	d.
Governor general	2,000	—	—
Lieutenant governor	1,500	—	—
Executive counsellors, each	100	—	—
Attorney general	300	—	—
Solicitor general	200	—	—
Secretary and register to the province	400	—	—
			Clerk

OFFICERS' SALARIES.

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	£.	s.	d.
Clerk of the court of appeals, with fire wood and stationary	120	—	—
Secretary to the governor - - - - -	200	—	—
French secretary to the governor, and translator to the council - - - - -	200	—	—
Chief justice of Quebec, who is chief justice of the province - - - - -	1,200	—	—
Chief justice of Montreal - - - - -	900	—	—
Chief justice of Three Rivers - - - - -	300	—	—
Receiver general - - - - -	400	—	—
Surveyor general of lands - - - - -	300	—	—
Deputy, and allowance for an office - - - - -	150	—	—
Surveyor of woods - - - - -	200	—	—
Grand voyer of Quebec - - - - -	100	—	—
Grand voyer of Montreal - - - - -	100	—	—
Grand voyer of Three Rivers - - - - -	60	—	—
Superintendent of provincial post houses - - - - -	100	—	—
Clerk of the terraro of the king's domain - - - - -	90	—	—
Clerk of the crown - - - - -	100	—	—
Inspector of police at Quebec - - - - -	100	—	—
Inspector of police at Montreal - - - - -	100	—	—
Four missionaries to Indians, each - - - - -	50	—	—
One missionary to Indians - - - - -	45	—	—
Schoolmaster at Quebec - - - - -	100	—	—
Schoolmaster at Montreal - - - - -	50	—	—
Schoolmaster at Carlisle, Bay de Chaleurs - - - - -	25	—	—
Overseers, to prevent fires at Quebec, and to sweep the chimneys of the poor - - - - -	60	—	—
Salary of the bishop of Quebec, who is bishop of both provinces - - - - -	2,000	—	—
The pensions, between January 1794 and January 1795, amounted to - - - - -	1,782	6	7

A STATEMENT of the Articles subject to Duty on Importation into Canada, and of the Duties payable thereon.

	£.	s.	d.
Brandy and other spirits, the manufacture of Great Britain, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	3
Rum and other spirits, imported from the colonies in the West Indies, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	6
Brandy and spirits of foreign manufacture, imported from Great Britain, per gallon - - - - -	—	1	—
Additional duty on the same, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	3
Rum or spirits manufactured in the United States, per gallon - - - - -	—	1	—
Molasses and Syrups imported in British shipping, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	3
Additional duty, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	3
Molasses or Syrups legally imported in other than British shipping, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	6
Additional duty, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	3
Madeira wine, per gallon - - - - -	—	—	6
Other wine - - - - -	—	—	3

N. B. Wine can be imported directly from Madeira, or from any of the African islands, into Canada; but no European wine or brandy can be imported, except through England.

Loaf or lump sugar, per lb. - - - - -	—	—	1
Muscovado or clayed sugar - - - - -	—	—	½
Coffee, per lb. - - - - -	—	—	2
Leaf tobacco, per lb. - - - - -	—	—	2
Playing cards, per pack - - - - -	—	—	2
Salt, the minot - - - - -	—	—	4

N. B. The minot is a measure commonly used in Canada, which is to the Winchester bushel, as 100 is to 108,765.

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The imports into Canada consist of all the various articles which a young country, that does not manufacture much for its own use, can be supposed to stand in need of; such as earthen ware, hardware, and household furniture, except of the coarser kinds; woollen and linen cloths, haberdashery, hosiery, &c.; paper, stationary, leather and manufactures of leather, groceries, wines, spirits, West Indian produce, &c. &c.; cordage of every description, and even the coarser manufactures of iron, are also imported.

The soil of the country is well adapted to the growth of hemp, and great pains have been taken to introduce the culture of it. Handbills, explaining the manner in which it can be raised to the best advantage, have been assiduously circulated amongst the farmers, and posted up at all the public houses. It is a difficult matter, however, to put the French Canadians out of their old ways, so that very little hemp has been raised in consequence of the pains that have been thus taken; and it is not probable that much will be raised for a considerable time to come.

Iron ore has been discovered in various parts of the country; but works for the smelting and manufacturing of it have been erected at one place only, in the neighbourhood of Trois Rivieres. These works were erected by the king of France some time before the conquest: they are now the property of the British government, and are rented out to the persons who hold them at present. When the lease expires, which will be the case about the year 1800, it is thought that no one will be found to carry on the works, as the bank of ore, from whence they are supplied, is nearly exhausted. The works consist of a forge and a foundry: iron stoves are the principal articles manufactured in the latter; but they are not so much esteemed as those from England.

Domestic manufactures are carried on in most parts of Canada, consisting of linen and of coarse woollen cloths; but by far the greater part of these articles used in the country is imported from Great Britain.

The exports from Canada consist of furs and pelts in immense quantities; of wheat, flour, flax-seed, potash, timber, staves, and lumber of all sorts; dried fish, oil, ginseng, and various medicinal drugs.

The trade between Canada and Great Britain employs, it is said, about seven thousand tons of shipping annually.

LETTER XXVI.

Of the Soil and Productions of Lower Canada.—Observations on the Manufacture of Sugar from the Maple-tree.—Of the Climate of Lower Canada.—Amusements of People of all Descriptions during Winter.—Carioles.—Manner of guarding against the Cold.—Great Hardiness of the Horses.—State of the River St. Lawrence on the Dissolution of Winter.—Rapid Progress of Vegetation during Spring.—Agreeableness of the Summer and Autumn Seasons.

Quebec.

THE eastern part of Lower Canada, between Quebec and the Gulph of St. Lawrence, is mountainous; between Quebec and the mouth of the Utawas River also a few scattered mountains are to be met with; but higher up the River St. Lawrence the face of the country is flat.

The soil, except where small tracts of stony and sandy land intervene, consists principally of a loose dark coloured earth, and of the depth of ten or twelve inches, below which there is a bed of cold clay. This earth towards the surface is extremely fertile, of which there cannot be a greater proof than that it continues to yield plentiful crops, notwithstanding its being worked year after year by the French Canadians, without ever being manured. It is only within a few years back, indeed, that any of the Canadians have begun to manure their lands, and many still continue, from father to son, to work the same fields without intermission, and without ever putting

putting any manure upon them, yet the land is not exhausted, as it would be in the United States. The manure principally made use of by those who are the best farmers is marl, found in prodigious quantities in many places along the shores of the River St. Lawrence.

The soil of Lower Canada is particularly suited to the growth of small grain. Tobacco also thrives well in it; it is only raised, however, in small quantities for private use, more than one half of what is used in the country being imported. The Canadian tobacco is of a much milder quality than that grown in Maryland and Virginia: the snuff made from it is held in great estimation.

Culinary vegetables of every description come to the greatest perfection in Canada, as well as most of the European fruits: the currants, gooseberries, and raspberries are in particular very fine; the latter are indigenous, and are found in profusion in the woods; the vine is also indigenous, but the grapes which it produces in its uncultivated state are very poor, four, and but little larger than fine currants.

The variety of trees found in the forests of Canada is prodigious, and it is supposed that there many kinds are still unknown: beech trees, oaks, elms, ashes, pines, sycamores, chestnuts, walnuts, of each of which several different species are commonly met with; the sugar maple tree is also found in almost every part of the country, a tree never seen but upon good ground. There are two kinds of this very valuable tree in Canada; the one called the swamp maple, from its being generally found upon low lands; the other, the mountain or curled maple, from growing upon high dry ground, and from the grain of the wood being very beautifully variegated with little stripes and curls. The former yields a much greater quantity of sap, in proportion to its size, than the other, but this sap does not afford so much sugar as that of the curled maple. A pound of sugar is frequently procured from two or three gallons of the sap of the curled maple, whereas no more than the same quantity can be had from six or seven gallons of that of the swamp.

The most approved method of getting the sap is by piercing a hole with an auger in the side of the tree, of one inch or an inch and half

in diameter, and two or three inches in depth, obliquely upwards; but the most common mode of coming at it is by cutting a large gash in the tree with an axe. In each case a small spout is fixed at the bottom of the wound, and a vessel is placed underneath to receive the liquor as it falls.

A maple tree of the diameter of twenty inches will commonly yield sufficient sap for making five pounds of sugar each year, and instances have been known of trees yielding nearly this quantity annually for a series of thirty years. Trees that have been gashed and mangled with an axe will not last by any means so long as those which have been carefully pierced with an auger; the axe, however, is generally used, because the sap distils much faster from the wound made by it than from that made by an auger, and it is always an object with the farmer, to have the sap brought home, and boiled down as speedily as possible, in order that the making of sugar may not interfere with his other agricultural pursuits. The season for tapping the trees is when the sap begins to rise, at the commencement of spring, which is just the time that the farmer is most busied in making preparations for sowing his grain.

It is a very remarkable fact, that these trees, after having been tapped for six or seven successive years, always yield more sap than they do on being first wounded; this sap, however, is not so rich as that which the trees distil for the first time; but from its coming in an increased portion, as much sugar is generally procured from a single tree on the fifth or sixth year of its being tapped as on the first.

The maple is the only sort of raw sugar made use of in the country parts of Canada; it is very generally used also by the inhabitants of the towns, whither it is brought for sale by the country people who attend the markets, just the same as any other kind of country produce. The most common form in which it is seen is in loaves or thick round cakes, precisely as it comes out of the vessel where it is boiled down from the sap. These cakes are of a very dark colour in general, and very hard; as they are wanted they are scraped down with a knife, and when thus reduced into powder, the sugar appears of a much lighter cast, and
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not unlike West Indian muscovada or grained sugar. If the maple sugar be carefully boiled with lime, whites of eggs, blood, or any of the other articles usually employed for clarifying sugar, and properly granulated, by the draining off of the melasses, it is by no means inferior, either in point of strength, flavour, or appearance to the eye, to any West Indian sugar whatsoever: simply boiled down into cakes with milk or whites of eggs it is very agreeable to the taste.

The ingenious Dr. Nooth, of Quebec, who is at the head of the general hospital in Canada, has made a variety of experiments upon the manufacture of maple sugar; he has granulated, and also refined it, so as to render it equal to the best lump sugar that is made in England. To convince the Canadians also, who are as incredulous on some points as they are credulous on others, that it was really maple sugar which they saw thus refined, he has contrived to leave large lumps, exhibiting the sugar in its different stages towards refinement, the lower part of the lumps being left hard, similar to the common cakes, the middle part granulated, and the upper part refined.

Dr. Nooth has calculated, that the sale of the melasses alone would be fully adequate to the expence of refining the maple sugar, if a manufactory for that purpose were established. Some attempts have been made to establish one of the kind at Quebec, but they have never succeeded, as the persons by whom they were made were adventurers that had not sufficient capitals for such an undertaking. It ought not, however, to be concluded from this, that a manufactory of the sort would not succeed if conducted by judicious persons that had ample funds for the business; on the contrary, it is highly probable that it would answer.

There is great reason also to suppose, that a manufactory for making the sugar from the beginning, as well as for refining it, might be established with advantage.

Several acres together are often met with in Canada, entirely covered with maple trees alone; but the trees are most usually found growing mixed with others, in the proportion of from thirty to fifty maple trees to every acre. Thousands and thousands of acres might be procured, within a very short distance of the River St. Lawrence, for less than one shilling

an acre, on each of which thirty maple trees would be found ; but supposing that only twenty-five trees were found on each acre, then on a track of five thousand acres, supposing each tree to produce five pounds of sugar, 5,580 cwt. 2 qrs. 12 lbs. of sugar might be made annually.

The maple tree attains a growth sufficient for yielding five pounds of sugar annually in the space of twenty years ; as the oaks and other kinds of trees, therefore, were cut away for different purposes, maples might be planted in their room, which would be ready to be tapped by the time that the old maple trees failed. Moreover, if these trees were planted out in rows regularly, the trouble of collecting the sap from them would be much less than if they stood widely scattered, as they do in their natural state, and of course the expence of making the sugar would be considerably lessened. Added to this, if young maples were constantly set out in place of the other trees, as they were cut down, the estate, at the end of twenty years, would yield ten times as much sugar as it did originally.

It has been asserted, that the difficulty of maintaining horses and men in the woods at the season of the year proper for making the sugar would be so great, as to render every plan for the manufactory of the sugar on an extensive scale abortive. This might be very true, perhaps, in the United States, where the subject has been principally discussed, and where it is that this objection has been made ; but it would not hold good in Canada. Many tracks, containing five thousand acres each, of sugar maple land, might be procured in various parts of the country, no part of any of which would be more than six English miles distant from a populous village. The whole labour of boiling in each year would be over in the space of six weeks ; the trouble therefore of carrying food during that period, for the men and horses that were wanting for the manufactory, from a village into the woods, would be trifling, and a few huts might be built for their accommodation in the woods at a small expence.

The great labour requisite for conveying the sap from the trees, that grow so far apart, to the boiling house, has been adduced as another objection

jection to the establishment of an extensive sugar manufactory in the woods.

The sap, as I have before observed, is collected by private families, by setting a vessel into which it drops, under each tree, and from thence carried by hand to the place where it is to be boiled. If a regular manufactory, however, were established, the sap might be conveyed to the boiling house with far less labour; small wooden troughs might be placed under the wounds in each trees, by which means the sap might easily be conveyed to the distance of twenty yards, if it were thought necessary, into reservoirs. Three or four of these reservoirs might be placed on an acre, and avenues opened through the woods, so as to admit carts with proper vessels to pass from one to the other, in order to convey the sap to the boiling houses. Mere sheds would answer for boiling houses, and these might be erected at various different places on the estate, in order to save the trouble of carrying the sap a great way.

The expence of cutting down a few trees, so as to clear an avenue for a cart, would not be much; neither would that of making the spouts, and common tubs for reservoirs, be great in a country abounding with wood; the quantity of labour saved by such means would, however, be very considerable.

When then, it is considered, that private families, who have to carry the sap by hand from each tree to their own houses, and often at a considerable distance from the woods, in order to boil it, can, with all this labour, afford to sell sugar, equally good with that which comes from the West Indies, at a much lower price than what the latter is sold at; when it is considered also, that by going to the small expence, on the first year, of making a few wooden spouts and tubs, a very great portion of labour would be saved, and of course the profits on the sale of the sugar would be far greater; there is good foundation for thinking, that if a manufactory were established on such a plan as I have hinted at, it would answer extremely well, and that maple sugar would in a short time become a principal article of foreign commerce in Canada.

The sap of the maple tree is not only useful in yielding sugar; most excellent vinegar may likewise be made from it. In company with
several

several gentlemen I tasted vinegar made from it by Dr. Nooth, allowed by every one present to be much superior to the best French white wine vinegar; for at the same time that it possessed equal acidity, it had a more delicious flavour.

Good table beer may likewise be made from the sap, which many would mistake for malt liquor.

If distilled, the sap affords a very fine spirit.

The air of Lower Canada is extremely pure, and the climate is deemed uncommonly salubrious, except only in the western parts of the province, high up the River St. Lawrence, where, as is the case in almost every part of the United States south of New England, between the ocean and the mountains, the inhabitants suffer to a great degree from intermittent fevers. From Montreal downwards, the climate resembles very much that of the states of New England; the people live to a good old age, and intermittents are quite unknown. This great difference in the healthiness of the two parts of the province must be attributed to the different aspects of the country; to the east, Lower Canada, like New England, is mountainous, but to the west it is an extended flat.

The extremes of heat and cold in Canada are amazing; in the months of July and August the thermometer, according to Fahrenheit, is often known to rise to 96°, yet a winter scarcely passes over but even the mercury itself freezes. Those very sudden transitions, however, from heat to cold, so common in the United States, and so very injurious to the constitution, are unknown in Canada; the seasons also are much more regular.

The snow generally begins to fall in November; but sometimes it comes down as early as the latter end of October. This is the most disagreeable part of the whole year; the air is then cold and raw, and the sky dark and gloomy; two days seldom pass over together without a fall either of snow or sleet. By the end of the first or second week, however, in December, the clouds are generally dissolved, the frost sets in, the sky assumes a bright and azure hue, and for weeks together it continues the same, without being obscured by a single cloud.

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The greatest degree of cold which they experience in Canada, is in the month of January, when for a few days it is sometimes so intense, that it is impossible for a human being to remain out of doors for any considerable time, without evident danger of being frost bitten. These very cold days, however, do not come altogether, but intervene generally at some little distance from each other; and between them, in the depth of winter, the air is sometimes so warm that people in exercise, in the middle of the day, feel disposed to lay aside the thick fur cloaks usually worn out of doors.

Those who have ever passed a winter in Canada, have by no means that dread of its severity, which some would have who have never experienced a greater degree of cold than what is commonly felt in Great Britain; and as for the Canadians themselves, they prefer the winter to every other season; indeed I never met with a Canadian, rich or poor, male or female, but what was of that opinion; nor ought this to excite our surprise, when it is considered that they pass the winter so very differently from what we do. If a Canadian were doomed to spend but six weeks only in the country parts of England, when the ground was covered with snow, I dare venture to say that he would be as heartily tired of the sameness which then pervaded the face of nature, and as desirous of beholding a green field once more, as any one of us.

Winter in Canada is the season of general amusement. The clear frosty weather no sooner commences, than all thoughts about business are laid aside, and every one devotes himself to pleasure. The inhabitants meet in convivial parties at each other's houses, and pass the day with music, dancing, card-playing, and every social entertainment that can beguile the time. At Montreal, in particular, such a constant and friendly intercourse is kept up amongst the inhabitants, that, as I have often heard it mentioned, it appears then as if the town were inhabited but by one large family.

By means of their carioles or sledges, the Canadians transport themselves over the snow, from place to place, in the most agreeable manner, and with a degree of swiftness that appears almost incredible; for with the same

horse it is possible to go eighty miles in a day; so light is the draft of one of these carriages, and so favourable is the snow to the feet of the horse. The Canadian cariole or sledge is calculated to hold two persons and a driver; it is usually drawn by one horse; if two horses are made use of, they are put one before the other, as the track in the roads will not admit of their going abreast. The shape of the carriage is varied according to fancy, and it is a matter of emulation amongst the gentlemen, who shall have the handsomest one. There are two distinct kinds, however, of carioles, the open and the covered. The former is commonly somewhat like the body of a capriole, put upon two iron runners or slides, similar in shape to the irons of a pair of skates; the latter consists of the body of a chariot put on runners in the same manner, and covered entirely over with furs, which are found by experience to keep out the cold much better than any other covering whatsoever. Covered carioles are not much liked, except for the purpose of going to a party in the evening, for the great pleasure of carioling consists in seeing and being seen, and the ladies always go out in most superb dresses of furs. The carioles glide over the snow with great smoothness, and so little noise do they make in sliding along, that it is necessary to have a number of bells attached to the harness, or a person continually sounding a horn to guard against accidents. The rapidity of the motion, with the sound of these bells and horns, appears to be very conducive to cheerfulness, for you seldom see a dull face in a cariole. The Canadians always take advantage of the winter season to visit their friends who live at a distance, as travelling is then so very expeditious; and this is another circumstance which contributes, probably not a little, to render the winter so extremely agreeable in their eyes.

Though the cold is so very intense in Canada, yet the inhabitants never suffer from it, constant experience having taught them how to guard against it effectually.

In the first place, by means of stoves they keep their habitations as warm and comfortable as can be desired. In large houses they generally have four or five stoves placed in the hall, and in the apartments on the ground floor, from whence flues pass in different directions through
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the upper rooms. Besides these stoves, they likewise frequently have open fires in the lower apartments; it is more, however, on account of the cheerful appearance they give to the room, than for the sake of the warmth they communicate, as by the stoves the rooms can be heated to any degree. Lest any cold blasts should penetrate from without, they have also double doors, and if the house stands exposed, even double windows, about six inches apart. The windows are made to open lengthwise in the middle, on hinges, like folding doors, and where they meet they lock together in a deep groove; windows of this description, when closed, are found to keep out the cold air much better than the common sashes, and in warm weather they are more agreeable than any other sort, as they admit more air when opened. Nor do the inhabitants suffer from cold when they go abroad; for they never stir out without first wrapping themselves up in furs from head to foot. Their caps entirely cover the ears, the back of the neck, and the greatest part of the face, leaving nothing exposed except the eyes and nose; and their large and thick cloaks effectually secure the body; besides which they wear fur gloves, muffs, and shoes.

It is surprising to see how well the Canadian horses support the cold; after standing for hours together in the open air at a time when spirits will freeze, they set off as alertly as if it were summer. The French Canadians make no scruple to leave their horses standing at the door of a house, without any covering, in the coldest weather, while they are themselves taking their pleasure. None of the other domestic animals are as indifferent to the cold as the horses. During winter all the domestic animals, not excepting the poultry, are lodged together in one large stable, that they may keep each other warm; but in order to avoid the expence of feeding many through the winter, as soon as the frost sets in they generally kill cattle and poultry sufficient to last them till the return of spring. The carcases are buried in the ground, and covered with a heap of snow, and as they are wanted they are dug up; vegetables are laid up in the same manner, and they continue very good throughout the whole winter. The markets in the towns are always supplied best at this season, and provisions are then also the cheapest; for the

farmers having nothing else to engage them, and having a quantity of meat on hand, that is never injured from being sent to market, flock to the towns in their carioles in great numbers, and always well supplied.

The winter generally continues till the latter end of April, and sometimes even till May, when a thaw comes on very suddenly. The snow soon disappears; but it is a long time before the immense bodies of ice in the rivers are dissolved. The scene which presents itself on the St. Lawrence at this season is most tremendous. The ice first begins to crack from side to side, with a report as loud as that of a cannon. Afterwards, as the waters become swollen by the melting of the snow, it is broken into pieces, and hurried down the stream with prodigious impetuosity; but its course is often interrupted by the islands and shallow places in the river; one large piece is perhaps first stopped, other pieces come drifting upon that, and at length prodigious heaps are accumulated, in some places rising several yards above the level of the water. Sometimes these mounds of ice are driven from the islands or rocks, upon which they have accumulated, by the wind, and are floated down to the sea in one entire body: if in going down they happen to strike against any of the rocks along the shore, the crash is horrible: at other times they remain in the same spot where they were first formed, and continue to obstruct the navigation of the river for weeks after every appearance of frost is banished on shore; so very widely also do they frequently extend in particular parts of the river, and so solid are they at the same time, that in crossing from shore to shore, the people, instead of being at the trouble of going round them, make directly for the ice, disembark upon it, drag their bateaux or canoes across, and launch them again on the opposite side. As long as the ice remains in the St. Lawrence, no ships attempt to pass up or down; for one of these large bodies of ice is equally dangerous with a rock.

The rapid progress of vegetation in Canada, as soon as the winter is over, is most astonishing. Spring has scarcely appeared, when you find it is summer. In a few days the fields are clothed with the richest verdure, and the trees obtain their foliage. The various productions of the
garden

garden come in after each other in quick succession, and the grain sown in May affords a rich harvest by the latter end of July. This part of the year, in which spring and summer are so happily blended together, is delightful beyond description; nature then puts on her gayest attire; at the same time the heat is never found oppressive; it is seldom that the mercury in Fahrenheit's thermometer then rises above 84° : in July and August the weather becomes warmer, and a few days often intervene when the heat is overcoming; during these months the mercury sometimes rises to 96° . There is a great difference, however, in the weather at this season in different years: during the whole of the time that I was in the country, I never observed the thermometer higher than 88° ; for the greater part of the months of July and August it was not higher than 80° , and for many days together it did not rise beyond 65° , between Quebec and Montreal.

The fall of the year is a most agreeable season in Canada, as well as the summer.

It is observed, that there is in general a difference of about three weeks in the length of the winter at Montreal and at Quebec, and of course in the other seasons. When green peas, strawberries, &c. were entirely gone at Montreal, we met with them in full season at Quebec.

L E T T E R XXVII.

Inhabitants of Lower Canada.—Of the Tenures by which Lands are held.—Not favourable to the Improvement of the Country.—Some Observations thereon.—Advantages of settling in Canada and the United States compared.—Why Emigrations to the latter Country are more general.—Description of a Journey to Stoneham Township near Quebec.—Description of the River St. Charles.—Of Lake St. Charles.—Of Stoneham Township,

Quebec.

ABOUT five-sixths of the inhabitants of Lower Canada are of French extraction, the bulk of whom are peasants, living upon the lands of the seigniors. Amongst the English inhabitants devoted to agriculture, but few, however, are to be found occupying land under seigniors, notwithstanding that several of the seigniories have fallen into the hands of Englishmen; the great majority of them hold the lands which they cultivate by virtue of certificates from the governor, and these people for the most part reside in the western parts of the province, bordering upon the upper parts of the river St. Lawrence.

The seigniors, both French and English, live in a plain simple style; for although the seigniories in general are extensive, but few of them afford a very large income to the proprietors.

The revenues of a seigniorie arise from certain fines called lods and vents, which are paid by the vassals on the alienation of property, as when a farm, or any part of it, is divided by a vassal, during his lifetime, amongst his sons, or when any other than the immediate issue of a vassal succeeds to his estate, &c. &c. The revenues arise also from certain fines paid on the granting of fresh lands to the vassals, and from the profits of the mills of the seignior, to which the vassals are bound to send all their corn to be ground.

This last obligation is sometimes extremely irksome to the vassal, when, for instance, on a large seigniorie there is not more than one mill; for although it should be ten miles distant from his habitation, and he could get his corn ground on better terms close to his own

door, yet he cannot send it to any other mill than that belonging to the feignior, under a heavy penalty.

The extent of feigniorial rights in Canada, particularly in what relates to the levying of the lods and vents, seems to be by no means clearly ascertained, so that where the feignior happens to be a man of a rapacious disposition, the vassal is sometimes compelled to pay fines, which, in strict justice perhaps, ought not to be demanded. In the first provincial assembly that was called, this business was brought forward, and the equity and policy was strongly urged by some of the English members that possessed considerable abilities, of having proper bounds fixed to the power of the feigniors, and of having all the fines and services due from their vassals accurately ascertained, and made generally known; but the French members, a great number of whom were themselves feigniors, being strongly attached to old habits, and thinking that it was conducive to their interest that their authority should still continue undefined, opposed the measure with great warmth, and nothing was done.

Nearly all those parts of Canada which were inhabited when the country was under French government, as well as the unoccupied lands granted to individuals during the same period, are comprized under different feignories, and these, with all the usages and customs thereto formerly pertaining, were confirmed to the proprietaries by the Quebec bill, which began to be in force in May 1775; these lands, therefore, are held by unquestionable titles. All the waste lands, however, of the crown, that have been allotted since the conquest, have been granted simply by certificates of occupation, or licenses from the governor, giving permission to persons who applied for these lands to settle upon them; no patents, conveying a clear possession of them, have ever been made out; it is merely by courtesy that they are held; and if a governor thought proper to reclaim them on the part of the crown, he has only to say the word, and the titles of the occupiers sink into air. Thus it is, that although several persons have expended large sums of money in procuring, and afterwards improving townships*, none of

* Tracts of waste land, usually ten miles square.

them

them are yet enabled to fell a single acre as an indemnification for these expences; at least no title can be given with what is offered for sale, and it is not therefore to be supposed, that purchasers of such property will easily be found. It is true, indeed, that the different proprietaries of these townships have been assured, on the part of government, that patents shall be granted to every one of them, and they are fully persuaded that these will be made out some time or other; but they have in vain waited for them for three years, and they are anxiously waiting for them still*.

Different motives have been assigned for this conduct on the part of the British government. In the first place it has been alledged, that the titles are withheld, in order to prevent speculation and land jobbing from rising to the same height in Canada as they have done in the United States.

It is a notorious fact, that in the United States land jobbing has led to a series of the most nefarious practices, whereby numbers have already suffered, and by which still greater numbers must suffer hereafter. By the machinations of a few interested individuals, who have contrived by various methods to get immense tracts † of waste land into their possession, fictitious demands have been created in the market for land, the price of it has consequently been enhanced much beyond its intrinsic worth, and these persons have then taken the opportunity of selling what they had on hand at an enormous profit. The wealth that has been accumulated by particular persons in the United States, in this manner, is prodigious; and numberless others, witnesses to their prosperity, have been tempted to make purchases of land, in hopes of realizing for-

* I received a letter, dated early in the year 1796, from a gentleman in Canada, who has taken up one of these townships, which contains the following paragraph: "At present the matter remains in an unsettled state, although every step has been taken on my part to accelerate the completion of the business. Mr. D——'s patent, which was sent home as a model, is not yet returned. I received a letter lately from Mr. Secretary R——, in which he informs me, that Mr. G—— is again returned to the sur-

vayor's office, and he assures me, that in conjunction with him, he will do every thing in his power to expedite my obtaining a patent. The governor, he says, means that the land business should go forward."

† There have been many instances in the United States of a single individual's holding upwards of three millions of acres at one time, and some few individuals have been known to hold even twice that quantity at once.

tunes in a similar way, by selling out small portions at an advanced price. Thus it is that the nominal value of waste land has been raised so suddenly in the United States; for large tracts, which ten years before were selling for a few pence per acre, have sold in numberless instances, lately, for dollars per acre, an augmentation in price which the increase of population alone would by no means have occasioned. Estates, like articles of merchandize, have passed, before they have ever been improved, through the hands of dozens of people, who never perhaps were within five hundred miles of them, and the consumer or farmer, in consequence of the profits laid on by these people, to whom they have severally belonged, has had frequently to pay a most exorbitant price for the little spot which he has purchased*.

Speculation and land jobbing carried to such a pitch cannot but be deemed great evils in the community, and to prevent them from extending into Canada appears to be an object well worthy the attention of government; but it seems unnecessary to have recourse for that purpose to the very exceptionable measure of withholding a good title to all lands granted by the crown, a measure disabling the land holder from taking the proper steps to improve his estate, which gives rise to distrust and suspicion, and materially impedes the growing prosperity of the country.

It appears to me, that land-jobbing could never arrive at such a height in Canada as to be productive of similar evils to those already sprung up from it in the United States, or similar to those further ones with which the country is threatened, if no more land were granted by the crown, to any one individual, than a township of ten thousand acres; or should it be thought that grants of such an extent even opened too wide a field

* In the beginning of the year 1796, this traffic was at its highest pitch, and at this time General Washington, so eminently distinguished for his prudence and foresight, perceiving that land had risen beyond its actual value, and persuaded that it could not rise higher for some years to come, advertised for sale every acre of which he was possessed, except the farms of Mount Vernon. The event shewed how accurate his

judgment was. In the close of the year, one of the great land jobbers, disappointed in his calculations, was obliged to abscond; the land trade was shaken to its very foundation; bankruptcies spread like wildfire from one great city to another, and men that had begun to build palaces found themselves likely to have no better habitation for a time than the common gaol.

for speculation, certain restrictions might be laid upon the grantee; he might be bound to improve his township by a clause in the patent, invalidating the sale of more than a fourth or fifth of it, unless to actual settlers, until a certain number of people should be resident thereon*. Such a clause would effectually prevent the evil; for it is the granting of very extensive tracts of waste lands to individuals, without binding them in any way to improve them, which gives rise to speculation and land-jobbing.

By others it is imagined, that the withholding of clear titles to the lands is a measure adopted merely for the purpose of preventing a diminution of the inhabitants from taking place by emigration.

Not only townships have been granted by certificates of occupation, but also numberless small portions of land, from one hundred acres upwards, particularly in Upper Canada, to royalists and others, who have at different periods emigrated from the United States. These people have all of them improved their several allotments. By withholding any better title, therefore, than that of a certificate, they are completely tied down to their farms, unless, indeed, they think proper to abandon them, together with the fruits of many years labour, without receiving any compensation whatsoever for so doing.

It is not probable, however, that these people, if they had a clear title to their lands, would return back to the United States; the royalists, who were driven out of the country by the ill treatment of the other inhabitants, certainly would not; nor would the others, who have voluntarily quitted the country, return, whilst self-interest, which led them originally to come into Canada, operated in favour of their remaining there. It was the prospect of getting land on advantageous terms which induced them to emigrate; land is still a cheaper article in Canada than in the United States; and as there is much more waste land in the former, than in the latter country, in proportion to the num-

* The plan of binding every person that should take up a township to improve it, by providing a certain number of settlers, has not wholly escaped the notice of government; for in the licences of occupation, by which each township is allotted, it is stipulated, that every person shall provide forty settlers for his township; but as no given time is mentioned for the procuring of these settlers, the stipulation becomes nugatory.

ber of the inhabitants, it will probably continue so for a length of time to come. In the United States, at present, it is impossible to get land without paying for it; and in parts of the country where the soil is rich, and where some settlements are already made, a tract of land, sufficient for a moderate farm, is scarcely to be procured under hundreds of dollars. In Canada, however, a man has only to make application to government, and on his taking the oath of allegiance, he immediately gets one hundred acres of excellent uncleared land, in the neighbourhood of other settlements, gratis; and if able to improve it directly, he can get even a larger quantity. But it is a fact worthy of notice, which banishes every suspicion relative to a diminution of the inhabitants taking place by emigrations into the States, that great numbers of people from the States actually emigrate into Canada annually, whilst none of the Canadians, who have it in their power to dispose of their property, emigrate into the United States, except, indeed, a very few of those who have resided in the towns.

According to the opinion of others again, it is not for either of the purposes already mentioned, that clear titles are withheld to the lands granted by the crown, but for that of binding down to their good behaviour the people of each province, more particularly the Americans that have emigrated from the States lately, who are regarded by many with an eye of suspicion, notwithstanding they have taken the oaths of allegiance to the crown. It is very unfair, however, to imagine that these people would be ready to revolt a second time from Great Britain, if they were made still more independent than they are now, merely because they did so on a former occasion, when their liberties and rights as men and as subjects of the British empire were so shamefully disregarded; on the contrary, were clear titles granted with the lands bestowed by the crown on them, and the other subjects of the province, instead of giving rise to disaffection, there is every reason to think it would make them still more loyal, and more attached to the British government, as no invidious distinctions could then be drawn between the condition of the land holders in the States and those in Canada. The material rights and liberties of the people would then be full as exten-

five in the one country as in the other; and as no positive advantage could be gained by a revolt, it is not likely that Americans, of all people in the world the most devoted to self-interest, would expose their persons and properties in such an attempt.

If, however, the Americans from the States are people that would abuse such favours from the crown, why were they admitted into the province at all? The government might easily have kept them out, by refusing to them any grants of lands; but at any rate, were it thought expedient to admit them, and were such measures necessary to keep them in due subjection, it seems hard that the same measures should be adopted in regard to the inhabitants of the province, who stood firm to the British government, even at the time when the people in every other part of the continent revolted.

For whatever reason this system of not granting unexceptionable titles with the land, which the crown voluntarily bestows on its faithful subjects, has been adopted, one thing appears evident, namely, that it has very considerably retarded the improvement of both the provinces; and indeed, as long as it is continued, they must both remain very backward counties, compared with any of the adjoining states. Were an opposite system, however, pursued, and the lands granted merely with such restrictions as were found absolutely necessary, in order to prevent jobbing, the happy effects of a measure of that nature would soon become visible; the face of the country would be quickly meliorated, and it is probable that there would not be any part of North America, where they would, after a short period, be able to boast that improvement had taken place more rapidly.

It is very certain, that were the lands granted in this manner, many more people would annually emigrate into Canada from the United States than at present; for there are numbers who come yearly into the country to "explore it," that return back solely because they cannot get lands with an indisputable title; I have repeatedly met with these people myself in Upper Canada, and have heard them express the utmost disappointment at not being able to get lands on such terms even for money; I have heard others in the states also speak to the same pur-
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port after they had been in Canada; it is highly probable, moreover, that many of the people, who leave Great Britain and Ireland for America, would then be induced to settle in Canada instead of the United States, and the British empire would not, in that case, lose, as it does now, thousands of valuable citizens every year.

What are the general inducements, may here be asked, to people to quit Great Britain for the United States? They have been summed up by Mr. Cooper *, in his letters published in 1794, on the subject of emigrating to America; and we cannot have recourse, *on the whole*, to better authority.

“ In my mind,” he says, “ the first and principal inducement to a person to quit England for America is, *the total absence of anxiety respecting the future success of a family.* There is little fault to find with the government of America, that is, of the United States, either in principle or practice. There are few taxes to pay, and those are of acknowledged necessity, and moderate in amount. There are no animosities about religion, and it is a subject about which few questions are asked; there are few respecting political men or political measures; the present irritation of men’s minds in Great Britain, and the discordant state of society on political accounts, is not known there. The government is the government of the people, and for the people. There are no tythes nor game laws; and excise laws upon spirits only, and similar to the British only in name. There are no great men of rank, nor many of great riches; nor have the rich the power of oppressing the less rich, for poverty is almost unknown; nor are the streets crowded with beggars. You see no where the disgusting and melancholy contrast, so common in Europe, of vice and filth, and rags and wretchedness, in the immediate neighbourhood of the most wanton extravagance, and the most useless and luxurious parade; nor are the common people so depraved as in Great Britain. Quarrels are uncommon, and boxing matches unknown in the streets. There are

* Mr. Cooper, late of Manchester, who emigrated to America with all his family, and whose authority has been very generally quoted by the

Americans who have since written on the subject of emigration.

“no military to keep the people in awe. Robberies are very rare. All these are real advantages; but great as they are, they do not weigh with me so much as the single consideration first mentioned.”

Any person that has travelled generally through the United States must acknowledge, that Mr. Cooper has here spoken with great partiality; for as to the morality and good order that prevails amongst the people, he has applied to all of them what only holds true with respect to those who live in the most improved parts of the country.

He is extremely inaccurate also, in representing the people of the states as free from all animosities about political measures; on the contrary, there is no country on the face of the globe, perhaps, where party spirit runs higher, where political subjects are more frequently the topic of conversation amongst all classes, and where such subjects are more frequently the cause of rancorous disputations and lasting differences amongst the people. I have repeatedly been in towns where one half of the inhabitants would scarcely deign to speak to the other half, on account of the difference of their political opinions; and it is scarcely possible, in any part of the country, to remain for a few hours in a mixed company of men, without witnessing some acrimonious dispute from the same cause.

Let us, however, compare the inducements which he holds out to people in England to leave that country for America, that is, for the United States, with the inducements there would be to settle in Canada, under the premised supposition, that the land was there granted in an unexceptionable manner.

From the land being plentiful in Canada, and consequently at a very low price, but likely to increase in value, whilst in the States, on the contrary, it has risen to an exorbitant value, beyond which it is not likely to rise for some time to come, there can be no doubt but that a man of moderate property could provide for his family with much more ease in Canada than in the United States, as far as land were his object.

In Canada, also, there is a much greater opening for young men acquainted with any business or profession that can be carried on in America,

rica, than there is in the United States. The expence of settling in Canada would be far less also than in any one of the states; for in the former country the necessaries and conveniencies of life are remarkably cheap, whilst, on the contrary, in the other they are far dearer than in England; a man therefore would certainly have no greater anxiety about the future success of a family in Canada than in the United States, and the absence of this anxiety, according to Mr. Cooper, *is the great inducement to settle in the States, which weighs with him more than all other considerations put together.*

The taxes of Lower Canada have already been enumerated; they are of acknowledged necessity, and much lower in amount and number than those paid in the States.

There are no animosities in Canada about religion, and people of all persuasions are on a perfect equality with each other, except, indeed, it be the protestant dissenters, who may happen to live on lands that were subject to tithes under the French government; they have to pay tithes to the English episcopalian clergy; but there is not a dissenter living on tithe lands, perhaps, in the whole province. The lands granted since the conquest are not liable to tithes. The English episcopalian clergy are provided for by the crown out of the waste lands, and all dissenters have simply to pay their own clergy.

There are no game laws in Canada, nor any excise laws whatsoever.

As for the observation made by Mr. Cooper in respect to the military, it is almost too futile to deserve notice. If a soldier, however, be an object of terror, the timid man will not find himself at ease in the United States any more than in England, as he will meet with soldiers in New York, on Governor's Island, at Mifflin Fort near Philadelphia, at the forts on the North River, at Niagara, at Detroit, and at Oswego, &c. on the lakes, and all through the western country, at the different posts which were established by General Wayne.

In every other respect, what Mr. Cooper has said of the United States holds good with regard to Canada; nay more, it must certainly in addition be allowed by every unprejudiced person that has been in both countries, that morality and good order are much more conspicuous

amongst the Canadians of every description, than the people of the States; drunkenness is undoubtedly much less common amongst them, as is gambling, and also quarrels.

But independent of these inducements to settle in Canada, there is still another circumstance which ought to weigh greatly with every British emigrant, according to the opinion even of Mr. Cooper himself. After advising his friends "to go where land is cheap and fertile, and "where it is in a progress of improvement," he recommends them "to go somewhere, if possible, *in the neighbourhood of a few English*, "whose society, even in America, is interesting to an English settler, "who cannot entirely relinquish the *memoria temporis acti*;" that is, as he particularly mentions in another passage, "he will find their "manners and conversation far more agreeable than those of the Americans," and from being chiefly in their company, he will not be so often tormented with the painful reflection, that he has not only left, but absolutely renounced his native country, and the men whom he once held dear above all others, and united himself, in their stead, with people whose vain boasts and ignorant assertions, however harsh and grating they may sound to his ears, he must listen to without murmuring.

Now in Canada, particularly in Lower Canada, in the neighbourhood of Quebec and Montreal, an English settler would find himself surrounded by his countrymen; and although his moderate circumstances should have induced him to leave England, yet he would not be troubled with the disagreeable reflection that he had totally renounced his native land, and sworn allegiance to a foreign power; he would be able to consider with heartfelt satisfaction, that he was living under the protection of the country wherein he had drawn his first breath; that he was contributing to her prosperity, and the welfare of many of his countrymen, while he was ameliorating his own fortune.

From a due consideration of every one of the before mentioned circumstances, it appears evident to me, that there is no part of America so suitable to an English or Irish settler as the vicinity of Montreal or Quebec in Canada, and within twenty miles of each of these places there is ample room for thousands of additional inhabitants.

I must

I must not omit here to give some account of a new settlement in the neighbourhood of Quebec, which I and my fellow travellers visited in company with some neighbouring gentlemen, as it may in some degree tend to confirm the truth of what I have said respecting the impolicy of withholding indisputable titles to the lands lately granted by the crown, and as it may serve at the same time to shew how many eligible spots for new settlements are to be found in the neighbourhood of this city.

We set off from Quebec in calashes, and following, with a little deviation only, the course of the River St. Charles, arrived on the margin of the lake of the same name, about twelve miles distant from Quebec.

The River St. Charles flows from the lake into the basin, near Quebec; at its mouth it is about thirty yards wide, but not navigable for boats, except for a few miles up, owing to the numerous rocks and falls. In the spring of the year, when it is much swollen by floods, rafts have been conducted down the whole way from the lake, but this has not been accomplished without great difficulty, some danger, and a considerable loss of time in passing the different portages. The distance from the lake to Quebec being so short, land carriage must always be preferred to a water conveyance along this river, except it be for timber.

The course of the St. Charles is very irregular; in some places it appears almost stagnant, whilst in others it shoots with wonderful impetuosity over deep beds of rocks. The views upon it are very romantic, particularly in the neighbourhood of Lorette, a village of the Huron Indians, where the river, after falling in a beautiful cascade over a ledge of rocks, winds through a deep dell, shaded on each side with tall trees.

The face of the country between Quebec and the lake is extremely pleasing, and in the neighbourhood of the city, where the settlements are numerous, well cultivated; but as you retire from it the settlements become fewer and fewer, and the country of course appears wilder. From the top of a hill, about half a mile from the lake, which commands a fine view of that and the adjacent country, not more than five

or six houses are to be seen, and beyond these there is no settlement beside that on Stoneham township, the one under immediate notice.

On arriving at the lake, we found two canoes in waiting for us, and embarked on board.

Lake St. Charles is about four miles and a half in length, and its breadth on an average about three quarters of a mile. It consists of two bodies of water nearly of the same size; they communicate together by a narrow pass, through which a smart current sets towards Quebec. The scenery along the lower part of the lake is uninteresting, but along the upper part of it the views are highly picturesque, particularly upon a first entrance through the pass. The lake is here interspersed with large rocks; and close to the water on one side, as far as the eye can reach, rocks and trees appear blended together in the most beautiful manner. The shores are bold, and richly ornamented with hanging woods; and the head of the lake being concealed from the view by several little promontories, you are led to imagine that the body of water is far more extensive than in reality. Towards the upper end the view is terminated by a range of blue hills, which appear at a distance, peeping over the tops of the tall trees. When a few settlements come to be made here, open to the lake, for the land bordering upon it is quite in its natural state, this must indeed be a heavenly little spot.

The depth of the water in the lake is about eight feet, in some places more, in others less. The water is clear, and as several small streams fall into it to supply what runs off by the River St. Charles, it is kept constantly in a state of circulation; but it is not well tasted, owing as is conceived to the bottom being in some parts overgrown with weeds. Prodigious numbers of bull frogs, however, are found about the shores, which shews that springs of good water abound near it, for these creatures are never met with but where the water is of a good quality.

At the upper part of the lake we landed, and having proceeded for about half a mile over some low ground bare of trees, from being annually flooded on the dissolution of the snow, we struck into the woods. Here a road newly cut soon attracted our attention, and following the

course of it for a mile or two, we at last espied, through a sudden opening between the trees, the charming little settlement.

The dwelling house, a neat boarded little mansion painted white, together with the offices, were situated on a small eminence; to the right, at the bottom of the slope, stood the barn, the largest in all Canada, with a farm yard exactly in the English style; behind the barn was laid out a neat garden, at the bottom of which, over a bed of gravel, ran a purling stream of the purest water, deep enough, except in a very dry season, to float a large canoe. A small lawn laid down in grass appeared in front of the house, ornamented with clumps of pines, and in its neighbourhood were about sixty acres of cleared land. The common method of clearing land in America is to grub up all the brushwood and small trees merely, and to cut down the large trees about two feet above the ground: the remaining stumps rot in from six to ten years, according to the quality of the timber; in the mean time the farmer ploughs between them the best way he can, and where they are very numerous he is sometimes obliged to use even the spade or the hoe to turn up the soil. The lands, however, at this settlement had been cleared in a different manner, for the trees and roots had all been grubbed up at once. This mode of proceeding is extremely expensive, so that few of those destined to make new settlements could afford to adopt it; and, moreover, it has not been accurately proved that it is the most profitable one; but the appearance of lands so cleared is greatly superior to those cleared in the common method.

In another respect also the lands at this settlement had been cleared in a superior manner to what is commonly to be met with in America; for large clumps of trees were left adjoining to the house, and each field was encircled with wood, whereby the crops were secured from the bad effects of storms. The appearance of cultivated fields thus situated, as it were, in the midst of a forest, was inconceivably beautiful.

The economy of this little farm equalled its beauty. The fields, neatly fenced in and furnished with handsome gates, were cultivated according to the Norfolk system of husbandry, and had been brought to yield the most plentiful crops of every different sort of grain; the farm

yard was filled with as fine cattle as could be seen in any country; and the dairy afforded excellent butter, and abundance of good cheese.

Besides the dwelling-house before mentioned, there were several log houses on different parts of this farm, inhabited by the people who were engaged in clearing the land. All these appeared delighted with the situation; nor were such of them as had come a short time before from England at all displeas'd with the climate; they inform'd me, that they had enjoy'd perfect health from the moment of their landing, and found no inconvenience from the intense cold of the winter season, which appears such an insuperable objection to many against settling in Canada.

This settlement, together with the township it is situated upon, are the property of a clergyman formerly resident at Quebec. The township is ten miles square, commencing where the most remote of the old feignories end, that is, within eighteen miles of the city of Quebec; but though within this short distance of a large city, it was almost totally unknown until about five or six years ago, when the present proprietor, with a party of Indians and a few friends, set out himself to examine the quality of the lands. They proved to be rich; the timber was luxuriant; the face of the country agreeably diversified with hill and dale, interspersed with beautiful lakes, and intersected by rivers and mill streams in every direction. Situated also within six miles of old settlements, through which there were established roads, being convenient to a market at the capital of Canada, and within the reach of society at least as agreeable, if not more so, than is to be found in all America, nothing seem'd wanting to render it an eligible spot for a new settlement; accordingly the proprietor made application to government; the land was survey'd, the township marked out, and it was allotted to him merely, however, by a certificate of occupation.

Several other gentlemen, charmed with the excellent quality and beautiful disposition of the lands in this part of the country, have taken up adjoining townships, but at none of them have any settlements been made, nor is it probable that any will be, until the proprietaries get better titles; indeed, it has excited the surpris'e of a numerous set of people
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in the province, to see even the little settlement I have spoken of established on land held under such a tenure.

That unexceptionable titles may be speedily made out to these lands is sincerely to be hoped; for may we not, whenever that measure shall take place, expect to see these beautiful provinces, that have so long remained almost unknown, rising into general notice? May we not then expect to behold them increasing rapidly in population, and making hasty strides towards the attainment of that degree of prosperity and consequence, which their soil, climate, and many other natural advantages have so eminently qualified them for enjoying? And surely the empire at large would be greatly benefited by such a change in the state of Canada; for as the country increased in population, it would increase in riches, and there would then be a proportionably greater demand for English manufactures; a still greater trade would also be carried on then between Canada and the West Indies than at present, to the great advantage of both countries*; a circumstance that would give employment to a greater number of British ships: as Canada also increased in wealth, it would be enabled to defray the expences of its own government, which at present falls so heavily upon the people of Great Britain: neither is there reason to imagine that Canada, if allowed to attain such a state of prosperity, would be ready to disunite herself from Great Britain, supposing that Great Britain should remain as powerful as at present, and that Canada continued to be governed with mildness and wisdom; for she need but turn towards the United States to be convinced that the great mass of her people were in the possession of as much happiness and liberty as those of the neighbouring country, and that whatever she might lose by exposing herself to the horrors of a sanguinary war, she could gain no essential or immediate advantages whatsoever, by asserting her own independence.

* All those articles of American produce in demand in the West Indies may be had on much better terms in Canada than in the United States; and if the Canadian merchants had sufficient capitals to enable them to trade thither largely, there can hardly be a doubt but that the people

of the British West Indian isles would draw their supplies from Canada rather than from any other part of America. The few cargoes at present sent from Quebec always command a preference in the West Indian markets over those sent from any part of the United States.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Leave Quebec.—Convenience of Travelling between that City and Montreal.—Post Houses.—Calashes.—Drivers.—Canadian Horses very serviceable.—Salutations on arriving at different Post Houses.—Beautiful Prospects from the Road on the Top of the Banks of the St. Lawrence.—Female Peasants.—Style of Farming in Canada.—Considerably improved of late.—Inactivity of Canadians in not clearing more Land.—Their Character contrasted with that of the People of the States.—Arrival at Trois Rivieres.—Description of that Town and its Vicinity.—Visit to the Convent of St. Ursule.—Manufactures of Birch-Bark.—Birch Canoes, how formed.—Leave Trois Rivieres, and reach Montreal.

Montreal, August.

HAVING remained in Quebec and the neighbourhood as long as we could, consistently with the plan which we had formed of visiting the Falls of Niagara, and returning again into the States before the commencement of winter, we set out for Montreal by land.

In no part of North America can a traveller proceed so commodiously as along this road between Quebec and Montreal; a regular line of post houses, at convenient distances from each other, being established upon it, where calashes or carioles, according to the season, are always kept in readiness. Each postmaster is obliged to have four calashes, and the same number of carioles; and besides these, as many more are generally kept at each stage by persons called aids-de-poste, for which the postmaster calls when his own happen to be engaged. The postmaster has the exclusive privilege of furnishing these carriages at every stage, and, under a penalty, he must have them ready in a quarter of an hour after they are demanded by a traveller, if it be day-light, and in half an hour should it be in the night. The drivers are bound to take you on at the rate of two leagues an hour. The charge for a calash with a single horse

horse is one shilling Halifax * currency per league; no gratuity is expected by the driver.

The post calashes are very clumsily built, but upon the whole we found them easy and agreeable carriages; they are certainly far superior to the American stage waggons, in which, if persons wish to travel with comfort, they ought always to set out provided with cushions for their hips and elbows, otherwise they cannot expect but to receive numberless contusions before they get to the end of their journey.

The horses in Canada are mostly small and heavy, but extremely serviceable, as is evident from those employed for the post carriages being in general fat and very brisk on the road, notwithstanding the poor fare and ill usage they receive. They are seldom rubbed down; but as soon as they have performed their journey are turned into a field, and there left until the next traveller arrives, or till they are wanted to perform the work of the farm. This is contrary to the regulations of the post, according to which the horses should be kept in the stable, in perfect readiness for travellers; however, I do not recollect that we were at any place detained much beyond the quarter of an hour prescribed, notwithstanding that the people had frequently to send for their horses, more than a mile, to the fields where they were employed. When the horses happened to be at a distance, they were always brought home in a full gallop, in order to avoid complaints; they were yoked in an instant, and the driver set off at the rate of nine or ten miles an hour; a little money, indeed, generally induces them to exceed the established rate; this, however, does not always answer, but play upon their vanity and you may make them go on at what rate you please, for they are the vainest people, perhaps, in the world. Commend their great dexterity in driving, and the excellence of the Canadian horses, and it seldom fails to quicken your pace at least two or three miles an hour; but if you

* According to Halifax currency, which is the established currency of Lower Canada, the dollar passes for five shillings.

The silver coins current in Canada are dollars, halves, quarters, eighths, and sixteenths of dollars, pistareens, Spanish coins somewhat less va-

uable than quarter dollars, and French and English crowns and half crowns. Gold coins pass only as bullion by weight. British and Portugal gold coins are deemed the best; next to them those of Spain, then those of France.

wish to go in a gallop, you need only observe to your companion, so as to be overheard by the driver, that the Canadian calashes are the vilest carriages on earth, and so heavy that you believe the people are afraid the horses would fall down and break their necks if they attempted to make them go as fast as in other countries; above all, praise the carriages and drivers of the United States. A few remarks of this sort at once discompose the tempers of the drivers, and their passion is constantly vented in lashes on their horses.

To hasten the speed of their horses they have three expressions, rising above each other in a regular climax. The first, "Marche," is pronounced in the usual tone of voice; "Marche-donc," the second, is pronounced more hastily and louder; if the horse is dull enough not to comprehend this, then the "Marche-donc," accompanied with one of Sterne's magical words, comes out, in the third place, in a shrill piercing key, and a smart lash of the whip follows. From the frequent use made by the drivers of these words, the calashes have received the nick-name of "marche-doncs."

The first post house is nine miles from Quebec, which our drivers, of their own accord, managed to reach in one hour. No sooner were we in sight of it, than the postmaster, his wife in her close French cap, and all the family, came running out to receive us. The foremost driver, a thin fellow of about six feet high, with a queue bound with eel skins that reached the whole way down his back, immediately cracked his whip, and having brought his calash to the door, with a great air he leapt out, bowed respectfully at a distance to the hostess, then advancing with his hat off, paid her a few compliments, and kissed both her cheeks in turn, which she presented to him with no small condescension. Some minutes are generally spent thus at every post house in mutual congratulations on meeting, before the people ever think of getting a fresh carriage ready.

The road between Quebec and Montreal runs, for the most part, close upon the banks of the River St. Lawrence, through those beautiful little towns and villages seen to so much advantage from the water; and as the traveller passes along, he is entertained with prospects,

if possible, superior to those which strike the attention in sailing down the river.

For the first thirty or forty miles in the way from Quebec, the views are in particular extremely grand. The immense River St. Lawrence, more like a lake confined between ranges of mountains than a river, appears at one side rolling under your feet, and as you look down upon it from the top of the lofty banks, the largest merchant vessels scarcely seem bigger than fishing boats; on the other side, steep mountains, skirted with forests, present themselves to the view at a distance, whilst, in the intermediate space, is seen a rich country, beautifully diversified with whitened cottages and glittering spires, with groves of trees and cultivated fields, watered by innumerable little streams: groups of the peasantry, busied as we passed along in getting in the harvest, which was not quite over, diffused an air of cheerfulness and gaiety over the scene, and heightened all its charms.

The female French peasants are in general, whilst young, very pretty, and the neat simplicity of their dress in summer, which consists mostly of a blue or scarlet bodice without sleeves, a petticoat of a different colour, and a straw hat, makes them appear extremely interesting; like the Indians, however, they lose their beauty very prematurely, and it is to be attributed much to the same cause, namely, their laborious life, and being so much exposed to the air, the indolent men suffering them to take a very active part in the management of the farms.

The style of farming amongst the generality of the French Canadians has hitherto been very slovenly; manure has been but rarely used; the earth just lightly turned up with a plough, and without any other preparation the grain sown; more than one half of the fields also have been left without any fences whatsoever, exposed to the ravages of cattle. The people are beginning now, however, to be more industrious, and better farmers, owing to the increased demand for grain for exportation, and to the advice and encouragement given to them by the English merchants at Quebec and Montreal, who send agents through the country to the farmers to buy up all the corn they can spare. The

farmers are bound to have their corn ready by a certain day on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and bateaux are then sent by the merchants to receive and convey it to the port where it is to be shipped,

All the settlements in Lower Canada lie contiguous to the River St. Lawrence: in no place perhaps do they extend farther back than twelve miles from it, except along the banks of the River St. Jean, the River des Prairies, and some other navigable streams falling into the St. Lawrence. This is owing to the disposition of the French Canadians, who, like the Germans, are fond of living near each other; nay more, as long as the farm of the father will admit of a division, a share of it is given to the sons when they are grown up, and it is only when the farm is exceedingly small, or the family numerous, that they ever think of taking up a piece of fresh land from the seignior. In this respect a wonderful difference appears between their conduct and that of the young people of the United States, particularly of those of New England, who, as soon as they are grown up, immediately emigrate, and bury themselves in the woods, where, perhaps, they are five or six hundred miles distant from every relation upon earth: yet a spirit of enterprise is not wanting amongst the Canadians; they eagerly come forward, when called upon, to traverse the immense lakes in the western regions; they laugh at the dreadful storms on those prodigious bodies of water; they work with indefatigable perseverance at the oar and the pole in stemming the rapid currents of the rivers; nor do they complain, when, on these expeditions, they happen to be exposed to the inclemency of the seasons, or to the severest pangs of hunger. The spirit of the Canadian is excited by vanity; he delights in talking to his friends and relatives of the excursions he has made to those distant regions; and he glories in the perils which he has encountered: his vanity would not be gratified by chopping down trees and tilling the earth; he deems this therefore merely a secondary pursuit, and he sets about it with reluctance: self interest, on the contrary, it is that rouses the citizen of the states into action, and accordingly he hastily emigrates to a distant part of the country, where he thinks land is in the most rising state, and
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where he hopes to be able the soonest to gratify a passion to which he would readily make a sacrifice of every social tie, and of all that another man would hold dear.

On the second day of our journey from Quebec to Montreal we reached Trois Rivieres, lying nearly midway between the two places. This town is situated on the banks of the St. Lawrence, close to the mouth of the River St. Maurice, the largest of upwards of thirty that fall into the St. Lawrence, on the north-west side alone, between Quebec and Montreal. This river, before it unites with the St. Lawrence, is divided into three streams by two large islands, so that to a person sailing past its mouth it appears as if three distinct rivers disembogued at the one spot; from hence it is that the town of Trois Rivieres receives its name.

The St. Maurice is not navigable for large vessels, neither is it for sloops more than a few miles above its mouth. In bateaus and canoes, however, it may be ascended nearly to its source; from whence, if credit is to be given to the accounts of the Indians, the distance is not very great to the head of navigable rivers that fall into Hudson's Bay; at a future day, therefore, if ever the dreary and inhospitable waste through which it passes shall put on a different aspect from what it now wears, and become the abode of human beings instead of wild beasts, the St. Maurice may be esteemed a river of the first importance in a commercial point of view; at present there are a few scattered settlements on each side of it, from its mouth as far as the iron works, which are about nine miles distant from Trois Rivieres; beyond that the country is but little known except to Indians.

Trois Rivieres contains about two hundred and fifty or three hundred houses, and ranks as the third town, in point of size, in the provinces. It is one of the oldest settlements in the country, and its founder, it is said, calculated upon its becoming in a short time a city of great extent. It has hitherto, however, increased but very slowly in size, and there is no reason to imagine that it will increase more rapidly in future, at least until the country bordering upon the St. Maurice becomes settled, a period that may be very distant. The bank of iron ore in the neighbourhood, by the

manufacture of which it was expected that the town would suddenly become opulent, is now nearly exhausted; nor do we find that this bank has ever furnished more ore than was sufficient to keep one small forge and one small foundry employed at intervals. The fur trade also, from which so much benefit was expected, is now almost wholly centered at Quebec and Montreal; it is merely the small quantity of furs brought down the St. Maurice, and some of the northern rivers that fall into the St. Lawrence, nearer to the town of Trois Rivieres than to Quebec or Montreal, that is shipped there. These furs are laden on board the Montreal ships, which stop opposite to the town as they go down the river.

The country in the vicinity of Trois Rivieres has been represented by some French travellers as wonderfully fertile, and as one of the most agreeable parts of Canada; but it is totally the reverse. It is a level barren tract, and so sandy, that in walking along many of the streets of the town, and the roads in the neighbourhood, you sink into the sand at every step above the ankles. The sand is of a whitish colour, and very loose. The air also swarms with musquitoes, a certain proof of the low damp situation of the place. In none of the other inhabited parts of Canada, except in the neighbourhood of Lake St. Charles, were we ever annoyed with these troublesome insects. In Quebec, indeed, and Montreal, they are scarcely ever seen.

The streets in Trois Rivieres are narrow, and the houses in general small and indifferent; many of them are built of wood. There are two churches in the town, the one an English episcopalian, the other a large Roman catholic parish church, formerly served by the Recollets, or Franciscan friars, but the order is now extinct in Trois Rivieres. The old monastery of the order, a large stone building, at present lies quite deserted; and many of the houses in the neighbourhood being also uninhabited, that part of the town wherein it is situated has a very dull gloomy aspect. The college or monastery of the Jesuits, also a large old building of stone in the same neighbourhood, has been converted into a gaol.

The only religious order at present existing in the town is that of St. Ursule, the sisterhood of which is as numerous as the convent will well

permit. It was founded by M. de St. Vallier, bishop of Quebec, in the year 1677. It is a spacious building, situated near that formerly belonging to the Recollets, and annexed to it, under the same roof, there is an hospital attended by the nuns. We were introduced to the chaplain of the order, a poor French emigrant curé, an interesting and apparently a most amiable man, and under his guidance we received permission to visit the convent.

The first part we entered was the chapel, the doors of which open to the street under a porch. It is very lofty, but the area of it is small. The altar, which is grand, and richly ornamented, stands nearly opposite to the entrance, and on each side of it is a lattice, the one communicating with an apartment allotted for sick nuns, the other with the cœur of the chapel. On ringing a small bell, a curtain at the inside of this last lattice was withdrawn, and an apartment discovered, somewhat larger than the chapel, surrounded with pews, and furnished with an altar, at the foot of which sat two of the sisterhood, with books in their hands, at their meditations. The fair Ursuline, who came to the lattice, seemed to be one of those unfortunate females that had at last begun to feel all the horrors of confinement, and to lament the rashness of that vow which had secluded her for ever from the world, and from the participation of those innocent pleasures, which, for the best and wisest of purposes, the beneficent Ruler of the universe meant that his creatures should enjoy. As she withdrew the curtain, she cast a momentary glance through the grating, that imparted more than could be expressed by the most eloquent words; then retiring in silence, seated herself on a bench in a distant part of the cœur. The melancholy and sorrow portrayed in the features of her lovely countenance interested the heart in her behalf, and it was impossible to behold her without partaking of that dejection which hung over her soul, and without deprecating at the same time the cruelty of the custom which allows, and the mistaken zeal of a religion that encourages, an artless and inexperienced young creature to renounce a world, of which she was destined, perhaps, to be a happy and useful member, for an unprofitable life of solitude, and unremitting penance for sins never committed!

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The hospital, which lies contiguous to the chapel, consists of two large apartments, wherein are about twelve or fourteen beds. The apartments are airy, and the beds neat and well appointed. Each bed is dedicated to a particular saint, and over the foot of it is an invocation to the tutelary saint, in large characters, as, "St. Jaques priez pour moi." "St. Jean priez pour moi," &c. The patients are attended by a certain number of the sisterhood appointed for that purpose. An old priest, who appeared to be near his death, was the only person in the hospital when we passed through it; he was seated in an easy chair by the bed-side, and surrounded by a number of the sisters, who paid him the most assiduous attention.

The dress of the Ursulines consists of a black stuff gown; a handkerchief of white linen tied by a running string close round the throat, and hanging down over the breast and shoulders, being rounded at the corners; a head-piece of white linen, which covers half the forehead, the temples, and ears, and is fastened to the handkerchief; a black gauze veil, which conceals half the face only when down, and flows loosely over the shoulders; and a large plain silver cross suspended from the breast. The dress is very unbecoming, the hair being totally concealed, and the shape of the face completely disguised by the close white head-piece.

From the hospital we were conducted through a long passage to an agreeable light parlour, the windows of which opened into the gardens of the convent. This was the apartment of the "Superieure," who soon made her appearance, accompanied by a number of the lay sisters. The conversation of the old lady and her protégées was lively and agreeable; a thousand questions were asked us respecting the former part of our tour, and our future destination; and they seemed by no means displeased at having a few strangers of a different sex from their own within the walls of the convent. Many apologies were made, because they could not take us through the "interieure," as there was an ordinance against admitting any visitors into it without leave from the bishop; they regretted exceedingly that we had not obtained this leave before we left Quebec. After some time was spent in conversation, a
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great variety of fancy works, the fabrication of the sifterhood, was brought down for our inspection, some of which it is always expected that strangers will purchase, for the order is but poor. We selected a few of the articles which appeared most curious, and having received them packed up in the neatest manner in little boxes kept for the purpose, and promised to preserve them in memory of the fair Ursulines that handed them to us, we bade adieu to the superieure, and returned to our lodgings.

It is for their very curious bark work that the sisters of this convent are particularly distinguished. The bark of the birch tree is what they use, and with it they make pocket-books, work-baskets, dressing-boxes, &c. &c. which they embroider with elk hair died of the most brilliant colours. They also make models of the Indian canoes, and various warlike implements used by the Indians.

Nearly all the birch bark canoes in use on the St. Lawrence and Utawa Rivers, and on the nearer lakes, are manufactured at Three Rivers, and in the neighbourhood, by Indians. The birch tree is found in great plenty near the town; but it is from the more northern part of the country, where the tree attains a very large size, that the principal part of the bark is procured that canoes are made with. The bark resembles in some degree that of the cork tree, but it is of a closer grain, and also much more pliable, for it admits of being rolled up the same as a piece of cloth. The Indians of this part of the country always carry large rolls of it in their canoes when they go on a hunting party, for the purpose of making temporary huts. The bark is spread on small poles over their heads, and fastened with strips of elm bark, which is remarkably tough, to stakes, so as to form walls on the sides.

The canoes are made with birch bark, as follows: The ribs, consisting of thick tough rods, are first bound together; then the birch bark is sowed on in as large pieces as possible, and a thick coat of pitch is laid over the seams between the different pieces. To prevent the bark being injured by the cargo, and to make the canoe stronger, its inside is lined with two layers of thin pieces of pine, laid in a contrary direction to each other.

other. A canoe made in this manner is so light that two men could easily carry one on their shoulders capable of containing six people.

The birch canoes made at Three Rivers are put together with the utmost neatness, and on the water they appear very beautiful. They are made from a size sufficient to hold one man only, to a size large enough for upwards of twenty. It is wonderful to see with what velocity a few skilful men with paddles can take one of these canoes of a size suitable to their number. In a few minutes they would leave the best moulded keel boat, conducted by a similar number of men with oars, far behind. None but experienced persons ought ever to attempt to navigate birch canoes, for they are so light that they are apt to be upset by the least improper movement of the persons in them.

The day after that on which we quitted Trois Rivieres, we reached Montreal once more. The villages between the two places are very numerous, and the face of the country around them is pleasing, so that the eye of the traveller is constantly entertained as he passes on; but there is nothing in this part of the country particularly deserving of mention.

L E T T E R XXIX.

The Party make the usual Preparations for ascending the St. Lawrence.—Buffalo Skins.—How used by Travellers.—Difficulty of proceeding to Lake Ontario otherwise than by Water.—Rapids above Montreal.—Village of La Chine.—King's Stores there.—Indian Village on the opposite side of the River.—Similitude between French Canadians and Indians in Person and Disposition of Mind.—Owing to this the Power of the French over the Indians.—Summary View of the Indians in Lower Canada.—The Party embark in a Bateau at La Chine.—Mode of conducting Bateaux against a strong Current.—Great Exertion requisite.—Canadians addicted to smoking.—How they measure Distances.—Description of Lake St. Louis.—

Clouds

Clouds of Insects over Reed Banks.—Party encamps on l'Isle Perot.—Passage of Rapids called Les Cascades.—Their tremendous Appearance.—Description of the Village of the Hill of Cedars.—Rapids du Coteau du Lac.—Wonderful Rapidity of the Current.—Party encamps.—Lake St. Francis.—Point au Baudet.—L'Isle aux Raisins.—Islands in the River still the Property of the Indians.—Not determined yet whether in the British Territory or that of the States.—Party encamps.—Storm.—Unpleasant Situation of the Party.—Relieved.—Continue the Voyage.—Account of more Rapids.—Canals and Locks at different Places on the River St. Lawrence.—Immense Flights of Pigeons.—Emigration of Squirrels and Bears.—Oswegatchee River and Fort la Galette described.—Advantageous Position of the latter.—Current above this gentle.—Bateaux sail on all Night.—Songs of the Canadians.—Good Ear for Music.—Lake of a Thousand Isles.—Arrival at Kingston on Lake Ontario.—Observations on the Navigation of the St. Lawrence.—The St. Lawrence compared with the Mississippi.—A View of the different Rivers which open a Water Communication between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic.—Great Superiority of the St. Lawrence over all the rest.—Of the Lake Trade.

Kingston, September.

ON arriving at Montreal, our first concern was to provide a large travelling tent, and some camp equipage, buffalo skins *, a store of dried provisions, kegs of brandy and wine, &c. &c. and, in short, to make every usual and necessary preparation for proceeding up the River St. Lawrence. A few days afterwards, we took our passage for Kingston, on board a bateau, which, together with twelve others, the commissary was sending thither for the purpose of bringing down to Quebec the cannon and ordnance stores that had been taken from the different mi-

* In the western parts of Lower Canada, and throughout Upper Canada, where it is customary for travellers to carry their own bedding with them, these skins are very generally made use of for the purpose of sleeping upon. For upwards of two months we scarcely ever had any other bed than one of the skins spread on the floor and a blanket to each person. The skins are dressed by the Indians with the hair on, and they are ren-

dered by a certain process as pliable as cloth. When the buffalo is killed in the beginning of the winter, at which time he is fenced against the cold, the hair resembles very much that of a black bear; it is then long, straight, and of a blackish colour; but when the animal is killed in the summer, the hair is short and curly, and of a light brown colour, owing to its being scorched by the rays of the sun.

litary posts on the lakes, preparatory to their being delivered up to the United States.

On the north-west side of the St. Lawrence, except for about fifty miles or thereabouts, are roads, and also scattered settlements, at no great distance from each other, the whole way between Montreal and Kingston, which is situated at the eastern extremity of Lake Ontario; but no one ever thinks of going thither by land, on account of the numberless inconveniencies such a journey would be attended with; indeed, the difficulty of getting horses across the many deep and rapid rivers falling into the St. Lawrence would in itself be sufficient to deter travellers from proceeding by land to Kingston, supposing even that there were none other to encounter. A water conveyance is by far the most eligible, and except only between Quebec and Montreal, it is the conveyance universally made use of in every part of the country, that is, when people wish merely to follow the course of the rivers, in the neighbourhood of which alone there are any settlements.

The rapids in the St. Lawrence are so very strong just above Montreal, that the bateaux are never laden at the town, but suffered to proceed empty as far as the village of La Chine, which stands on the island of Montreal, about nine miles higher up. The goods are sent, from Montreal, thither in carts.

La Chine is built on a fine gravelly beach, at the head of a little bay at the lower end of Lake St. Louis, which is a broad part of the river St. Lawrence. A smart current sets down the lake, and owing to it there is generally a considerable curl on the surface of the water, even close to the shore, which, with the appearance of the boats and canoes upon it in motion, gives the place a very lively air. The situation of the village is indeed extremely agreeable, and from some of the houses there are most charming views of the lake, and of the country at the opposite side of it. There are very extensive storehouses belonging to the King, and also to the merchants of Montreal. In the former the presents for the Indians are deposited as soon as they arrive from England; and prior to their being sent up the country they are inspected by the commanding officer of the garrison of Montreal and a committee of merchants, who

are bound to make a faithful report to government, whether the presents are agreeable to the contract, and as good as could be obtained for the price that is paid for them.

In sight of La Chine, on the opposite side of the St. Lawrence, stands the village of the Cochenonaga Indians, whom I have already had occasion to mention. The village contains about fifty log houses and a Roman catholic church, built in the Canadian style, and ornamented within with pictures, lamps, &c. in such a manner as to attract the eye as forcibly as possible. The outward shew, and numerous ceremonies of the Roman catholic religion, are particularly suited to the capacities of the Indians, and as but very little restraint is imposed upon them by the missionaries, more of them become converts to that religion than to any other. The worship of the Holy Virgin meets in a very peculiar manner with the approbation of the squaws, and they sing her praises with the most profound devotion.

In this and all the other Indian villages situated in the improved parts of Lower Canada, a great mixture of the blood of whites with that of the aborigines is observable in the persons of the inhabitants; there are also considerable numbers of the French Canadians living in these villages, who have married Indian wives, and have been adopted into the different nations with whom they reside. Many of the French Canadians bear such a close resemblance to the Indians, owing to their dark complexions, black eyes, and long black hair, that when attired in the same habits it is only a person intimately acquainted with the features of the Indians that could distinguish the one race of men from the other. The dispositions of the two people also accord together in a very striking manner; both are averse to a settled life, and to regular habits of industry; both are fond of roving about, and procuring sustenance by hunting rather than by cultivating the earth; nature seems to have implanted in their hearts a reciprocal affection for each other; they associate together, and live on the most amicable terms; and to this one circumstance more than to any other cause is to be attributed that wonderful ascendancy which the French were ever known to have over the Indians, whilst they had possession of Canada. It is very remarkable indeed, that in

the upper country, notwithstanding that presents to such a very large amount are distributed amongst the Indians through the hands of the English inhabitants, and that their natural rights are as much respected by them as they possibly can be, yet an Indian, even at this day, will always go to the house of a poor French farmer in preference to that of an Englishman.

The numbers of the Cacheonaga nation, in the village near La Chine, are estimated at one hundred and fifty persons. The other Indian villages, in the civilized parts of Lower Canada, are, one of the Canasdogas, situated near the mouth of the Utawas River; one of the Little Algonquins, near Trois Rivieres; one of the Aberachies, near Trois Rivieres, at the opposite side of the river; and one of the Hurons, near Quebec; but none of these villages are as large as that of the Cacheonagas. The numbers of the Indians in the lower province have diminished very fast of late years, as they have done in every other part of the continent, where those of the white inhabitants have increased; in the whole lower province, at present, it is thought that there are not more than twelve hundred of them. Many of these Indians are continually loitering about the large towns, in expectation of getting spirits or bread, which they are extremely fond of, from the inhabitants. No less than two hundred, that had come a great distance in canoes, from the lower parts of the river St. Lawrence, were encamped on Point Levi when we visited Quebec. These Indians, squalid and filthy in the extreme, and going about the streets every day in large parties, begging, presented a most melancholy picture of human nature; and indeed, if a traveller never saw any of the North American Indians, but the most decent of those who are in the habit of frequenting the large towns of Lower Canada, he would not be led to entertain an opinion greatly in their favour. The farther you ascend up the country, and consequently the nearer you see the Indians to what they were in their original state, before their manners were corrupted by intercourse with the whites, the more do you find in their character and conduct deserving of admiration.

It was on the 28th day of August that we reached La Chine; the next day the "brigade," as it was called, of bateaux was ready, and in the afternoon

afternoon we set out on our voyage. Three men are found sufficient to conduct an empty bateau of about two tons burthen up the St. Lawrence, but if the bateau be laden more are generally allowed. They ascend the stream by means of poles, oars, and sails. Where the current is very strong, they make use of the former, keeping as close as possible to the shore, in order to avoid the current, and to have the advantage of shallow water to pole in. The men set their poles altogether at the same moment, and all work at the same side of the bateau; the steersman, however, shifts his pole occasionally from side to side, in order to keep the vessel in an even direction. The poles commonly used are about eight feet in length, extremely light, and headed with iron. On coming to a deep bay or inlet, the men abandon the poles, take to their oars, and strike if possible directly across the mouth of the bay; but in many places the current proves so strong that it is absolutely impossible to stem it by means of oars, and they are obliged to pole entirely round the bays. Whenever the wind is favourable they set their sail; but it is only at the upper end of the river, beyond the rapids, or on the lakes or broad parts of it, where the current is not swift, that the sail by itself is sufficient to impel them forward.

The exertion it requires to counteract the force of the stream by means of poles and oars is so great, that the men are obliged to stop very frequently to take breath. The places at which they stop are regularly ascertained; some of them, where the current is very rapid, are not more than half a mile distant one from the other; others one or two, but none of them more than four miles apart. Each of these places the boatmen, who are almost all French Canadians, denominate "une pipe," because they are allowed to stop at it and fill their pipes. A French Canadian is scarcely ever without a pipe in his mouth, whether working at the oar or plough; whether on foot, or on horseback; indeed, so much addicted are the people to smoking, that by the burning of the tobacco in their pipes they commonly ascertain the distance from one place to another. Such a place, they say, is three pipes off, that is, it is so far off that you may smoke three pipes full of tobacco whilst you

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go thither. A pipe, in the most general acceptation of the word, seemed to be about three quarters of an English mile.

Lake St. Louis, commencing, or rather terminating, at La Chine, for that village stands at the lower end of it, is about twelve miles in length and four in breadth. At its uppermost extremity it receives a large branch of the Utawas River, and also the south-west branch of the River St. Lawrence, which by some geographers is called the River Cadaraqui, and by others the River Iroquois; but in the country, generally speaking, the whole of that river, running from Lake Ontario to the Gulph of St. Lawrence, goes simply under the name of the St. Lawrence.

At the upper end of Lake St. Louis the water is very shallow, owing to the banks of mud and sand washed up by the two rivers. These very extensive banks, are entirely covered with reeds, so that when a vessel sails over them she appears at a little distance to be absolutely sailing over dry land. As we passed along this part of the lake we were enveloped with clouds of little insects, different from any I ever saw before or afterwards in the country, but they are common, it is said, on various parts of the River St. Lawrence. Their size was somewhat larger than that of the gnat; their colour a pure white; and so delicately were they formed, that by the slightest touch they were destroyed and reduced to powder. They were particularly attracted by any white object, and having once alighted were not to be driven away but by force. The leaves of a book, which I happened to have in my hand, were in a few seconds so thickly covered by them that it was impossible to discern a single letter, and no sooner was one swarm of them brushed off than a fresh one immediately alighted. These insects have very broad wings in proportion to their size, and fly heavily, so that it is only when the air is remarkably calm that they can venture to make their appearance.

About sunset on this, the first evening of our voyage, we reached the island of Perot, situated at the mouth of the Utawas River. This island is about fourteen miles in circumference; its soil is fertile, and it is well cultivated. There are two considerable villages near its center, but towards Point St. Claire, at its lower extremity, the settlements
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are but very few. We landed at the point, and pitched our tent in a meadow which stood bordering upon the water. Here the bateaux were drawn up, and having been properly secured, the different crews, amounting in all to upwards of fifty men, divided themselves into small parties, and kindled fires along the shore, in order to cook their provisions for the succeeding day, and to keep themselves warm during the night. These men, who are engaged in conducting bateaux in Canada, are, as I have before observed, a very hardy race : when the weather is fair, they sleep on the grass at night, without any other covering than a short blanket, scarcely reaching down to their knees ; during wet weather a sail or a blanket to the weather side, spread on poles stuck into the ground in an inclined direction, is all the shelter they deem necessary. On setting out each man is furnished with a certain allowance of salted pork, biscuit, pease, and brandy ; the pease and biscuit they boil with some of the pork into porridge, and a large vessel full of it, is generally kept at the head of the bateau, for the use of the crew when they stop in the course of the day. This porridge, or else cold fat salted pork, with cucumbers, constitutes the principal part of their food. The cucumber is a fruit that the lower classes of the French Canadians are extremely fond of ; they use it however in a very indifferent state, as they never pull it until it has attained a large size, and is become yellow and feedy. Cucumbers thus mellow, chopped into small pieces without being peeled, and afterwards mixed with sour cream, is one of their favourite dishes.

At day break on the second morning of our voyage, we quitted the island of Perot, and crossed the Utawas River, in order to gain the mouth of the south-west branch of the St. Lawrence. A tremendous scene is here presented to the view ; each river comes rushing down into the lake, over immense rocks, with an impetuosity which, seemingly, nothing can resist. The waves are as high as what are commonly met with in the British Channel during a smart breeze, and the breakers so numerous and dangerous, that one would imagine a bateau could not possibly live in the midst of them ; and indeed, unless it were navigated by men intimately acquainted with the place, and very expert at the
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same time, there would be evident danger of its being filled with water. Several times, as we passed through the breakers, the water dashed over the sides of our bateau. Tremendous and dangerous, however, as the rapids are at this spot, they are much less so than some of those met with higher up the River St. Lawrence.

The water of the Utawas River is remarkably clear, and of a bright greenish colour; that of the St. Lawrence, on the contrary, is muddy, owing to its passing over deep beds of marl for some miles before it enters into Lake St. Louis. For a considerable way down the lake the waters of the two rivers may be plainly distinguished from each other.

The rapids immediately at the mouth of the south-west branch of the St. Lawrence are called "Les Cascades," or, "Le Saut de Trou." In laden bateaux it is no arduous task to shoot down them, but it is impossible to mount against the stream even in such as are empty. In order to avoid the laborious task therefore of carrying them along the shore past the rapids, as used formerly to be done, a canal with a double lock has been made here at a great expence. This canal extends but a very little way, not more than fifty yards perhaps. Beyond this there is a succession of other rapids, the first of which, called "Le Saut de Buiffon" on account of the closeness of the woods along the shores on each side, is so strong, that in order to pass it, it is necessary to lighten the bateaux very considerably. If the cargoes are large, they are wholly taken out at once, and sent forward in carts to the distance of a mile and a half, past all the rapids. The men are always obliged here to get out of the bateaux, and haul them along with ropes, it being wholly impracticable to counteract the force of the current by means of poles alone.

The passage of these rapids is so very tedious, that we here quitted the bateaux, took our guns in hand, and proceeded on foot to "Le Coteau des Cedres," the Hill of Cedars, about nine miles higher up the river. In going thither you soon lose sight of the few straggling houses at the cascades, and enter the recesses of a remarkably thick wood, whose solemn gloom, together with the loud roaring of the waters at a distance, and the wild appearance of every object around you, inspire the mind with a sort of pleasing horror. As you approach "Le Coteau des Cedres," the
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country assumes a softer aspect; cultivated fields and neat cottages once more appear in view, and the river, instead of being agitated by tremendous rapids, is here seen gliding on with an even current between its lofty banks.

The village of the Hill of Cedars contains about thirty houses, amongst which we were agreeably surprised to find a remarkably neat and excellent tavern, kept by an English woman. We remained here until three in the afternoon, when we again set off on foot, partly for the pleasure of beholding, from the top of the steep banks, the many noble and beautiful prospects laid open before us, and partly for the pleasure of stopping occasionally to chat with the lively French girls, that, during this delicious season of the year, sat spinning in groups at the doors of the cottages. About five o'clock the bateaux overtook us; but after proceeding in them for about two miles, we again landed to escape the tedious process of ascending fresh rapids. These are called the rapids "du Coteau du Lac St. François;" they are several miles in length, and though not the most dangerous, are yet the most tremendous to appearance of any in the whole river, the white breakers being distinctly visible at the distance of four miles; some travellers have gone so far as to represent them as even more terrible to the beholder than the falls of Niagara, but this is a very exaggerated account. Boats are here carried down with the stream at the rate of fourteen or fifteen miles an hour, according to the best information I could procure on the subject, though the Canadian boatmen and others declare that they are carried down at the rate of twenty miles in the hour. At some of the rapids, higher up the river, the current is considerably swifter than at this place.

In descending these rapids they pass through the breakers in the middle of the river, but in going up they keep close in to the shore, on the north-west side, and being here sheltered by a numerous cluster of islands, which break the force of the current, and having the benefit of a short canal and locks, they get past the rapids with less difficulty even than they pass the cascades. One of the islands here, farther removed from the shore than the rest, is called Prisoners Island, having been allotted for the residence of some of the American prisoners during the last war.

There were some buildings on the island at that time, but it has been quite deserted since, on account of the great difficulty of getting to it through the strong rapids. During the war, an officer, who had compelled some of the Canadians, notwithstanding their remonstrances, to make an attempt to reach the island at an improper season, perished, with a great number of men, in going thither. Of the whole party one alone escaped with his life. The St. Lawrence is here about two miles wide.

This evening, the second of our voyage, the bateaux were drawn up for the night at the bottom of "Le Coteau du Lac," the Hill of the Lake, and we pitched our tent on the margin of a wood, at a little distance from the river. The next morning we proceeded again on foot for about two miles, when we came to a tavern, where we waited the arrival of the bateaux. The people of this house were English. From hence upwards there are but few French to be met with.

We were detained here nearly half the day in endeavouring to procure a fresh man, one of the conductor's crew having been seized with an intermittent fever. At last a man from a neighbouring settlement made his appearance, and we proceeded on our voyage. We now entered Lake St. François, which is about twenty-five miles in length, and five in breadth; but the wind being unfavourable, we were prevented from proceeding farther upon it than Point au Baudet, at which place the boundary line commences, that separates the upper from the lower province. When the wind comes from the south-west, the immense body of water in the lake is impelled directly towards this point, and a surge breaks in upon the beach, as tremendous as is seen on the sea-shore. There was one solitary house here, which proved to be a tavern, and afforded us a well dressed supper of venison, and decent accommodation for the night.

The next day the wind was not more favourable; but as it was considerably abated, we were enabled to prosecute our voyage, coasting along the shores of the lake. This was a most laborious and tedious business, on account of the numerous bays and inlets, which the wind was not sufficiently abated to suffer us to cross at their mouths: notwithstanding

all the difficulties, however, we had to contend with, we advanced nearly twenty-five miles in the course of the day.

At the head of Lake St. François, we landed on a small island, called "Isle aux Raisins," on account of the number of wild vines growing upon it. The bateaux men gathered great quantities of the grapes, wherewith the trees were loaded, and also an abundance of plumbs, which they devoured with great avidity. Neither of the fruits, however, were very tempting to persons whose palates had been accustomed to the taste of garden fruits. The grapes were sour, and not larger than peas; and as for the plumbs, though much larger in size, yet their taste did not differ materially from that of sloes.

Beyond L'Isle aux Raisins, in the narrow part of the river, there are several other islands, the largest of which called L'isle St. Regis, is near ten miles in length. All these islands still continue in the possession of the Indians, and many of them, being situated as nearly as possible in the middle of the river, which here divides the British territory from that of the United States, it yet remains to be determined of what territory they form a part. It is sincerely to be desired that this matter may be adjusted amicably in due time. A serious altercation has already taken place about an island similarly situated in Detroit River, that will be more particularly mentioned hereafter. The Indians not only retain possession of these different islands, but likewise of the whole of the south-east shore of the St. Lawrence, situated within the bounds of the United States; they likewise have considerable strips of land on the opposite shore, within the British dominions, bordering upon the river; these they have reserved to themselves for hunting. The Iroquois Indians have a village upon the Isle of St. Regis, and another also upon the main land, on the south-east shore; as we passed it, several of the inhabitants put off in canoes, and exchanged unripe heads* of Indian corn with the men for bread; they also brought with them some very fine wild ducks and fish, which they disposed of to us on very moderate terms.

* The heads of Indian corn, before they become hard, are esteemed a great delicacy; the most approved method of dressing, is to parboil, and afterwards roast them.

On the fourth night of our voyage we encamped, as usual, on the main land opposite the island of St. Regis; and the excellent viands we had procured from the Indians having been cooked, we set down to supper before a large fire, materials for which are never wanting in this woody country. The night was uncommonly serene, and we were induced to remain until a late hour in front of our tent, talking of the various occurrences in the course of the day; but we had scarcely retired to rest, when the sky became overcast, a dreadful storm arose, and by day-break the next morning we found ourselves, and every thing belonging to us, drenched with rain. Our situation now was by no means agreeable; torrents still came pouring down; neither our tent nor the woods afforded us any shelter, and the wind being very strong, and as adverse as it could blow, there was no prospect of our being enabled speedily to get into better quarters. In this state we had remained for a considerable time, when one of the party, who had been rambling about in order to discover what sort of a neighbourhood we were in, returned with the pleasing intelligence that there was a house at no great distance, and that the owner had politely invited us to it. It was the house of an old provincial officer, who had received a grant of land in this part of the country for his past services. We gladly proceeded to it, and met with a most cordial welcome from the captain and his fair daughters, who had provided a plenteous breakfast, and spared no pains to make their habitation, during our stay, as pleasing to us as possible. We felt great satisfaction at the idea, that it would be in our power to spend the remainder of the day with these worthy and hospitable people; but alas, we had all formed an erroneous opinion of the weather; the wind suddenly veered about; the sun broke through the thick clouds; the conductor gave the parting order; and in a few minutes we found ourselves once more seated in our bateau.

From hence upwards, for the distance of forty miles, the current of the river is extremely strong, and numberless rapids are to be encountered, which, though not so tremendous to appearance as those at the Cascades, and "Le Coteau du Lac," are yet both more dangerous and more difficult to pass. The great danger, however, consists in going down them; it

it arises from the shallowness of the water and the great number of sharp rocks, in the midst of which the vessels are hurried along with such impetuosity, that if they unfortunately get into a wrong channel, nothing can save them from being dashed to pieces; but so intimately are the people usually employed on this river acquainted with the different channels, that an accident of the sort is scarcely ever heard of. "Le Long Saut," the Long Fall or Rapid, situated about thirty miles above Lake St. Francis, is the most dangerous of any one in the river, and so difficult a matter is it to pass it, that it requires no less than six men on shore to haul a single bateau against the current. There is a third canal with locks at this place, in order to avoid a point, which it would be wholly impracticable to weather in the ordinary way. These different canals and locks have been made at the expence of government, and the profits arising from the tolls paid by every bateau that passes through them are placed in the public treasury. At these rapids, and at several of the others, there are very extensive flour and saw mills.

On the fifth night we arrived at a small farm house, at the top of the "Long Saut," wet from head to foot, in consequence of our having been obliged to walk past the rapids through woods and bushes still dripping after the heavy rain that had fallen in the morning. The woods in this neighbourhood are far more majestic than on any other part of the St. Lawrence; the pines in particular are uncommonly tall, and seem to wave their tops in the very clouds. In Canada, pines grow on the richest soils; but in the United States they grow mostly on poor ground: a tract of land covered solely with pines is there generally denominated "a pine barren," on account of its great poverty.

During a considerable part of the next day, we also proceeded on foot, in order to escape the tedious passage up the "Rapide Plat," and some of the other dangerous rapids in this part of the river. As we passed along, we had excellent diversion in shooting pigeons, several large flights of which we met with in the woods. The wild pigeons of Canada are not unlike the common English wood pigeons, except that they are of a much smaller size: their flesh is very well flavoured. During particular years, these birds come down from the northern regions in flights
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that it is marvellous to tell of. A gentleman of the town of Niagara assured me, that once as he was embarking there on board ship for Toronto, a flight of them was observed coming from that quarter; that as he sailed over Lake Ontario to Toronto, forty miles distant from Niagara, pigeons were seen flying over head the whole way in a contrary direction to that in which the ship proceeded; and that on arriving at the place of his destination, the birds were still observed coming down from the north in as large bodies as had been noticed at any one time during the whole voyage; supposing, therefore, that the pigeons moved no faster than the vessel, the flight, according to this gentleman's account, must at least have extended eighty miles. Many persons may think this story surpassing belief; for my own part, however, I do not hesitate to give credit to it, knowing, as I do, the respectability of the gentleman who related it, and the accuracy of his observation. When these birds appear in such great numbers, they often light on the borders of rivers and lakes, and in the neighbourhood of farm houses, at which time they are so unwary that a man with a short stick might easily knock them down by hundreds. It is not oftener than once in seven or eight years, perhaps, that such large flocks of these birds are seen in the country. The years in which they appear are denominated "pigeon years."

There are also "bear years" and "squirrel years." This was both a bear and a squirrel year. The former, like the pigeons, came down from the northern regions, and were most numerous in the neighbourhood of lakes Ontario and Erie, and along the upper parts of the River St. Lawrence. On arriving at the borders of these lakes, or of the river, if the opposite shore was in sight, they generally took to the water, and endeavoured to reach it by swimming. Prodigious numbers of them were killed in crossing the St. Lawrence by the Indians, who had hunting encampments, at short distances from each other, the whole way along the banks of the river, from the island of St. Regis to Lake Ontario. One bear, of a very large size, boldly entered the river in the face of our bateaux, and was killed by some of our men whilst swimming from the main land to one of the islands. In the woods it is very rare that bears will venture to attack a man, but several instances

stances that had recently occurred were mentioned to us, where they had attacked a single man in a canoe whilst swimming, and so very strong are they in the water, that the men thus set upon, being unarmed, escape narrowly with their lives.

The squirrels, this year, contrary to the bears, migrated from the south, from the territory of the United States. Like the bears, they took to the water on arriving at it, but as if conscious of their inability to cross a very wide piece of water, they bent their course towards Niagara River, above the falls, and at its narrowest and most tranquil part crossed over into the British territory. It was calculated, that upwards of fifty thousand of them crossed the river in the course of two or three days, and such great depredations did they commit on arriving at the settlements on the opposite side, that in one part of the country the farmers deemed themselves very fortunate where they got in as much as one third of their crops of corn. These squirrels were all of the black kind, said to be peculiar to the continent of America; they are in shape similar to the common grey squirrel, and weigh from about one to two pounds and a half each. Some writers have asserted, that these animals cannot swim, but that when they come to a river, in migrating, each one provides itself with a piece of wood or bark, upon which, when a favourable wind offers, they embark, spread their bushy tails to catch the wind, and are thus wafted over to the opposite side. Whether these animals do or do not cross in this manner sometimes, I cannot take upon me to say; but I can safely affirm, that they do not always cross so, as I have frequently shot them in the water whilst swimming: no animals swim better, and when pursued, I have seen them eagerly take to the water. Whilst swimming, their tail is useful to them by way of rudder, and they use it with great dexterity; owing to its being so light and bushy, the greater part of it floats upon the water, and thus helps to support the animal. The migration of any of these animals in such large numbers is said to be an infallible sign of a severe winter.*

* In the present instance it certainly was so, for the ensuing winter proved to be the severest that had been known in North America for several years.

On the sixth evening of our voyage we stopped nearly opposite to Point aux Iroquois, so named from a French family having been cruelly massacred there by the Iroquois Indians in the early ages of the colony. The ground being still extremely wet here, in consequence of the heavy rain of the preceding day, we did not much relish the thoughts of passing the night in our tent; yet there seemed to be no alternative, as the only house in sight was crowded with people, and not capable of affording us any accommodations. Luckily, however, as we were searching about for the driest spot to pitch our tent upon, one of the party espied a barn at a little distance, belonging to the man of the adjoining house, of whom we procured the key; it was well stored with straw, and having mounted to the top of the mow, we laid ourselves down to rest, and slept soundly there till awakened in the morning by the crowing of some cocks, that were perched on the beams above our head.

At an early hour we pursued our voyage, and before noon passed the last rapid, about three miles below the mouth of Oswegatchee River, the most considerable of those within the territory of the United States, which fall into the St. Lawrence. It consists of three branches, that unite together about fifteen miles above its mouth, the most western of which issues from a lake twenty miles in length and eight in breadth. Another of the branches issues from a small lake or pond, only about four miles distant from the western branch of Hudson's River, that flows past New York. Both the Hudson and Oswegatchee are said to be capable of being made navigable for light bateaux as far as this spot, where they approach within so short a distance of each other, except only at a few places, so that the portages will be but very trifling. This however is a mere conjecture, for Oswegatchee River is but very imperfectly known, the country it passes through being quite uninhabited; but should it be found, at a future period, that these rivers are indeed capable of being rendered navigable so far up the country, it will probably be through this channel that the chief part of the trade that there may happen to be between New York and the country bordering upon Lake Ontario will be carried on. It is at present carried on between that city and the lake by means of Hudson
River,

River, as far as Albany, and from thence by means of the Mohawks River, Wood Creek, Lake Oneida, and Oswego River, which falls into Lake Ontario. The harbour at the mouth of Oswego River is very bad on account of the sand banks; none but flat bottomed vessels can approach with safety nearer to it than two miles; nor is there any good harbour on the south side of Lake Ontario in the neighbourhood of any large rivers. Sharp built vessels, however, of a considerable size, can approach with safety to the mouth of Oswegatchee River. The Seneca, a British vessel of war of twenty-six guns, used formerly to ply constantly between Fort de la Galette, situated at the mouth of that river, and the fort at Niagara; and the British fur ships on the lakes used also, at that time, to discharge the cargoes there, brought down from the upper country. As therefore the harbour at the mouth of Oswegatchee is so much better than that at the mouth of Oswego River, and as they are nearly an equal distance from New York, there is reason to suppose, that if the river navigation should prove equally good, the trade between the lakes and New York will be for the most part, if not wholly, carried on by means of Oswegatchee rather than of Oswego River. With a fair wind, the passage from Oswegatchee River to Niagara is accomplished in two days; a voyage only one day longer than that from Oswego to Niagara with a fair wind.

Fort de la Galette was erected by the French, and though not built till long after Fort Cataraguis or Frontignac, now Kingston, yet they esteemed it by far the most important military post on the St. Lawrence, in the upper country, as it was impossible for any boat or vessel to pass up or down that river without being observed, whereas they might easily escape unseen behind the many islands opposite to Kingston. Since the close of the American war, Fort de la Galette has been dismantled, as it was within the territory of the United States; nor would any advantage have arisen from its retention; for it was never of any importance to us but as a trading post, and as such Kingston, which is within our own territory, is far more eligibly situated in every point of view; it has a more safe and commodious harbour, and the fur ships coming down from Niagara, by stopping there, are saved a voyage of

sixty miles up and down the St. Lawrence, which was oftentimes found to be more tedious than the voyage from Niagara to Kingston.

In the neighbourhood of La Galette, on the Oswegatchee River, there is a village of the Oswegatchee Indians, whose numbers are estimated at one hundred warriors.

The current of the St. Lawrence, from Oswegatchee upwards, is much more gentle than in any other part between Montreal and Lake Ontario, except only where the river is considerably dilated, as at lakes St. Louis and St. François; however, notwithstanding its being so gentle, we did not advance more than twenty-five miles in the course of the day, owing to the numerous stops that we made, more from motives of pleasure than necessity. The evening was uncommonly fine, and towards sun-set a brisk gale springing up, the conductor judged it advisable to take advantage of it, and to continue the voyage all night, in order to make up for the time we had lost during the day. We accordingly proceeded, but towards midnight the wind died away; this circumstance, however, did not alter the determination of the conductor. The men were ordered to the oars, and notwithstanding that they had laboured hard during the preceding day, and had had no rest, yet they were kept closely at work until day-break, except for one hour, during which they were allowed to stop to cook their provisions. Where there is a gentle current, as in this part of the river, the Canadians will work at the oar for many hours without intermission; they seemed to think it no hardship to be kept employed in this instance the whole night; on the contrary, they plied as vigorously as if they had but just set out, singing merrily the whole time. The French Canadians have in general a good ear for music, and sing duets with tolerable accuracy. They have one very favourite duet amongst them, called the "rowing duet," which as they sing they mark time to with each stroke of the oar; indeed, when rowing in smooth water, they mark the time of most of the airs they sing in the same manner.

About eight o'clock the next, and eighth morning of our voyage, we entered the last lake before you come to that of Ontario, called the Lake of a Thousand Islands, on account of the multiplicity of them which it contains.

contains. Many of these islands are scarcely larger than a bateau, and none of them, except such as are situated at the upper and lower extremities of the lake, appeared to me to contain more than fifteen English acres each. They are all covered with wood, even to the very smallest. The trees on these last are stunted in their growth, but the larger islands produce as fine timber as is to be found on the main shores of the lake. Many of these islands are situated so closely together, that it would be easy to throw a pebble from one to the other, notwithstanding which circumstance, the passage between them is perfectly safe and commodious for bateaux, and between some of them that are even thus close to each other, is water sufficient for a frigate. The water is uncommonly clear, as it is in every part of the river, from Lake St. Francis upwards: between that lake and the Utawas River downwards it is discoloured, as I have before observed, by passing over beds of marl. The shores of all these islands under our notice are rocky; most of them rise very boldly, and some exhibit perpendicular masses of rock towards the water upwards of twenty feet high. The scenery presented to view in sailing between these islands is beautiful in the highest degree. Sometimes, after passing through a narrow strait, you find yourself in a basin, land locked on every side, that appears to have no communication with the lake, except by the passage through which you entered; you are looking about, perhaps, for an outlet to enable you to proceed, thinking at last to see some little channel which will just admit your bateau, when on a sudden an expanded sheet of water opens upon you, whose boundary is the horizon alone; again in a few minutes you find yourself land locked, and again a spacious passage as suddenly presents itself; at other times, when in the middle of one of these basins, between a cluster of islands, a dozen different channels, like so many noble rivers, meet the eye, perhaps equally unexpectedly, and on each side the islands appear regularly retiring till they sink from the sight in the distance. Every minute, during the passage of this lake, the prospect varies. The numerous Indian hunting encampments on the different islands, with the smoke of their fires rising up between the trees, added considerably to the beauty of the scenery as we passed it. The Lake of a Thousand Islands is twenty-five miles in

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length,

length, and about six in breadth. From its upper end to Kingston, at which place we arrived early in the evening, the distance is fifteen miles.

The length of time required to ascend the River St. Lawrence, from Montreal to Kingston, is commonly found to be about seven days. If the wind should be strong and very favourable, the passage may be performed in a less time; but should it, on the contrary, be adverse, and blow very strong, the passage will be protracted somewhat longer; an adverse or favourable wind, however, seldom makes a difference of more than three days in the length of the passage upwards, as in each case it is necessary to work the bateaux along by means of poles for the greater part of the way. The passage downwards is performed in two or three days, according to the wind. The current is so strong, that a contrary wind seldom lengthens the passage in that direction more than a day.

The Mississippi is the only river in North America, which, for grandeur and commodiousness of navigation, comes in competition with the St. Lawrence, or with that river which runs from Lake Ontario to the ocean. If, however, we consider that immense body of water that flows from Lake Winnipeg through the Lake of the Woods, Lake Superior, &c. down to the sea, as one entire stream, and of course as a continuation of the St. Lawrence, it must be allowed to be a very superior river to the Mississippi in every point of view; and we may certainly consider it as one stream, with as much reason as we look upon that as one river which flows from Lake Ontario to the sea; for before it meets the ocean it passes through four large lakes, not indeed to be compared with those of Erie or Superior, in size, but they are independent lakes notwithstanding, as much as any of the others. The Mississippi is principally to be admired for the evenness of its current, and the prodigious length of way it is navigable, without any interruption, for bateaux of a very large burthen; but in many respects it is a very inferior river to the St. Lawrence, properly so called. The Mississippi at its mouth is not twenty miles broad, and the navigation is there so obstructed by banks or bars, that a vessel drawing more than twelve feet water cannot ascend it with-
out

out very imminent danger. These bars at its mouth or mouths, for it is divided by several islands, are formed by large quantities of trees that come drifting down from the upper country, and when once stopped by any obstacle, are quickly cemented together by the mud, deposited between the branches by the waters of the river, which are uncommonly foul and muddy. Fresh bars are formed, or the old bars are enlarged every year, and it is said, that unless some steps are taken to prevent the lodgments of the trees annually brought down at the time of the inundation, the navigation may in a few years be still more obstructed than it is at present. It is notorious, that since the river was first discovered, several islands and points have been formed near its mouth, and the different channels have undergone very material alterations for the worse, as to their courses and depths. The River St. Lawrence, however, on the contrary, is no less than ninety miles wide at its mouth, and it is navigable for ships of the line as far as Quebec, a distance of four hundred miles from the sea. The channel also, instead of having been impaired by time, is found to be considerably better now than when the river was first discovered; and there is reason to imagine that it will improve still more in process of time, as the clear water that flows from Lake Ontario comes down with such impetuosity, during the floods in the spring of the year, as frequently to remove banks of gravel and loose stones in the river, and thus to deepen its bed. The channel on the north side of the island of Orleans, immediately below Quebec, which, according to the account of Le P. de Charlevoix, was not sufficiently deep in the year 1720 to admit a shallop of a small size, except at the time of high tides, is at present found to be deep enough for the largest vessels, and is the channel most generally used.

The following table shews for what vessels the St. Lawrence is navigable in different places; and also points out the various breadths of the river from its mouth upwards:

At

178 TRAVELS THROUGH UPPER CANADA:

Names of Places.	Distances in miles ascending.	Breadth in miles.	
At its mouth - - - - -	- - - - -	90	
At Cape Cat - - - - -	140 - - - - -	30	
At Saguenay River - - - - -	120 - - - - -	18	
At the lower extremity of the Isle of Orleans - - - - -	110 - - - - -	15	This island is 25 miles in length and 6 in breadth, the river on each side is about 2 miles wide.
At the basin between the Isle of Orleans and Que- bec - - - - -	30 - - - - -	5	Thus far, 400 miles from its mouth, it is navigable for ships of the line with safety.
From Quebec to Lake St. Pierre - - - - -	90		
Lake St. Pierre - - - - -	30 - - - - -	14	
To La Valterie - - - - -	10 - - - - -	1	
To Montreal - - - - -	30 - - - - -	2 to 4	To this place, 560 miles, it is navigable with perfect safety for ships drawing 14 feet water. Vessels of a much larger draught have proceeded many miles above Quebec, but the channel is very intricate and dangerous.
To Lake St. Louis - - - - -	6 - - - - -	$\frac{1}{2}$	
Lake St. Louis - - - - -	12 - - - - -	4	
To Lake St. Francis - - - - -	25 - - - - -	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 2	
Lake St. Francis - - - - -	20 - - - - -	5	
To the Lake of a Thousand Isles - - - - -	90 - - - - -	$\frac{1}{4}$ to 1	
Lake of a Thousand Isles	25 - - - - -	6	
To Kingston, on Lake On- tario - - - - -	15 - - - - -	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 6	

During the whole of its course the St. Lawrence is navigable for bateaux of two tons burthen, except merely at the rapids above Montreal, at the Fall of the Thicket, and at the Long Fall, where, as has been already pointed out, it is necessary to lighten the bateaux, if heavily laden. At each of these places, however, it is possible to construct canals, so as to prevent

prevent the trouble of unloading any part of the cargoes of the bateaux, and at a future day, when the country becomes rich, such canals no doubt will be made.

Although the lakes are not immediately connected with the Atlantic Ocean by any other river than the St. Lawrence, yet there are several streams that fall into the Atlantic, so nearly connected with others flowing into the lakes, that by their means trade may be carried on between the ocean and the lakes. The principal channels for trade between the ocean and the lakes are four in number; the first, along the Mississippi and the Ohio, and thence up the Wabash, Miami, Muskingum, or the Alleghany rivers, from the head of which there are portages of from one to eighteen miles to rivers that fall into Lake Erie; secondly, along the Patowmac River, which flows past Washington, and from thence along Cheat River, the Monongahela and Alleghany rivers and French Creek to Presqu' Isle on Lake Erie; thirdly, along Hudson's River, which falls into the Atlantic at New York, and afterwards along the Mohawk River, Wood Creek, Lake Oneida, and Oswego River, which last falls into Lake Ontario; fourthly, along the St. Lawrence.

The following is a statement of the entire length of each of these channels or routes, and of the lengths of the portages in each, reckoning from the highest seaport on each river that will receive vessels of a suitable size for crossing the Atlantic to Lake Erie, which is the most central of the lakes to the four ports:

	Length of Way in Miles.	Length of the Portages.	
From Montreal - - -	440	22	
From Washington - - -	450	80	When the navigation is opened, this will be reduced, it is said, to 50 miles.
From New York - - -	500	30	
From New Orleans - - -	1,800	1 to 18	According to the route followed from the Ohio to the Lake.

From

From this statement it not only appears evident that the St. Lawrence opens a shorter passage to the lakes than any of the other rivers, but also that the portages are shorter than in any of the other routes; the portages are also fewer, and goods may be transported in the same boats the whole way from Montreal to the lakes; whereas in conveying goods thither either from Washington or New York, it is necessary to employ different boats and men on each different river, or else to transport the boats themselves on carriages over the portages from one river to another. It is always an object of importance to avoid a portage, as by every change in the mode of conveyance the expence of carriage is increased, and there is an additional risk of pillage from the goods passing through the hands of a greater number of people. Independent of these considerations, the St. Lawrence will, on another account, be found a more commodious channel than any other for the carrying on of trade between the ocean and the lakes. Constantly supplied from that immense reservoir of water, Lake Ontario, it is never so low, even in the driest season, as not to be sufficiently deep to float laden bateaux. The small streams, on the contrary, which connect Hudson's River, the Patowmac, and the Mississippi with the lakes, are frequently so dried up in summer time, that it is scarcely possible to pass along them in canoes. For upwards of four months in the summer of 1796, the Mohawk River was so low, that it was totally impracticable to transport merchandize along it during the greater part of its course, and the traders in the back country, after waiting for a length of time for the goods they wanted, were under the necessity at last of having them forwarded by land carriage. The navigation of this river, it is said, becomes worse every year, and unless several long canals are cut, there will be an end to the water communication between New York and Lake Ontario by that route. The Alleghany River and French Creek, which connect the Patowmac with Lake Erie, are equally affected by droughts; indeed it is only during floods, occasioned by the melting of the snow, or by heavy falls of rain, that goods can be transported with ease either by the one route or the other.

By far the greater part of the trade to the lakes is at present centered at Montreal; for the British merchants not only can convey their goods
from

from thence to the lakes for one third less than what it costs to convey the same goods thither from New York, but they can likewise afford to sell them, in the first instance, considerably cheaper than the merchants of the United States. The duties paid on the importation into Canada of refined sugar, spirits, wine, and coffee, are considerably less than those paid on the importation of the same commodities into the United States; and all British hardware, and dry goods in general, are admitted duty free into Canada, whereas, in the United States, they are chargeable, on importation from Europe, with a duty of fifteen per cent. on the value. To attempt to levy duties on foreign manufactures sent into the states from Canada would be an idle attempt, as from the great extent of their frontier, and its contiguity to Canada, it would at all times be an easy matter to send the goods clandestinely into them, in order to avoid the duties.

The trade carried on from Montreal to the lakes is at present very considerable, and increasing every year. Already are there extensive settlements on the British side of Lake Ontario, at Niagara, at Toronto, at the Bay of Canti, and at Kingston, which contain nearly twenty thousand inhabitants; and on the opposite shore, the people of the states are pushing forward their settlements with the utmost vigour. On Lake Erie, and along Detroit River also, the settlements are increasing with astonishing rapidity, both on the British and on the opposite side.

The importance of the back country trade, and the trade to the lakes is in fact the back country trade, has already been demonstrated; and it has been shewn, that every sea-port town in the United States has increased in size in proportion to the quantum it enjoyed of this trade; and that those towns most conveniently situated for carrying it on, were those that had the greatest share of it; as, therefore, the shores of the lake increase in population, and of course as the demand for European manufactures increases amongst the inhabitants, we may expect to see Montreal, which of all the sea-ports in North America is the most con-

veniently situated for supplying them with such manufactures, increase proportionably in size; and as the extent of back country it is connected with, by means of water, is as great, and also as fertile as that with which any of the large towns of the United States are connected, it is not improbable but that Montreal at a future day will rival in wealth and in size the greatest of the cities on the continent of North America.

L E T T E R X X X .

Description of the Town of Kingston.—Formerly called Fort Cadaragua.—Extensive Trade carried on here.—Nature of it.—Inhabitants very hospitable.—Harbours on Lake Ontario.—Ships of War on that Lake.—Merchant Vessels.—Naval Officers.—Expence of building and keeping up Vessels very great.—Why.—No Iron Mines yet opened in the Country.—Copper may be more easily procured than Iron.—Found in great Quantities on the Borders of Lake Superior.—Embark in a Trading Vessel on Lake Ontario.—Description of that Lake.—A Septennial Change in the Height of the Waters said to be observable—also a Tide that ebbs and flows every Two Hours.—Observations on these Phenomena.—Voyage across the Lake similar to a Sea Voyage.—Come in Sight of Niagara Fort.—Land at Mississaguis Point.—Mississaguis Indians.—One of their Chiefs killed in an Affray.—How treated by the British Government.—Their revengeful Disposition.—Mississaguis good Hunters.—How they kill Salmon.—Variety of Fish in the Lakes and Rivers of Canada.—Sea Wolves.—Sea Cows.—Description of the Town of Niagara or Newark.—The present Seat of Government.—Scheme of removing it elsewhere.—Unhealthiness of the Town of Niagara and adjacent Country.—Navy Hats.—Fort of Niagara surrendered pursuant to Treaty.—Description of it.—Description of the other Forts surrendered to the People of the United States.—Shewn not to be so advantageous to them as was expected.—Superior Position of the new British Posts pointed out.

Niagara, September.

KINGSTON is situated at the mouth of a deep bay, at the north eastern extremity of Lake Ontario. It contains a fort and barracks, an English episcopalian church, and about one hundred houses, the most of which last were built, and are now inhabited by persons who emigrated from the United States at the close of the American war. Some few of the houses are built of stone and brick, but by far the greater part of them are of wood. The fort is of stone, and consists of a square with

four bastions. It was erected by M. le Comte de Frontinac, as early as the year 1672, and was for a time called after him; but insensibly it lost his name, and received instead of it that of Cadaraqui, the name of a creek which falls into the bay. This name remained common to the fort and to the town until a few years ago, when it was changed to that of Kingston. From sixty to one hundred men are usually quartered in the barracks.

Kingston is a place of very considerable trade, and it is consequently increasing most rapidly in size. All the goods brought up the St. Lawrence for the supply of the upper country are here deposited in stores, preparatory to their being shipped on board vessels suitable to the navigation of the lake; and the furs from the various posts on the nearer lakes are here likewise collected together, in order to be laden on board bateaux, and sent down the St. Lawrence. Some furs are brought in immediately to the town by the Indians, who hunt in the neighbouring country, and along the upper parts of the St. Lawrence, but the quantity is not large. The principal merchants resident at Kingston are partners of old established houses at Montreal and Quebec. A stranger, especially if a British subject, is sure to meet with a most hospitable and friendly reception from them, as he passes through the place.

During the autumn the inhabitants of Kingston suffer very much from intermittent fevers, owing to the town being situated on a low spot of ground, contiguous to an extensive morass.

The bay adjoining to Kingston affords good anchorage, and is the safest and most commodious harbour on all Lake Ontario. The bay of Great Sodus, on the south side of the lake, and that of Toronto, situated on the north side of the lake, nearly in the same meridian with Niagara, are said to be the next best to that of Kingston; but the entrance into each of them is obstructed by sand banks, which in rough weather cannot be crossed without imminent danger in vessels drawing more than five or six feet water. On the borders of the bay at Kingston there is a King's dock yard, and another which is private property. Most of the British vessels of burthen on Lake Ontario have been built at these yards. Belong-
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ing to his Majesty there were on Lake Ontario, when we crossed it, three vessels of about two hundred tons each, carrying from eight to twelve guns, besides several gun boats; the last, however, were not in commission, but laid up in Niagara River; and in consequence of the ratification of the treaty of amity and commerce between the United States and his Britannic Majesty, orders were issued, shortly after we left Kingston, for laying up the other vessels of war, one alone excepted*. For one King's ship there would be ample employment on the lake, in conveying to the upper country the presents for the Indians and the stores for the troops, and in transporting the troops across the lake when they changed quarters. Every military officer at the outposts enjoys the privilege of having a certain bulk, according to his rank, carried for him in the King's vessels, free of all charges. The naval officers, if their vessels be not otherwise engaged, are allowed to carry a cargo of merchandize when they sail from one port to another, the freight of which is their perquisite; they likewise have the liberty, and are constantly in the practice, of carrying passengers across the lake at an established price. The commodore of the King's vessels on Lake Ontario is a French Canadian, and so likewise are most of the officers under him. Their uniform is blue and white, with large yellow buttons, stamped with the figure of a beaver, over which is inscribed the word, "Canada." The naval officers are under the controul of the military officer commandant, at every post where their vessels happen to touch; and they cannot leave their vessels to go up into the country at any time without his permission.

Several decked merchant vessels, schooners, and sloops, of from fifty to two hundred tons each, and also numberless large sailing bateaux, are kept employed on Lake Ontario. No vessels are deemed proper for the navigation of these lakes but complete sea boats, or else flat bottomed vessels, such as canoes and bateaux, that can safely run ashore on an emergency. At present the people of the United States have no other vessels than bateaux on the lake, and whether they will deem it proper

* Subsequent orders, it was said, were issued, during the summer of 1797, to have one or more of these vessels put again in commission.

to have larger vessels, as their harbours are all so indifferent, remains yet to be determined. The large British vessels ply mostly between Kingston and Niagara, and but very rarely touch at any other place.

The expence of building, and equipping vessels on Lake Ontario, is very considerable; and it is still greater on the more distant lakes, as the larger part of the iron implements, and all the cordage wanted for that purpose, are imported from Great Britain, through the medium of the lower province. There can be no doubt, however, but that when the country is become more populous, an ample supply of these necessary articles will be readily procured on the spot; for the soil of the upper province is well adapted to the growth of hemp, and iron ore has been discovered in many parts of the country. Hemp already begins to be cultivated in small quantities; but it has hitherto been the policy of government to direct the attention of the people to agriculture, rather than to any other pursuit, so that none of the iron mines, which, together with all other mines that are, or that may hereafter be discovered, are the exclusive property of the crown, have yet been opened. The people of the United States, however, alive to every prospect of gain, have already sent persons to look for iron ore in that part of their territory situated conveniently to the lakes. These persons have been very successful in their searches, and as works will undoubtedly be established speedily by them in this quarter for the manufacture of iron, and as they will be able to afford it on much better terms than that which is brought all the way from Lower Canada, it is probable that government will encourage the opening of mines in our own dominions, rather than suffer the people of the States to enjoy such a very lucrative branch of trade as they must necessarily have, if the same policy is persisted in which has hitherto been pursued.

Copper, in the more remote parts of Upper Canada, is found in much greater abundance than iron, and as it may be extracted from the earth with considerably less trouble than any of the iron ore that has yet been discovered, there is reason to imagine, that at a future day it will be much more used than iron for every purpose to which it can be applied. On the borders of a river, which falls into the south-west side of Lake

Superior, virgin copper is found in the greatest abundance; and on most of the islands on the eastern side it is also found. In the possession of a gentleman at Niagara I saw a lump of virgin copper of several ounces weight, apparently as pure as if it had passed through fire, which I was informed had been struck off with a chisel from a piece equally pure, growing on one of these islands, which must at least have weighed forty pounds. Rich veins of copper are visible in almost all the rocks on these islands towards the shore; and copper ore, resembling copperas, is likewise found in deep beds near the water: in a few hours bateaux might here be filled with ore, and in less than three days conveyed to the Straits of St. Mary, after passing which the ore might be laden on board large vessels, and conveyed by water without any further interruption as far as Niagara River. The portage at the Straits of St. Mary may be passed in a few hours, and with a fair wind large vessels, proper for traversing Lakes Huron and Erie, may come down to the eastern extremity of the latter lake in six days.

Not only the building and fitting out of vessels on the lakes is attended with considerable expence, but the cost of keeping them up is likewise found to be very great, for they wear out much sooner than vessels employed commonly on the ocean; which circumstance, according to the opinion of the naval gentlemen on the lakes, is owing to the freshness of the water; added to this, no failors are to be hired but at very high wages, and it is found necessary to retain them at full pay during the five months of the year that the vessels are laid up on account of the ice, as men cannot be procured at a moment's notice. The failors, with a few exceptions only, are procured from sea ports, as it is absolutely necessary on these lakes, the navigation of which is more dangerous than that of the ocean, to have able and experienced seamen. Lake Ontario itself is never frozen out of sight of land, but its rivers and harbours are regularly blocked up by the ice.

The day after that on which we reached Kingston, we took our passage for Niagara on board a schooner of one hundred and eighty tons burthen, which was waiting at the merchant's wharf for a fair wind. The established price of the passage across the lake in the cabin is two guineas,

guineas, and in the steerage one guinea, for each person: this is by no means dear, considering that the captain, for the money, keeps a table for each respective set of passengers. The cabin table on board this vessel was really well served, and there was abundance of port and sherry wine, and of every sort of spirits, for the use of the cabin passengers. The freight of goods across the lake is dearer in proportion, being thirty-six shillings British per ton, which is nearly as much as was paid for the transportation of a ton of goods across the Atlantic previous to the present war; it cannot, however, be deemed exorbitant, when the expence of building and keeping the vessels in repair, and the high wages of the sailors, &c. are taken into consideration.

On the 7th of September, in the afternoon, the wind became favourable for crossing the lake; notice was in consequence immediately sent round to the passengers, who were dispersed in different parts of the town, to get ready; all of them hurried on board; the vessel was unmoored, and in a few minutes she was wafted out into the lake by a light breeze. For the first mile and a half, in going from Kingston, the prospect is much confined, on account of the many large islands on the left hand side; but on weathering a point on one of the islands, at the end of that distance, an extensive view of the lake suddenly opens, which on a still clear evening, when the sun is sinking behind the lofty woods that adorn the shores, is extremely grand and beautiful.

Lake Ontario is the most easterly of the four large lakes through which the boundary line passes, that separates the United States from the province of Upper Canada. It is two hundred and twenty miles in length, from east to west, and seventy miles wide in the broadest part, and, according to calculation, contains about 2,390,000 acres. This lake is less subject to storms than any of the others, and its waters in general, considering their great expanse, are wonderfully tranquil. During the first evening of our voyage there was not the least curl even on their surface, they were merely agitated by a gentle swell; and during the subsequent part of the voyage, the waves were at no time so high as to occasion the slightest sickness amongst any of the passengers. The depth of the water in the lake is very great; in some parts it is unfathomable,

fathomable. On looking over the side of a vessel, the water, owing to its great depth, appears to be of a blackish colour, but it is nevertheless very clear, and any white substance thrown overboard may be discerned at the depth of several fathoms from the surface; it is, however, by no means so clear and transparent as the water of some of the other lakes. Mr. Carver, speaking of Lake Superior, says, "When it was calm, and the sun shone bright, I could sit in my canoe, where the depth was upwards of six fathoms, and plainly see huge piles of stone at the bottom, of different shapes, some of which appeared as if they had been hewn; the water was at this time as pure and transparent as air, and my canoe seemed as if it hung suspended in that element. It was impossible to look attentively through this limpid medium, at the rocks below, without finding, before many minutes were elapsed, your head swim, and your eyes no longer able to behold the dazzling scene." The water of Lake Ontario is very well tasted, and is that which is constantly used on board the vessels that traverse it.

It is very confidently asserted, not only by the Indians, but also by great numbers of the white people who live on the shores of Lake Ontario, that the waters of this lake rise and fall alternately every seventh year; others, on the contrary, deny that such a fluctuation does take place; and indeed it differs so materially from any that has been observed in large bodies of water in other parts of the globe, that for my own part I am somewhat tempted to believe it is merely an imaginary change; nevertheless, when it is considered, that according to the belief of the oldest inhabitants of the country, such a periodical ebbing and flowing of the waters of the lake takes place, and that it has never been clearly proved to the contrary, we are bound to suspend our opinions on the subject. A gentleman, whose habitation was situated close upon the borders of the lake, not far from Kingston, and who, from the nature of his profession, had more time to attend to such subjects than the generality of the people of the country, told me, that he had observed the state of the lake attentively for nearly fourteen years, that he had resided on the borders of it, and that he was of opinion the waters did not ebb and flow periodically; yet he acknowledged this very remark-

able fact, that several of the oldest white inhabitants in his neighbourhood declared, previously to the rising of the lake, that the year 1795 would be the high year; and that in the summer of that year, the lake actually did rise to a very uncommon height. He said, however, that he had reason to think the rising of the lake on this occasion was wholly owing to fortuitous circumstances, and not to any regular established law of nature; and he conceived, that if the lake had not risen as it had done, yet the people would have fancied, nevertheless, that it was in reality higher than usual, as he supposed they had fancied it to be on former occasions. He was induced to form this opinion, he said, from the following circumstance: When the lake had risen to such an unusual height in the year 1795, he examined several of the oldest people on the subject, and questioned them particularly as to the comparative height of the waters on this and former occasions. They all declared that the waters were not higher than they usually were at the time of their periodical rising; and they affirmed, that they had themselves seen them equally high before. Now a grove of trees, which stood adjoining to this gentleman's garden, and must at least have been of thirty years growth, was entirely destroyed this year by the waters of the lake, that flowed amongst the trees; had the lake, therefore, ever risen so high before, this grove would have been then destroyed. This circumstance certainly militated strongly against the evidence which the people gave as to the height of the waters; but it only proved that the waters had risen on this occasion higher than they had done for thirty years preceding; it did not prove that they had not, during that term, risen periodically above their ordinary level.

What Mr. Carver relates concerning this subject, rather tends to confirm the opinion that the waters of the lake do rise. "I had like," he says, "to have omitted a very extraordinary circumstance relative to these straits;" the Straits of Michillimakinac, between lakes Michigan and Huron. "According to observations made by the French, whilst they were in possession of the fort there, although there is no diurnal flood or ebb to be perceived in these waters, yet from an exact attention to their state, a periodical alteration in them has been discovered.

“ covered. It was observed, that they arose by gradual but almost imperceptible degrees, till they had reached the height of three feet; this was accomplished in seven years and a half; and in the same space of time they as gently decreased, till they had reached their former situation; so that in fifteen years they had completed this inexplicable revolution. At the time I was there, the truth of these observations could not be confirmed by the English, as they had then been only a few years in possession of the fort; but they all agreed that some alterations in the limits of the straits was apparent.” It is to be lamented that succeeding years have not thrown more light on the subject; for since the fort has been in our possession, persons competent to determine the truth of observations of such a nature have never staid a sufficient length of time there to have had it in their power to do so.

A long series of minute observations are necessary to determine positively whether the waters of the lake do or do not rise and fall periodically. It is well known, for instance, that in wet seasons the waters rise much above their ordinary level, and that in very dry seasons they sink considerably below it; a close attention, therefore, ought to be paid to the quantity of rain that falls, and to evaporation; and it ought to be ascertained in what degree the height of the lake is altered thereby; otherwise, if the lake happened to be higher or lower than usual on the seventh year, it would be impossible to say with accuracy whether it were owing to the state of the weather, or to certain laws of nature that we are yet unacquainted with. At the same time, great attention ought to be paid to the state of the winds, as well in respect to their direction as to their velocity, for the height of the waters of all the lakes is materially affected thereby. At Fort Erie, situated at the eastern extremity of the lake of the same name, I once observed the waters to fall full three feet in the course of a few hours upon a sudden change of the wind from the westward, in which direction it had blown for many days, to the eastward. Moreover, these observations ought not only to be made at one place on the borders of any one of the lakes, but they ought to be made at several different places at the same time; for the

waters have encroached, owing to some unknown causes, considerably and gradually upon the shores in some places, and receded in others. Between the stone house, in the fort at Niagara, and the lake, for instance, there is not at present a greater space than ten yards, or thereabouts; though when first built there was an extensive garden between them. A water battery also, erected since the commencement of the present war, at the bottom of the bank, beyond the walls of the fort, was fapped away by the water in the course of two seasons, and now scarcely any vestige of it remains. At a future day, when the country becomes more populous and more wealthy, persons will no doubt be found who will have leisure for making the observations necessary for determining whether the lakes do or do not undergo a periodical change, but at present the inhabitants on the borders of them are too much engaged in commercial and agricultural pursuits to attend to matters of mere speculation, which, however they might amuse the philosopher, could be productive of no solid advantages to the generality of the inhabitants of the country.

It is believed by many persons that the waters of Lake Ontario not only rise and fall periodically every seventh year, but that they are likewise influenced by a tide, which ebbs and flows frequently in the course of twenty-four hours. On board the vessel in which I crossed the lake there were several gentlemen of the country, who confidently assured me, that a regular tide was observable at the Bay of Canti; that in order to satisfy themselves on the subject, they had stood for several hours together, on more than one occasion, at a mill at the head of the bay, and that they had observed the waters to ebb and flow regularly every four hours, rising to the height of fourteen inches. There can be no doubt, however, but that the frequent ebbing and flowing of the water at this place must be caused by the wind; for no such regular fluctuation is observable at Niagara, at Kingston, or on the open shores of the lake; and owing to the formation of the Bay of Canti, the height of the water must necessarily vary there with every slight change of the wind. The Bay of Canti is a long crooked inlet, that grows narrower at the upper end, like a funnel; not only, therefore, a change of wind up or down
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the bay would make a difference in the height of the water at the uppermost extremity of it; but owing to the waters being concentrated there at one point, they would be seen to rise or fall, if impelled even in the same direction, whether up or down the bay, more or less forcibly at one time of the day than at another. Now it is very seldom that the wind, at any part of the day or night, would be found to blow precisely with the same force, for a given space of two hours, that it had blown for the preceding space of two hours; an appearance like a tide must therefore be seen almost constantly at the head of this bay whenever there was a breeze. I could not learn that the fluctuation had ever been observed during a perfect calm: were the waters, however, influenced by a regular tide, during a calm the tide would be most readily seen.

To return to the voyage. A few hours after we quitted Kingston, on the 7th of September, the wind died away, and during the whole night the vessel made but little way; early on the morning of the 8th, however, a fresh breeze sprang up, and before noon we lost sight of the land. Our voyage now differed in no wise from one across the ocean; the vessel was steered by the compass, the log regularly heaved, the way marked down in the log book, and an exact account kept of the procedures on board. We continued sailing, out of sight of land, until the evening of the 9th, when we had a view of the blue hills in the neighbourhood of Toronto, on the northern side of the lake, but they soon disappeared. Except at this place, the shores of the lake are flat and sandy, owing to which circumstance it is, that in traversing the lake you are generally carried out of sight of land in a very few hours.

At day break on the 10th the fort and town of Niagara appeared under the lee bow, and the wind being favourable, we had every prospect before us of getting up to the town in a few hours; but scarcely had we reached the bar, at the mouth of Niagara River, when the wind suddenly shifted, and after endeavouring in vain to cross it by means of tacking, we were under the necessity of casting anchor at the distance of about two miles from the fort. The fort is seen to great advantage from the water; but the town being built parallel to the river, and no part of it
visible

visible to a spectator on the lake, except the few shabby houses at the nearest end, it makes but a very poor appearance. Having breakfasted, and exchanged our *habits de voyage*, for such as it was proper to appear in at the capital of Upper Canada, and at the center of the beau monde of the province, the schooner's yawl was launched, and we were landed, together with such of the passengers as were disposed to go on shore, at Mississaguis Point, from whence there is an agreeable walk of one mile, partly through woods, to the town of Niagara.

This point takes its name from the Mississaguis Indians, great numbers of whom are generally encamped upon it. The Mississaguis tribe inhabits the shores of Lake Ontario, and it is one of the most numerous of this part of the country. The men are in general very stout, and they are esteemed most excellent hunters and fishers; but less warlike, it is said, than any of the neighbouring nations. They are of a much darker complexion than any other Indians I ever met with; some of them being nearly as black as negroes. They are extremely dirty and slovenly in their appearance, and the women are still more so than the men; such indeed is the odour exhaled in a warm day from the rancid grease and fish oil with which the latter daub their hair, necks, and faces profusely, that it is offensive in the highest degree to approach within some yards of them. On arriving at Niagara, we found great numbers of these Indians dispersed in knots, in different parts of the town, in great concern for the loss of a favourite and experienced chief. This man, whose name was Wompakanon, had been killed, it appeared, by a white man, in a fray which happened at Toronto, near to which place is the principal village of the Mississaguis nation. The remaining chiefs immediately assembled their warriors, and marched down to Niagara, to make a formal complaint to the British government. To appease their resentment, the commanding officer of the garrison distributed presents amongst them to a large amount, and amongst other things they were allowed no small portion of rum and provisions, upon which the tribe feasted, according to custom, the day before we reached the town; but the rum being all consumed, they seemed to feel severely for the loss of poor Wompakanon. Fear of exciting the anger of the British government would prevent them from taking revenge openly on this occasion,

occasion, but I was informed by a gentleman in the Indian department, intimately acquainted with the dispositions of the Indians, that as nothing but blood is deemed sufficient in their opinion to atone for the death of a favourite chief, they would certainly kill some white man, perhaps one perfectly innocent, when a favourable and secret opportunity offered for so doing, though it should be twenty years afterwards.

The Mississaguais keep the inhabitants of Kingston, of Niagara, and of the different towns on the lake, well supplied with fish and game, the value of which is estimated by bottles of rum and loaves of bread. A gentleman, with whom we dined at Kingston, entertained us with a most excellent haunch of venison of a very large size, and a salmon weighing at least fifteen pounds, which he had purchased from one of these Indians for a bottle of rum and a loaf of bread *, and upon enquiry I found that the Indian thought himself extremely well paid, and was highly pleased with having made such a good bargain. The Indians catch salmon and other large fish in the following manner. Two men go together in a canoe at night; the one sits in the stern and paddles, and the other stands with a spear over a flambeau placed in the head of the canoe. The fish, attracted by the light, come in numbers around the canoe, and the spearman then takes the opportunity of striking them. They are very expert at this business, seldom missing their aim.

Lake Ontario, and all the rivers which fall into it, abound with excellent salmon, and many different kinds of sea-fish, which come up the River St. Lawrence; it also abounds with such a great variety of fresh water fish, that it is supposed there are many sorts in it which have never yet been named. In almost every part of the River St. Lawrence, fish is found in the greatest abundance; and it is the opinion of many persons, that if the fisheries were properly attended to, particularly the salmon fishery, the country would be even more enriched thereby than by the fur trade. Sea wolves and sea cows, amphibious animals, weighing from one to two thousand pounds each, are said to have been found in Lake Ontario; of the truth of this, however, there is some doubt; but certain it is, that in sailing across that lake animals of an immense size are frequently seen playing on the surface of

* Both together probably not worth more than half a dollar.

the water. Of the large fishes, the sturgeon is the one most commonly met with, and it is not only found in Lake Ontario, but also in the other lakes that have no immediate communication with the sea. The sturgeon caught in the lakes is valuable for its oil, but it is not a well flavoured fish; indeed, the sturgeon found north of James River in Virginia is in general very indifferent, and seldom or never eaten.

Niagara River runs nearly in a due south direction, and falls into Lake Ontario on the southern shore, about thirty miles to the eastward of the western extremity of the lake. It is about three hundred yards wide at its mouth, and is by far the largest body of water flowing into Lake Ontario. On the eastern side of the river is situated the fort, now in the possession of the people of the States, and on the opposite or British side the town, most generally known by the name of Niagara, notwithstanding that it has been named Newark by the legislature. The original name of the town was Niagara, it was afterwards called Lenox, then Nassau, and afterwards Newark. It is to be lamented that the Indian names, so grand and sonorous, should ever have been changed for others. Newark, Kingston, York, are poor substitutes for the original names of these respective places, Niagara, Cadaragui, Toronto. The town of Niagara hitherto has been, and is still the capital of the province of Upper Canada; orders, however, had been issued, before our arrival there, for the removal of the seat of government from thence to Toronto, which was deemed a more eligible spot for the meeting of the legislative bodies, as being farther removed from the frontiers of the United States. This projected change is by no means relished by the people at large, as Niagara is a much more convenient place of resort to most of them than Toronto; and as the governor who proposed the measure has been removed, it is imagined that it will not be put in execution. The removal of the seat of government from Niagara to Toronto, according to the plan laid down, was only to have been a preparatory step to another alteration: a new city, to have been named London, was to have been built on the river formerly called La Trénche, but since called the Thames, a river running into Lake St. Clair, and here the seat of government was ultimately to have been fixed. The spot marked out for the site of the city possesses many local advantages.

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It is situated in a healthy fertile country, on a fine navigable river, in a central part of the province, from whence the water communication is extensive in every direction. A few settlements have already been made on the banks of the river, and the tide of emigration is setting in strongly towards that quarter; at a future day, therefore, it is by no means improbable but that this spot may be deemed an eligible one for the capital of the country; but to remove the seat of government immediately to a place little better than a wilderness, and so far from the populous parts of the province, would be a measure fraught with numberless inconveniencies to the public, and productive apparently of no essential advantages whatsoever.

The town of Niagara contains about seventy houses, a court house, gaol, and a building intended for the accommodation of the legislative bodies. The houses, with a few exceptions, are built of wood; those next the lake are rather poor, but at the upper end of the town there are several very excellent dwellings, inhabited by the principal officers of government. Most of the gentlemen in official stations in Upper Canada are Englishmen of education, a circumstance which must render the society of the capital agreeable, let it be fixed where it will. Few places in North America can boast of a more rapid rise than the little town of Niagara, nearly every one of its houses having been built within the last five years; it is still advancing most rapidly in size, owing to the increase of the back country trade along the shores of the upper lakes, which is all carried on through the place, and also owing to the wonderful emigrations, into the neighbourhood, of people from the States. The motives which lead the citizens of the United States to emigrate to the British dominions have already been explained. So sudden and so great has the influx of people, into the town of Niagara and its vicinity, been, that town lots, horses, provisions, and every necessary of life have risen, within the last three years, nearly fifty per cent. in value.

The banks of the River Niagara are steep and lofty, and on the top, at each side of the river, are extensive plains. The town stands on the summit of the western bank, about fifty yards from the water's edge. It commands a fine view of the lake and distant shores, and its situa-

tion is in every respect pleasing to the eye. From its standing on a spot of ground so much elevated above the level of the water, one would imagine that it must also be a remarkably healthy place, but it is, in fact, lamentably the reverse. On arriving at the town, we were obliged to call at no less than four different taverns, before we could procure accommodations, the people at the first places we stopped at, being so severely afflicted with the ague, that they could not receive us; and on enquiring, it appeared that there was not a single house in the whole town but where one or more of the inhabitants were labouring under this perplexing disorder; in some of the houses entire families were laid up, and at the fort on the opposite side of the river, the whole of the new garrison, except a corporal and nine men, was disqualified for doing duty. Each individual of our party could not but entertain very serious apprehensions for his own health, on arriving at a place where sickness was so general, but we were assured that the danger of catching the disorder was now over; that all those who were ill at present, had been confined many weeks before; and that for a fortnight past not a single person had been attacked, who had not been ill in the preceding part of the season. As a precaution, however, each one of the party took fasting, in the morning, a glass of brandy, in which was infused a teaspoonfull of Peruvian bark. This mixture is deemed, in the country, one of the most certain preventatives against the disorder, and few that take it, in time, regularly, and avoid the evening dews, suffer from it. Not only the town of Niagara and its vicinity are unhealthy places, but almost every part of Upper Canada, and of the territory of the States bordering upon the lakes, is likewise unhealthy. The sickly season commences about the middle of July, and terminates about the first week of September, as soon as the nights become cold. Intermittent fevers are the most common disorders; but in some parts of the country the inhabitants suffer from continual fevers, of which there are different kinds, peculiar to certain districts. In the country, for instance, bordering upon the Genesee River, which falls into Lake Ontario on the southern side, a fever is common amongst the inhabitants of a malignant nature, vulgarly called the Genesee fever, of which many die annually;

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and in that bordering upon the Miami River, which falls into Lake Erie, within the north-western territory of the United States, a fever of a different kind, again, is common. It does not appear that the exact nature of these different fevers has ever been accurately ascertained. In the back parts of North America, in general, medical men are rarely to be met with, and indeed if they were, the settlements are so far removed from each other, that they could be of little service.

It is very remarkable, that notwithstanding that medical assistance is so rarely to be had in case of sickness in the back country, yet the Americans, when they are about to change their place of abode, seldom or ever consider whether the part of the country to which they are going is healthy or otherwise, at least they are scarcely ever influenced in their choice of a place of residence either by its healthiness or unhealthiness. If the lands in one part of the country are superior to those in another in fertility; if they are in the neighbourhood of a navigable river, or situated conveniently to a good market; if they are cheap, and rising in value, thither the American will gladly emigrate, let the climate be ever so unfriendly to the human system. Not a year passes over, but what numbers of people leave the beautiful and healthy banks of the Susquehannah River for the Genesee country, where nine out of every ten of the inhabitants are regularly seized, during the autumn, with malignant fevers; but the lands bordering upon the Susquehannah are in general poor, whereas those in the Genesee country are in many places so rich, that until reduced by successive crops of Indian corn, wheat, to use the common phrase, "will run wholly to straw:" where it has been sown in the first instance, the stalks have frequently been found fourteen or fifteen feet in length, two thirds of them lying on the ground.

On the margin of Niagara River, about three quarters of a mile from the town, stands a building called Navy Hall, erected for the accommodation of the naval officers on the lake during the winter season, when their vessels are laid up. Opposite to it there is a spacious wharf to protect the vessels from the ice during the winter, and also to facilitate the landing of merchandize when the navigation is open. All cargoes brought up the lake, that are destined for Niagara, are landed

here. Adjoining the wharf are very extensive stores belonging to the crown, and also to private persons. Navy Hall is now occupied by the troops; the fort on the opposite side of the river, where they were formerly stationed, having been delivered up pursuant to the late treaty between his Majesty and the United States. The troops, however, are only to remain at the hall until a blockhouse is erected on the top of the banks for their accommodation; this building is in a state of forwardness, and the engineer hopes to have it finished in a few months.

The fort of Niagara stands immediately at the mouth of the river, on a point of land, one side of which is washed by the river and the other by the lake. Towards the water it is stockaded; and behind the stockade, on the river side, a large mound of earth rises up, at the top of which are embrasures for guns; on the land side it is secured by several batteries and redoubts, and by parallel lines of fascines. At the gates, and in various different parts, there are strong blockhouses; and facing the lake, within the stockade, stands a large fortified stone house. The fort and outworks occupy about five acres of ground; and a garrison of five hundred men, and at least from thirty to forty pieces of ordnance, would be necessary to defend it properly. The federal garrison, however, consists only of fifty men; and the whole of the cannon in the place amounts merely to four small field pieces, planted at the four corners of the fort. This fort was founded by the French, and constituted one link of that extensive chain of posts which they established along the lakes and the western waters. It was begun by the building of the stone house, after a solemn promise had been obtained from the Indians that the artificers should not be interrupted whilst they were going on with the work. The Indians readily made this promise, as, according to their notion, it would have been inhospitable and unfriendly in the extreme not to have permitted a few traders to build a house within their territory to protect them against the inclemency of the seasons; but they were greatly astonished when one so totally different from any that they had ever seen before, and from any that they had an idea of, was completed; they began to suspect that the strangers had plans in meditation unfavourable to their interests, and they wished

wished to dispossess them of their new mansion, but it was too late. In the hall of the house a well had been sunk to keep it supplied with water; the house was plentifully stored with provisions in case of a siege; and the doors being once closed, the tenants remained perfectly indifferent about every hostile attack the Indians could make against it. Fortifications to strengthen the house were gradually erected; and by the year 1759 the place was so strong as to resist, for some time, the forces under the command of Sir William Johnston. Great additions were made to the works after the fort fell into the hands of the British. The stone house is a very spacious building, and is now, as it was formerly, appropriated for the accommodation of the principal officers of the garrison. In the rear of the house is a large apartment, commanding a magnificent view of the lake and of the distant hills at Toronto, which formerly was the officers mess room, and a pattern of neatness. The officers of the federal garrison, however, consider it more convenient to mess in one of the kitchens, and this beautiful room has been suffered to go to ruin; indeed every part of the fort now exhibits a picture of slovenliness and neglect; and the appearance of the soldiers is equally devoid of neatness with that of their quarters. Though it was on Sunday morning that we visited the fort, on which day it is usual even for the men of the garrisons in the States to appear better dressed than on other days, yet the greater part of the men were as dirty as if they had been at work in the trenches for a week without intermission: their grisly beards demonstrated that a razor had not approached their chins for many days; their hair, to appearance, had not been combed for the same length of time; their linen was filthy, their guns rusty, and their clothes ragged. That the clothes and accoutrements of the men should not be better is not to be wondered at, considering how very badly the western army of the States is appointed in every respect; but it is strange that the officers should not attend more than they do to the cleanliness of their men. Their garrisons on the frontiers have uniformly suffered more from sickness than those of the British; and it is to be attributed, I should imagine, in a great measure to their filthiness; for the men are as stout and hardy, apparently, as any in the world. The western army
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of the States has been most shamefully appointed from the very outset. I heard General Wayne, then the commander in chief, declare at Philadelphia, that a short time after they had begun their march, more than one third of his men were attacked in the woods, at the same period, with a dysentery; that the surgeons had not even been furnished with a medicine chest; and that nothing could have saved the greater part of the troops from death, had not one of the young surgeons fortunately discovered, after many different things had been tried in vain, that the bark of the root of a particular sort of yellow poplar tree was a powerful antidote to the disorder. Many times also, he said, his army had been on the point of suffering from famine in their own country, owing to the carelessness of their commissaries. So badly indeed had the army been supplied, even latterly, with provisions, that when notice was sent to the federal general by the British officers, that they had received orders to deliver up their respective posts pursuant to the treaty, and that they were prepared to do so whenever he was ready to take possession of them, an answer was returned, that unless the British officers could supply his army with a considerable quantity of provisions on arriving at the lakes, he could not attempt to march for many weeks. The federal army was generously supplied with fifty barrels of pork, as much as the British could possibly spare; notwithstanding which, it did not make its appearance till a considerable time after the day appointed for the delivery of the posts. The federal army is composed almost wholly of Irishmen and Germans, that were brought over as redemptioners, and enlisted as soon as they landed, before they had an opportunity of learning what great wages were given to labourers in the States. The natives of the country are too fond of making money to rest satisfied with the pay of a common soldier.

The American prints, until the late treaty of amity was ratified, teemed with the most gross abuse of the British government, for retaining possession of Niagara Fort, and the other military posts on the lakes, after the independence of the States had been acknowledged, and peace concluded. It was never taken into consideration, that if the British government had thought proper to have withdrawn its troops from the
posts

posts at once, immediately after the definitive treaty was signed, the works would in all probability have been destroyed by the Indians, within whose territories they were situated, long before the people of the States could have taken possession of them; for no part of their army was within hundreds of miles of the posts, and the country through which they must have past in getting to them was a mere wilderness; but if the army had gained the posts, the states were in no condition, immediately after the war, to have kept in them such large bodies of the military as would have been absolutely necessary for their defence whilst at enmity with the Indians, and it is by no means improbable, but that the posts might have been soon abandoned. The retention of them, therefore, to the present day, was, in fact, a circumstance highly beneficial to the interests of the States, notwithstanding that such an outcry was raised against the British on that account, inasmuch as the Americans now find themselves possessed of extensive fortifications on the frontiers, in perfect repair, without having been at the expence of building them, or maintaining troops in them for the space of ten years, during which period no equivalent advantages could have been derived from their possession. It is not to be supposed, however, that the British government meant to confer a favour on her late colonies by retaining the posts; it was well known that the people of the new states would be eager, sooner or later, to get possession of forts situated within their boundary line, and occupied by strangers; and as there were particular parts of the definitive treaty which some of the states did not seem very ready to comply with, the posts were detained as a security for its due ratification on the part of the States. In the late treaty of amity and commerce, these differences were finally accommodated to the satisfaction of Great Britain, and the posts were consequently delivered up. On the surrender of them very handsome compliments were paid, in the public papers throughout the States, to the British officers, for the polite and friendly manner in which they gave them up. The gardens of the officers were all left in full bearing, and high preservation; and all the little conveniencies.

conveniences were spared, which could contribute to the comforts of the federal troops.

The generality of the people of the States were big with the idea, that the possession of these places would be attended with the most important and immediate advantage; and in particular they were fully persuaded, that they would thereby at once become masters of the trade to the lakes, and of three-fourths at least of the fur trade, which, they said, had hitherto been so unjustly monopolized by the British merchants, to their great prejudice. They have now got possession of them, and perceive the futility of all these notions.

The posts surrendered are four in number; namely, Fort Oswego, at the mouth of Oswego River, which falls into Lake Ontario, on the south side; Fort Niagara, at the mouth of Niagara River; Fort Detroit, on the western bank of Detroit River; and Fort Michillimachinack, at the straits of the same name, between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. From Oswego, the first of these, we derived no benefit whatever. The neighbouring country, for miles round, was a mere forest; it was inhabited by but few Indians, and these few carried their furs to Cadaragui or Kingston, where they got a better price for them than at Oswego, as there were many traders there, and of course some competition amongst them; at the same time, the river, at the mouth of which this fort stands, was always open to the people of the States, and along it a small trade was carried on by them between New York and Lake Ontario, which was in no wise ever interrupted by the troops at the fort. By the surrender of this place, therefore, they have gained nothing but what they enjoyed before, and the British government is saved the expence of keeping up a useless garrison of fifty men.

The quantity of furs collected at Niagara is considerable, and the neighbourhood being populous, it is a place of no small trade; but the town, in which this trade is carried on, being on the British side of the line, the few merchants that lived within the limits of the fort immediately crossed over to the other side, as soon as it was rumoured that the fort was to be given up. By the possession of a solitary fort, therefore, the people of the States have not gained the smallest portion of this part of the
lake

lake trade; nor is it probable that any of them will find it their interest to settle as merchants near the fort; for the British merchants, on the opposite side, as has already been shewn, can afford to sell their goods, brought up the St. Lawrence, on much lower terms than what goods brought from New York can be sold at; and as for the collecting of furs, it is not to be imagined that the Indians, who bear such a rooted hatred to the people of the States, who are attached to the British, and who are not a people ready to forsake their old friends, will carry their furs over to their enemies, and give up their connections with the men with whom they have been in the habit of dealing, and who can afford to pay them so much better than the traders on the opposite side of the water.

Detroit, of all the places which have been given up, is the most important; for it is a town, containing at least twelve hundred inhabitants. Since its surrender, however, a new town has been laid out on the opposite bank of the river, eighteen miles lower down, and hither many of the traders have removed. The majority of them stay at Detroit; but few or none have become citizens of the States in consequence, nor is it likely that they will, at least for some time. In the late treaty, a particular provision for them was made; they were to be allowed to remain there for one year, without being called on to declare their sentiments, and if at the end of that period they chose to remain British subjects, they were not to be molested* in any manner, but suffered to carry on their trade as formerly in the fullest extent; the portion of the fur trade, which we shall lose by the surrender of this place, will therefore be very inconsiderable.

* This part of the late treaty has by no means been strictly observed on the part of the States. The officers of the federal army, without asking permission, and contrary to the desire of several of the remaining British inhabitants, appropriated to their own use several of the houses and stores of those who had removed to the new town, and declared their determination of not becoming citizens of the States; and many of the

inhabitants had been called on to serve in the militia, and to perform duties, from which, as British subjects, they were exempted by the articles in the treaty in their favour. When we were at Detroit, the British inhabitants met together, and drew up a memorial on the subject, reciting their grievances, which was committed to our care, and accordingly presented to the British minister at Philadelphia.

The fourth post, Michillimachinack, is a small stockaded fort, situated on an island. The agents of the North-west Company of merchants at Montreal, and a few independent traders, resided within the limits of the fort, and bartered goods there for furs brought in by different tribes of Indians, who are the sole inhabitants of the neighbouring country. On evacuating this place, another post was immediately established, at no great distance, on the Island of St. Joseph, in the Straits of St. Mary, between lakes Superior and Huron, and a small garrison left there, which has since been augmented to upwards of fifty men. Several traders, citizens of the States, have established themselves at Michillimakinac; but as the British traders have fixed their new post so close to the old one, it is nearly certain that the Indians will continue to trade with their old friends in preference, for the reasons before mentioned. From this statement it appears evident, that the people of the States can only acquire by their new possession a small part of one branch of the fur trade, namely, of that which is carried on on one of the nearer lakes. The furs brought down from the distant regions in the north-west to the grand portage, and from thence in canoes to Montreal along the Utawa River, are what constitute by far the principal part, both as to quantity and value, of those exported from Montreal; to talk, therefore, of their acquiring possession of three-fourths of the fur trade by the surrender of the posts on the lakes is absurd in the extreme; neither is it likely that they will acquire any considerable share of the lake trade in general, which, as I have already pointed out, can be carried on by the British merchants from Montreal and Quebec, by means of the St. Lawrence, with such superior advantage.

It is worthy of remark, that as military posts, all those lately established by the British are far superior, in point of situation, to those delivered up. The ground on which the new block house is building, on the British side of Niagara River, is nine feet higher than the top of the stone house in the American fort, and it commands every part of the fort. The chief strength of the old fort is on the land side; towards the water the works are very weak, and the whole might be battered down by a single
twelve

twelve pounder judiciously planted on the British side of the river. At present it is not proposed to erect any other works on the British side of the river than the block house; but should a fort be constructed hereafter, it will be placed on Mississaguic Point, a still more advantageous situation than that on which the block house stands, as it completely commands the entrance into the river.

The new post on Detroit River commands the channel much more effectually than the old fort in the town of Detroit; vessels cannot go up or down the river without passing within a very few yards of it. It is remarkable, indeed, that the French, when they first penetrated into this part of the country, fixed upon the spot chosen for this new fort, in preference to that where Detroit stands, and they had absolutely begun their fort and town, when the whole party was unhappily cut off by the Indians.

The island of St. Joseph, in the third place, is a more eligible situation for a British military post than Michillimakinac, inasmuch as it commands the entrance of Lake Superior, whereas Michillimakinac only commands the entrance into Lake Michigan, which is wholly within the territory of the United States.

It is sincerely to be hoped, however, that Great Britain and the United States may continue friends, and that we never may have occasion to view those posts on the frontiers in any other light than as convenient places for carrying on commerce.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Description of the River and Falls of Niagara and the Country bordering upon the Navigable Part of the River below the Falls.

Fort Chippeway, September.

AT the distance of eighteen miles from the town of Niagara or Newark, are those remarkable falls in Niagara River, which may justly be ranked amongst the greatest natural curiosities in the known world. The road leading from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie runs within a few hundred yards of them. This road, which is within the British dominions, is carried along the top of the lofty steep banks of the river; for a considerable way it runs close to their very edge, and in passing along it the eye of the traveller is entertained with a variety of the most grand and beautiful prospects. The river, instead of growing narrow as you proceed upwards, widens considerably: at the end of nine or ten miles it expands to the breadth of a mile, and here it assumes much the appearance of a lake; it is enclosed, seemingly on all sides, by high hills, and the current, owing to the great depth of the water, is so gentle as to be scarcely perceptible from the top of the banks. It continues thus broad for a mile or two, when on a sudden the waters are contracted between the high hills on each side. From hence up to the falls the current is exceedingly irregular and rapid. At the upper end of this broad part of the river, and nearly at the foot of the banks, is situated a small village, that has been called Queenstown, but which, in the adjacent country, is best known by the name of "The Landing." The lake merchant vessels can proceed up to this village with perfect safety, and they commonly do so, to deposit, in the stores there, such goods as are intended to be sent higher up the country, and to receive in return the furs, &c. that have been collected at the various posts on lakes Huron and Erie, and sent thither to be conveyed down to Kingston, across Lake Ontario. The portage from this place to the nearest navigable part of Niagara River, above the falls, is nine miles in length.

About

About half way up the banks, at the distance of a few hundred yards from Queenstown, there is a very extensive range of wooden barracks, which, when viewed a little way off, appears to great advantage; these barracks are now quite unoccupied, and it is not probable that they will ever be used until the climate improves: the first troops that were lodged in them sickened in a very few days after their arrival; many of the men died, and had not those that remained alive been removed, pursuant to the advice of the physicians, to other quarters, the whole regiment might possibly have perished.

From the town of Niagara to Queenstown, the country in the neighbourhood of the river is very level; but here it puts on a different aspect; a confused range of hills, covered with oaks of an immense size, suddenly rises up before you, and the road that winds up the side of them is so steep and rugged that it is absolutely necessary for the traveller to leave his carriage, if he should be in one, and proceed to the top on foot. Beyond these hills you again come to an unbroken level country; but the soil here differs materially from that on the opposite side; it consists of a rich dark earth intermixed with clay, and abounding with stones; whereas, on the side next Lake Ontario, the soil is of a yellowish cast, in some places inclining to gravel and in others to sand.

From the brow of one of the hills in this ridge, which overhangs the little village of Queenstown, the eye of the traveller is gratified with one of the finest prospects that can be imagined in nature: you stand amidst a clump of large oaks, a little to the left of the road, and looking downwards, perceive, through the branches of the trees with which the hill is clothed from the summit to the base, the tops of the houses of Queenstown, and in front of the village, the ships moored in the river; the ships are at least two hundred feet below you, and their masts appear like slender reeds peeping up amidst the thick foliage of the trees. Carrying your eye forward, you may trace the river in all its windings, and finally see it disembogue into Lake Ontario, between the town and the fort: the lake itself terminates your view in this direction, except merely at one part of the horizon, where you just get a glimpse of the blue hills of Toronto. The shore of the river, on the right hand,

remains in its natural state, covered with one continued forest; but on the opposite side the country is interspersed with cultivated fields and neat farm houses down to the water's edge. The country beyond the hills is much less cleared than that which lies towards the town of Niagara, on the navigable part of the river.

From the sudden change of the face of the country in the neighbourhood of Queenstown, and the equally sudden change in the river with respect to its breadth, depth, and current, conjectures have been formed, that the great falls of the river must originally have been situated at the spot where the waters are so abruptly contracted between the hills; and indeed it is highly probable that this was the case, for it is a fact well ascertained, that the falls have receded very considerably since they were first visited by Europeans, and that they are still receding every year; but of this I shall have occasion to speak more particularly presently.

It was at an early hour of the day that we left the town of Niagara or Newark, accompanied by the attorney general and an officer of the British engineers, in order to visit these stupendous falls. Every step that we advanced toward them, our expectations rose to a higher pitch; our eyes were continually on the look out for the column of white mist which hovers over them; and an hundred times, I believe, did we stop our carriage in hopes of hearing their thundering sound; neither, however, was the mist to be seen, nor the sound to be heard, when we came to the foot of the hills; nor after having crossed over them, were our eyes or ears more gratified. This occasioned no inconsiderable disappointment, and we could not but express our doubts to each other, that the wondrous accounts we had so frequently heard of the falls were without foundation, and calculated merely to impose on the minds of credulous people that inhabited a distant part of the world. These doubts were nearly confirmed, when we found that, after having approached within half a mile of the place, the mist was but just discernible, and that the sound even then was not to be heard; yet it is nevertheless strictly true, that the tremendous noise of the falls may be distinctly heard, at times, at the distance of forty miles; and the
cloud

cloud formed from the spray may be even seen still farther off*; but it is only when the air is very clear, and there is a fine blue sky, which however are very common occurrences in this country, that the cloud can be seen at such a great distance. The hearing of the sound of the falls afar off also depends upon the state of the atmosphere; it is observed, that the sound can be heard at the greatest distance, just before a heavy fall of rain, and when the wind is in a favourable point to convey the sound toward the listener: the day on which we first approached the falls was thick and cloudy.

On that part of the road leading to Lake Erie which draws nearest to the falls, there is a small village, consisting of about half a dozen straggling houses: here we alighted, and having disposed of our horses, and made a slight repast, in order to prepare us for the fatigue we had to go through, we crossed over some fields towards a deep hollow place surrounded with large trees, from the bottom of which issued thick volumes of whitish mist, that had much the appearance of smoke rising from large heaps of burning weeds. Having come to the edge of this hollow place, we descended a steep bank of about fifty yards, and then walking for some distance over a wet marshy piece of ground, covered with thick bushes, at last came to the Table Rock, so called from the remarkable flatness of its surface, and its bearing some similitude to a table. This rock is situated a little to the front of the great fall, above the top of which it is elevated about forty feet. The view from it is truly sublime; but before I attempt to give any idea of the nature of this view, it will be necessary to take a more general survey of the river and falls.

* We ourselves, some time afterwards, beheld the cloud with the naked eye, at no less a distance than fifty-four miles, when sailing on Lake Erie, on board one of the king's ships. The day on which we saw it was uncommonly clear and calm, and we were seated on the poop of the vessel, admiring the bold scenery of the southern shore of the lake, when the commander, who had been aloft to make some observations, came to us, and pointing to a small white cloud in the horizon, told us, that that was the cloud overhanging

Niagara. At first it appeared to us that this must have been a mere conjecture, but on minute observation it was evident that the commander's information was just. All the other light clouds, in a few minutes, flitted away to another part of the horizon, whereas this one remained steadily fixed in the same spot; and on looking at it through a glass, it was plain to see that the shape of the cloud varied every instant, owing to the continued rising of the mist from the cataract beneath.

Niagara

Niagara River issues from the eastern extremity of Lake Erie, and after a course of thirty-six miles discharges itself into Lake Ontario, as has already been mentioned. For the first few miles from Lake Erie, the breadth of the river is about three hundred yards, and it is deep enough for vessels drawing nine or ten feet water; but the current is so extremely rapid and irregular, and the channel so intricate, on account of the numberless large rocks in different places, that no other vessels than bateaux ever attempt to pass along it. As you proceed downward the river widens, no rocks are to be seen either along the shores or in the channel, and the waters glide smoothly along, though the current continues very strong. The river runs thus evenly, and is navigable with safety for bateaux as far as Fort Chippeway, which is about three miles above the falls; but here the bed of it again becomes rocky, and the waters are violently agitated by passing down successive rapids, so much so indeed, that were a boat by any chance to be carried but a little way beyond Chippeway, where people usually stop, nothing could save it from being dashed to pieces long before it came to the falls. With such astonishing impetuosity do the waves break on the rocks in these rapids, that the mere sight of them from the top of the banks is sufficient to make you shudder. I must in this place, however, observe, that it is only on each side of the river that the waters are so much troubled; in the middle of it, though the current is also there uncommonly swift, yet the breakers are not so dangerous but boats may pass down, if dexterously managed, to an island which divides the river at the very falls. To go down to this island it is necessary to set off at some distance above Chippeway, where the current is even, and to keep exactly in the middle of the river the whole way thither; if the boats were suffered to get out of their course ever so little, either to the right or left, it would be impossible to stem the current, and bring them again into it; they would be irresistibly carried towards the falls, and destruction must inevitably follow. In returning from the island there is still more difficulty and danger than in going to it. Notwithstanding these circumstances, numbers of persons have the foolhardiness to proceed to this island, merely for the sake of beholding the falls from the opposite side
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of it, or for the sake of having in their power to say that they had been upon it.

The river forces its way amidst the rocks with redoubled impetuosity, as it approaches towards the falls; at last coming to the brink of the tremendous precipice, it tumbles headlong to the bottom, without meeting with any interruption from rocks in its descent. Just at the precipice the river takes a considerable bend to the right, and the line of the falls, instead of extending from bank to bank in the shortest direction, runs obliquely across. The width of the falls is considerably greater than the width of the river, admeasured some way below the precipice; but the annexed plan will enable you to form a better idea of their position than any written description whatsoever. For its great accuracy I cannot vouch, as it was done merely from the eye; such as it is, however, I have sent it to you, conceiving it better that you should have a plan somewhat imperfect than no plan at all. On looking it over you will see that the river does not rush down the precipice in one unbroken sheet, but that it is divided by islands into three distinct collateral falls. The most stupendous of these is that on the north western or British side of the river, commonly called the Great, or Horse-shoe Fall, from its bearing some resemblance to the shape of a horse shoe. The height of this is only one hundred and forty-two feet, whereas the others are each one hundred and sixty feet high; but to its inferior height it is indebted principally for its grandeur; the precipice, and of course the bed of the river above it, being so much lower at the one side than at the other, by far the greater part of the water of the river finds its way to the low side, and rushes down with greater velocity at that side than it does at the other, as the rapids above the precipice are strongest there. It is from the center of the Horse-shoe Fall that arises that prodigious cloud of mist which may be seen so far off. The extent of the Horse-shoe Fall can only be ascertained by the eye; the general opinion of those who have most frequently viewed it is, that it is not less than six hundred yards in circumference. The island which separates it from the next fall is supposed to be about three hundred and fifty yards wide; the second fall is about five yards

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wide;

wide; the next island about thirty yards; and the third, commonly called the Fort Schloper Fall, from being situated towards the side of the river on which that fort stands, is judged to admeasure at least as much as the large island. The whole extent of the precipice, therefore, including the islands, is, according to this computation, thirteen hundred and thirty-five yards. This is certainly not an exaggerated statement. Some have supposed, that the line of the falls altogether exceeds an English mile. The quantity of water carried down the falls is prodigious. It will be found to amount to 670,255 tons per minute, though calculated simply from the following data, which ought to be correct, as coming from an experienced commander of one of the King's ships on Lake Erie, well acquainted in every respect with that body of water, viz. that where Lake Erie, towards its eastern extremity, is two miles and a half wide, the water is six feet deep, and the current runs at the rate of two knots in an hour; but Niagara River, between this part of Lake Erie and the falls, receives the waters of several large creeks, the quantity carried down the falls must therefore be greater than the foregoing computation makes it to be; if we say that six hundred and seventy-two thousand tons of water are precipitated down the falls every minute, the quantity will not probably be much overrated.

To return now to the Table Rock, situated on the British side of the river, and on the verge of the Horse-shoe Fall. Here the spectator has an unobstructed view of the tremendous rapids above the falls, and of the circumjacent shores, covered with thick woods; of the Horse-shoe Fall, some yards below him; of the Fort Schloper Fall, at a distance to the left; and of the frightful gulph beneath, into which, if he has but courage to approach to the exposed edge of the rock, he may look down perpendicularly. The astonishment excited in the mind of the spectator by the vastness of the different objects which he contemplates from hence is great indeed, and few persons, on coming here for the first time, can for some minutes collect themselves sufficiently to be able to form any tolerable conception of the stupendous scene before them. It is impossible for the eye to embrace the whole of it at once; it must gradually make itself acquainted, in the first place, with the component

ponent parts of the scene, each one of which is in itself an object of wonder; and such a length of time does this operation require, that many of those who have had an opportunity of contemplating the scene at their leisure, for years together, have thought that every time they have beheld it, each part has appeared more wonderful and more sublime, and that it has only been at the time of their last visit that they have been able to discover all the grandeur of the cataract.

Having spent a considerable time on the Table Rock, we returned to the fields the same way by which we had descended, pursuant to the direction of the officer of engineers accompanying us, who was intimately acquainted with every part of the cataract, and of the adjoining ground, and was, perhaps, the best guide that could be procured in the whole country. It would be possible to pursue your way along the edge of the cliff, from the Table Rock, a considerable way downwards; but the bushes are so exceedingly thick, and the ground so rugged, that the task would be arduous in the extreme. The next spot from which we surveyed the falls, was from the part of the cliff nearly opposite to that end of the Fort Schloper Fall, which lies next to the island. You stand here, on the edge of the cliff, behind some bushes, the tops of which have been cut down in order to open the view. From hence you have a better prospect of the whole cataract, and are enabled to form a more correct idea of the position of the precipice, than from any one other place. The prospect from hence is more beautiful, but I think less grand than from any other spot. The officer who so politely directed our movements on this occasion was so struck with the view from this spot, that he once had a wooden house constructed, and drawn down here by oxen, in which he lived until he had finished several different drawings of the cataract: one of these we were gratified with the sight of, which exhibited a view of the cataract in the depth of winter, when in a most curious and wonderful state. The ice at this season of the year accumulates at the bottom of the cataract in immense mounds, and huge icicles, like the pillars of a massy building, hang pendent in many places from the top of the precipice, reaching nearly to the bottom.

Having left this place, we returned once more through the woods bordering upon the precipice to the open fields, and then directed our course by a circuitous path, about one mile in length, to a part of the cliff where it is possible to descend to the bottom of the cataract. The river, for many miles below the precipice, is bounded on each side by steep, and in most parts perpendicular, cliffs, formed of earth and rocks, and it is impossible to descend to the bottom of them, except at two places, where large masses of earth and rocks have crumbled down, and ladders have been placed from one break to another, for the accommodation of passengers. The first of these places which you come to in walking along the river, from the Horse-shoe Fall downwards, is called the "Indian Ladder," the ladders having been constructed there by the Indians. These ladders, as they are called, of which there are several, one below the other, consist simply of long pine trees, with notches cut in their sides, for the passenger to rest his feet on. The trees, even when first placed there, would vibrate as you stepped upon them, owing to their being so long and slender; age has rendered them still less firm, and they now certainly cannot be deemed safe, though many persons are still in the habit of descending by their means. We did not attempt to get to the bottom of the cliff by this route, but proceeded to the other place, which is lower down the river, called Mrs. Simcoe's Ladder, the ladders having been originally placed there for the accommodation of the lady of the late governor. This route is much more frequented than the other; the ladders, properly so called, are strong, and firmly placed, and none of them, owing to the frequent breaks in the cliff, are required to be of such a great length but what even a lady might pass up or down them without fear of danger. To descend over the rugged rocks, however, the whole way down to the bottom of the cliff, is certainly no trifling undertaking, and few ladies, I believe, could be found of sufficient strength of body to encounter the fatigue of such an expedition.

On arriving at the bottom of the cliff, you find yourself in the midst of huge piles of misshapen rocks, with great masses of earth and rocks projecting

jecting from the side of the cliff, and overgrown with pines and cedars hanging over your head, apparently ready to crumble down and crush you to atoms. Many of the large trees grow with their heads downwards, being suspended by their roots, which had taken such a firm hold in the ground at the top of the cliff, that when part of it gave way the trees did not fall altogether. The river before you here is somewhat more than a quarter of a mile wide; and on the opposite side of it, a little to the right, the Fort Schloper Fall is seen to great advantage; what you see of the Horse-shoe Fall also appears in a very favourable point of view; the projecting cliff conceals nearly one half of it. The Fort Schloper Fall is skirted at bottom by milk white foam, which ascends in thick volumes from the rocks; but it is not seen to rise above the fall like a cloud of smoke, as is the case at the Horse-shoe Fall; nevertheless the spray is so considerable, that it descends on the opposite side of the river, at the foot of Simcoe's Ladder, like rain.

Having reached the margin of the river, we proceeded towards the Great Fall, along the strand, which for a considerable part of the way thither consists of horizontal beds of limestone rock, covered with gravel, except, indeed, where great piles of stones have fallen from the sides of the cliff. These horizontal beds of rock, in some places, extend very far into the river, forming points which break the force of the current, and occasion strong eddies along particular parts of the shore. Here great numbers of the bodies of fishes, squirrels, foxes, and various other animals, that, unable to stem the current of the river above the falls, have been carried down them, and consequently killed, are washed up. The shore is likewise found strewed with trees, and large pieces of timber, that have been swept away from the saw mills above the falls, and carried down the precipice. The timber is generally terribly shattered, and the carcases of all the large animals, particularly of the large fishes, are found very much bruised. A dreadful stench arises from the quantity of putrid matter lying on the shore, and numberless birds of prey, attracted by it, are always seen hovering about the place. Amongst the numerous stories current in the country, relating to this wonderful cataract, there is one that records the hap-
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less fate of a poor Indian, which I select, as the truth of it is unquestionable. The unfortunate hero of this tale, intoxicated, it seems, with spirits, had laid himself down to sleep in the bottom of his canoe, which was fastened to the beach at the distance of some miles above the falls. His squaw sat on the shore to watch him. Whilst they were in this situation, a sailor from one of the ships of war on the neighbouring lakes happened to pass by; he was struck with the charms of the squaw, and instantly determined upon enjoying them. The faithful creature, however, unwilling to gratify his desires, hastened to the canoe to arouse her husband; but before she could effect her purpose, the sailor cut the cord by which the canoe was fastened, and set it adrift. It quickly floated away with the stream from the fatal spot, and ere many minutes elapsed, was carried down into the midst of the rapids. Here it was distinctly seen by several persons that were standing on the adjacent shore, whose attention had been caught by the singularity of the appearance of a canoe in such a part of the river. The violent motion of the waves soon awoke the Indian; he started up, looked wildly around, and perceiving his danger, instantly seized his paddle, and made the most surprising exertions to save himself; but finding in a little time that all his efforts would be of no avail in stemming the impetuosity of the current, he with great composure put aside his paddle, wrapt himself up in his blanket, and again laid himself down in the bottom of the canoe. In a few seconds he was hurried down the precipice; but neither he nor his canoe were ever seen more. It is supposed that not more than one third of the different things that happen to be carried down the falls re-appear at bottom.

From the foot of Simcoe's Ladder you may walk along the strand for some distance without inconvenience; but as you approach the Horse-shoe Fall, the way becomes more and more rugged. In some places, where the cliff has crumbled down, huge mounds of earth, rocks, and trees, reaching to the water's edge, oppose your course; it seems impossible to pass them; and, indeed, without a guide, a stranger would never find his way to the opposite side; for to get there it is necessary to mount nearly to their top, and then to crawl on your
hands

hands and knees through long dark holes, where passages are left open between the torn up rocks and trees. After passing these mounds, you have to climb from rock to rock close under the cliff, for there is but little space here between the cliff and the river, and these rocks are so slippery, owing to the continual moisture from the spray, which descends very heavily, that without the utmost precaution it is scarcely possible to escape a fall. At the distance of a quarter of a mile from the Great Fall we were as wet, owing to the spray, as if each of us had been thrown into the river.

There is nothing whatsoever to prevent you from passing to the very foot of the Great Fall; and you might even proceed behind the prodigious sheet of water that comes pouring down from the top of the precipice, for the water falls from the edge of a projecting rock; and, moreover, caverns of a very considerable size have been hollowed out of the rocks at the bottom of the precipice, owing to the violent ebullition of the water, which extend some way underneath the bed of the upper part of the river. I advanced within about six yards of the edge of the sheet of water, just far enough to peep into the caverns behind it; but here my breath was nearly taken away by the violent whirlwind that always rages at the bottom of the cataract, occasioned by the concussion of such a vast body of water against the rocks. I confess I had no inclination at the time to go farther; nor, indeed, did any of us afterwards attempt to explore the dreary confines of these caverns, where death seemed to await him that should be daring enough to enter their threatening jaws. No words can convey an adequate idea of the awful grandeur of the scene at this place. Your senses are appalled by the sight of the immense body of water that comes pouring down so closely to you from the top of the stupendous precipice, and by the thundering sound of the billows dashing against the rocky sides of the caverns below; you tremble with reverential fear, when you consider that a blast of the whirlwind might sweep you from off the slippery rocks on which you stand, and precipitate you into the dreadful gulph beneath, from whence all the power of man could not extricate you; you feel what an insignificant being you are in the creation, and your mind is forcibly impressed with

an awful idea of the power of that mighty Being who commanded the waters to flow.

Since the Falls of Niagara were first discovered they have receded very considerably, owing to the disrapture of the rocks which form the precipice. The rocks at bottom are first loosened by the constant action of the water upon them; they are afterwards carried away, and those at top being thus undermined, are soon broken by the weight of the water rushing over them; even within the memory of many of the present inhabitants of the country, the falls have receded several yards. The commodore of the King's vessels on Lake Erie, who had been employed on that lake for upwards of thirty years, informed me, that when he first came into the country it was a common practice for young men to go to the island in the middle of the falls; that after dining there, they used frequently to dare each other to walk into the river towards certain large rocks in the midst of the rapids, not far from the edge of the falls; and sometimes to proceed through the water, even beyond these rocks. No such rocks are to be seen at present; and were a man to advance two yards into the river from the island, he would be inevitably swept away by the torrent. It has been conjectured, as I before mentioned, that the Falls of Niagara were originally situated at Queenstown; and indeed the more pains you take to examine the course of the river from the present falls downward, the more reason is there to imagine that such a conjecture is well founded. From the precipice nearly down to Queenstown, the bed of the river is strewn with large rocks, and the banks are broken and rugged; circumstances which plainly denote that some great disrapture has taken place along this part of the river; and we need be at no loss to account for it, as there are evident marks of the action of water upon the sides of the banks, and considerably above their present bases. Now the river has never been known to rise near these marks during the greatest floods; it is plain, therefore, that its bed must have been once much more elevated than it is at present. Below Queenstown, however, there are no traces on the banks to lead us to imagine that the level of the water was ever much higher there than it is now. The sudden increase of the
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depth of the river just below the hills at Queenstown, and its sudden expansion there at the same time, seem to indicate that the waters must for a great length of time have fallen from the top of the hills, and thus have formed that extensive deep basin below the village. In the river, a mile or two above Queenstown, there is a tremendous whirlpool, owing to a deep hole in the bed; this hole was probably also formed by the waters falling for a great length of time on the same spot, in consequence of the rocks which composed the then precipice having remained firmer than those at any other place did. Tradition tells us, that the great fall, instead of having been in the form of a horse shoe, once projected in the middle. For a century past, however, it has remained nearly in the present form; and as the ebullition of the water at the bottom of the cataract is so much greater at the center of this fall than in any other part, and as the water consequently acts with more force there in undermining the precipice than at any other part, it is not unlikely that it may remain nearly in the same form for ages to come.

At the bottom of the Horse-shoe Fall is found a kind of white concrete substance, by the people of the country, called spray. Some persons have supposed that it is formed from the earthy particles of the water, which descending, owing to their great specific gravity, quicker than the other particles, adhere to the rocks, and are there formed into a mass. This concrete substance has precisely the appearance of petrified froth; and it is remarkable, that it is found adhering to those rocks against which the greatest quantities of the froth, that floats upon the water, is washed by the eddies.

We did not think of ascending the cliff till the evening was far advanced, and had it been possible to have found our way up in the dark, I verily believe we should have remained at the bottom of it until midnight. Just as we left the foot of the great fall the sun broke through the clouds, and one of the most beautiful and perfect rainbows that ever I beheld was exhibited in the spray that arose from the fall. It is only at evening and morning that the rainbow is seen in perfection; for the banks of the river, and the steep precipice, shade the sun from the spray at the bottom of the fall in the middle of the day. At a little

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distance from the foot of the ladder we halted, and one of the party was dispatched to fetch a bottle of brandy and a pair of goblets, which had been deposited under some stones on the margin of the river, in our way to the great fall, whither it would have been highly inconvenient to have carried them. Wet from head to foot, and greatly fatigued, there certainly was not one amongst us that appeared, at the moment, desirous of getting the brandy, in order to pour out a libation to the tutelary deities of the cataract; nor indeed was there much reason to apprehend that our piety would have shone forth more conspicuously afterwards; however it was not put to the test; for the messenger returned in a few minutes with the woeful intelligence that the brandy and goblets had been stolen. We were at no great loss in guessing who the thieves were. Perched on the rocks, at a little distance from us, sat a pair of the river nymphs, not "nymphs with saged crowns and ever "harmless looks;" not "temperate nymphs," but a pair of squat sturdy old wenches, that with close bonnets and tucked up petticoats had crawled down the cliff, and were busied with long rods in angling for fish. Their noisy clack plainly indicated that they had been well pleased with the brandy, and that we ought not to entertain any hopes of recovering the spoil; we e'en flaked our thirst, therefore, with a draught from the wholesome flood, and having done so, boldly pushed forward, and before it was quite dark regained the habitations from whence we had started. On returning we found a well spread table laid out for us in the porch of the house, and having gratified the keen appetite which the fatigue we had encountered had excited, our friendly guides, having previously given us instructions for examining the falls more particularly, set off by moonlight for Niagara, and we repaired to Fort Chippeway, three miles above the falls, which place we made our head-quarters while we remained in the neighbourhood, because there was a tolerable tavern, and no house in the village near the falls, where sickness was not prevalent.

The Falls of Niagara are much less difficult of access now than they were some years ago. Charlevoix, who visited them in the year 1720, tells us, that they were only to be viewed from one spot; and that from
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thence the spectator had only a side prospect of them. Had he been able to have descended to the bottom, he would have had ocular demonstration of the existence of caverns underneath the precipice, which he supposed to be the cause from the hollow sound of the falling of the waters; from the number of carcases washed up there on different parts of the strand, and would also have been convinced of the truth of a circumstance which he totally disbelieved, namely, that fish were oftentimes unable to stem the rapid current above the falls, and were consequently carried down the precipice.

The most favourable season for visiting the falls is about the middle of September, the time when we saw them; for then the woods are seen in all their glory, beautifully variegated with the rich tints of autumn; and the spectator is not then annoyed with vermin. In the summer season you meet with rattlesnakes at every step, and mosquitoes swarm so thickly in the air, that to use a common phrase of the country, "you might cut them with a knife." The cold nights in the beginning of September effectually banish these noxious animals.

L E T T E R XXXII.

Description of Fort Chippeway.—Plan in meditation to cut a Canal to avoid the Portage at the Falls of Niagara.—Departure from Chippeway.—Intense Heat of the Weather.—Description of the Country bordering on Niagara River above the Falls.—Observations on the Climate of Upper Canada.—Rattlesnakes common in Upper Canada.—Fort Erie.—Miserable Accommodation there.—Squirrel hunting.—Seneka Indians.—Their Expertness at the Use of the Blow-gun.—Description of the Blow-gun.—Excursion to the Village of the Senekas.—Whole Nation absent.—Passage of a dangerous Sand Bar at the Mouth of Buffalo Creek.—Sail from Fort Erie.—Driven back by a Storm.—Anchor under Point Abineau.—Description of the Point.—Curious Sand Hills there.—Bear hunting.—How carried on.—Dogs, what Sort of, used.—Wind changes.—The Vessel suffers from the Storm whilst at Anchor.—Departure from Point Abineau.—General Description of Lake Erie.—Anecdote.—Reach the Islands at the Western End of the Lake.—Anchor there.—Description of the Islands.—Serpents of various Kinds found there.—Rattlesnakes.—Medicinal Uses made of them.—Fabulous Accounts of Serpents.—Departure from the Islands.—Arrival at Malden.—Detroit River.

Malden, October.

FORT CHIPPEWAY, from whence my last letter was dated, is a small stockaded fort, situated on the borders of a creek of the same name, about two hundred yards distant from Niagara River. Had it been built immediately on the latter stream, its situation would have been much more convenient; for the water of the creek is so bad that it cannot be drank, and the garrison is obliged to draw water daily from the river. The fort, which occupies about one rood of ground only, consists of a small block house, inclosed by a stockade of cedar posts about twelve feet high, which is merely sufficient to defend the garrison against musquet shot. Adjoining to the fort there are about seven or eight farm houses, and some large stone houses, where goods are deposited

posited preparatory to their being conveyed up the river in bateaux, or across the portage in carts, to Queenstown. It is said that it would be practicable to cut a canal from hence to Queenstown, by means of which the troublesome and expensive process of unlading the bateaux and transporting the goods in carts along the portage would be avoided. Such a canal will in all probability be undertaken one day or other; but whenever that shall be the case, there is reason to think that it will be cut on the New York side of the river for two reasons; first, because the ground on that side is much more favourable for such an undertaking; and, secondly, because the state of New York is much more populous, and far better enabled to advance the large sums of money that would be requisite for cutting a canal through such rugged ground as borders upon the river, than the province of Upper Canada either is at present, or appears likely to be.

About fifteen men, under the command of a lieutenant, are usually quartered at Fort Chippeway, who are mostly employed in conducting in bateaux from thence to Fort Erie the stores for the troops in the upper country, and the presents for the Indians.

After we had gratified our curiosity in regard to the wonderful objects in the neighbourhood, at least as far as our time would permit, we were obligingly furnished with a bateau by the officer at Fort Chippeway, to whom we carried letters, to convey us to Fort Erie. My companions embarked in it with our baggage, when the morning appointed for our departure arrived; but desirous of taking one more look at the falls, I staid behind, determining to follow them on foot in the course of the day; I accordingly walked down to the falls from Fort Chippeway after breakfast, spent an hour or two there, returned to the fort, and having stopped a short time to rest myself after the fatigues of climbing the steep about the falls, I set out for Fort Erie, fifteen miles distant from Chippeway, accompanied by my faithful servant Edward, who has indeed been a treasure to me since I have been in America. The day was by no means favourable for a pedestrian expedition; it was intensely hot, and we had not proceeded far before we found the necessity of taking off our jackets, waistcoats, and cravats,
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and carrying them in a bundle on our backs. Several parties of Indians that I met going down the river in canoes were stark naked.

The banks of Niagara River, between Chippeway and Fort Erie, are very low, and covered, for the most part, with shrubs, under whose shade, upon the gravelly beach of the river, the weary traveller finds an agreeable resting place. For the first few miles from Chippeway there are scarcely any houses to be seen; but about half way between that place and Fort Erie they are thickly scattered along the banks of the river. The houses in this neighbourhood were remarkably well built, and appeared to be kept in a state of great neatness; most of them were sheathed with boards, and painted white. The lands adjoining them are rich, and were well cultivated. The crops of Indian corn were still standing here, which had a most luxuriant aspect; in many of the fields there did not appear to be a stem less than eight feet in height. Between the rows they sow gourds, squashes, and melons, of which last every sort attains to a state of great perfection in the open air throughout the inhabited parts of the two provinces. Peaches in this part of the country likewise come to perfection in the open air, but in Lower Canada, the summers are too short to permit them to ripen sufficiently. The winters here are very severe whilst they last, but it is seldom that the snow lies longer than three months on the ground. The summers are intensely hot, Fahrenheit's thermometer often rising to 96°, and sometimes above 100°.

As I passed along to Fort Erie I killed a great many large snakes of different sorts that I found basking in the sun. Amongst them I did not find any rattlesnakes; these reptiles, however, are very commonly met with here; and at the distance of twenty or thirty miles from the river, up the country, it is said that they are so numerous as to render the surveying of land a matter of very great danger. It is a circumstance strongly in favour of Lower Canada, that the rattlesnake is not found there; it is seldom found, indeed, to the northward of the forty-fifth parallel of north latitude.

Fort Erie stands at the eastern extremity of Lake Erie; it is a small stockaded fort, somewhat similar to that at Chippeway, and adjoining

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it are extensive stores as at Chippeway, and about half a dozen miserable little dwellings. On arriving there I had no difficulty in discovering my companions; I found them lodged in a small log-house, which contained but the one room, and just fitting down to a supper, they had procured through the assistance of a gentleman in the Indian department, who accompanied them from Chippeway. This habitation was the property of an old woman, who in her younger days had followed the drum, and now gained her livelihood by accommodating, to the best of her power, such travellers as passed by Fort Erie. A sorry habitation it was; the crazy door was ready to drop off the hinges, and in all the three windows of it not one pane of glass was there; a young gentleman from Detroit having amused himself, whilst detained in the place by contrary winds, some little time before our arrival, with shooting arrows through them. It was not likely that these windows would be speedily repaired, for no glazier was to be met with nearer than Newark, thirty-six miles distant. Here, as we lay folded in our skins on the floor, the rain beat in upon us, and the wind whistled about our ears; but this was not the worst. In the morning we found it a difficult matter to get wherewith to satisfy our hunger; dinner was more difficult to be had than breakfast, supper than dinner; there seemed to be a greater scarcity of provisions also the second day than there was on the first. At last, fearing that we should be famished if we remained longer, under the care of old mother Palmer, we embarked at once on board the vessel of war in which we intended to cross the lake, where although sometimes tossed about by the raging contrary winds, yet we had comfortable births, and fared plenteously every day.

Ships lie opposite to Fort Erie, at the distance of about one hundred yards from the shore; they are there exposed to all the violence of the westerly winds, but the anchorage is excellent, and they ride in perfect safety. Three vessels of war, of about two hundred tons, and carrying from eight to twelve guns each, besides two or three merchant vessels, lay wind bound whilst we remained here. The little fort, with the surrounding houses built on the rocky shore, the vessels lying at anchor before it, the rich woods, the distant hills on the opposite side of
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the lake, and the vast lake itself, extending to the farthest part of the horizon, altogether formed an interesting and beautiful scene.

Whilst we were detained here by contrary winds, we regularly went on shore after breakfast to take a ramble in the woods; oftentimes also we amused ourselves with the diversion of hunting squirrels with dogs, amongst the shrubs and young trees on the borders of the lake, thousands of which animals we found in the neighbourhood of the fort. The squirrels, alarmed by the barking of the dogs, leap from tree to tree with wonderful swiftness; you follow them closely, shaking the trees, and striking against the branches with poles. Sometimes they will lead you a chace of a quarter of a mile and more; but sooner or later, terrified by your attentive pursuit, make a false leap, and come to the ground; the dogs, ever on the watch, then seize the opportunity to lay hold of them; frequently, however, the squirrels will elude their repeated snaps, and mount another tree before you can look round you. I have seldom known them to be hurt by their fall, notwithstanding that I have many times seen them tumble from branches of trees upwards of twenty feet from the ground.

In our rambles we used frequently to fall in with parties of the Seneka Indians, from the opposite side of the lake, that were amusing themselves with hunting and shooting these animals. They shot them principally with bows and blow-guns, at the use of which last the Senekas are wonderfully expert. The blow-gun is a narrow tube, commonly about six feet in length, made of a cane reed, or of some pithy wood, through which they drive short slender arrows by the force of the breath. The arrows are not much thicker than the lower string of a violin; they are headed generally with little triangular bits of tin, and round the opposite ends, for the length of two inches, a quantity of the down of thistles, or something very like it, is bound, so as to leave the arrows at this part of such a thickness that they may but barely pass into the tube. The arrows are put in at the end of the tube that is held next to the mouth, the down catches the breath, and with a smart puff they will fly to the distance of fifty yards. I have followed young Seneka Indians, whilst shooting with blow-guns, for hours together,

gether, during which time I have never known them once to miss their aim, at the distance of ten or fifteen yards, although they shot at the little red squirrels, which are not half the size of a rat; and with such wonderful force used they to blow forth the arrows, that they frequently drove them up to the very thistle-down through the heads of the largest black squirrels. The effect of these guns appears at first like magic. The tube is put to the mouth, and in the twinkling of an eye you see the squirrel that is aimed at fall lifeless to the ground; no report, not the smallest noise even, is to be heard, nor is it possible to see the arrow, so quickly does it fly, until it appears fastened in the body of the animal.

The Seneka is one of the six nations which formerly bore the general name of the Iroquois Indians. Their principal village is situated on Buffalo Creek, which falls into the eastern extremity of Lake Erie, on the New York shore. We took the ship's boat one morning, and went over to visit it, but all the Indians, men, women, and children, amounting in all to upwards of six hundred persons, had, at an early hour, gone down to Fort Niagara, to partake of a feast which was there prepared for them. We walked about in the neighbourhood of the village, dined on the grass on some cold provisions that we had taken with us, and in the evening, returned.

Opposite to the mouth of Buffalo Creek there is a very dangerous sand bar, which at times it is totally impossible to pass in any other vessels than bateaux; we found it no easy matter to get over it in the ship's long boat with four oars on going into the creek, and in returning the passage was really tremendous. The wind, which was westerly, and of course impelled the vast body of water in the lake towards the mouth of the creek, had increased considerably whilst we had been on shore, and the waves had begun to break with such fury over the bar, that it was not without a considerable share of terror that we contemplated the prospect of passing through them: the commodore of the King's ships on the lake, who was at the helm, was determined, however, to cross the bar that night, and accordingly, a strict silence having been enjoined, that the crew might hear his orders, we boldly entered into the midst of the breakers: the boat now rolled about in a most

alarming manner ; sometimes it mounted into the air on the top of the mighty billows, at other times it came thumping down with prodigious force on the bar ; at last it stuck quite fast in the sand ; neither oars nor rudder were any longer of use, and for a moment we gave ourselves over for lost ; the waves that rolled towards us broke on all sides with a noise like that of thunder, and we were expecting that the boat would be overwhelmed by some one or other of them every instant, when luckily a large wave, that rolled on a little farther than the rest without breaking into foam, set us again afloat, and the oarsmen making at that moment the most vigorous exertions, we once more got into deep water ; it was not, however, until after many minutes that we were safely out of the tremendous surf. A boat, with a pair of oars only, that attempted to follow us, was overwhelmed in an instant by a wave which broke over her : it was in vain to think of attempting to give any assistance to her crew, and we were obliged for a time to endure the painful thought that they might be struggling with death within a few yards of us ; but before we lost sight of the shore we had the satisfaction of beholding them all standing in safety on the beach, which they had reached by swimming.

After having been detained about seven days at Fort Erie, the wind veered about in our favour, the signal gun was fired, the passengers repaired on board, and at half an hour before sun-set we launched forth into the lake. It was much such another evening as that on which we left Kingston ; the vast lake, bounded only by the horizon, glowed with the rich warm tints that were reflected in its unruffled surface from the western sky ; and the top of the tall forest, adorning the shores, appeared fringed with gold, as the sun sunk down behind it. There was but little wind during the first part of the night ; but afterwards a fresh breeze sprang up, and by ten o'clock the next morning we found ourselves forty miles distant from the fort : the prosperous gale, however, did not long continue, the sky became overcast, the waves began to roll with fury, and the captain judging it advisable to seek a place of shelter against the impending storm, the ship was put about, and with all possible expedition measured back the way which we
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had just made with so much pleasure. We did not return, however, the whole way to Fort Erie, but run into a small bay on the same side of the lake, about ten miles distant, sheltered by Point Abineau: by three o'clock in the afternoon the vessel was safely moored, and this business having been accomplished, we proceeded in the long boat to the shore, which was about two miles off.

Point Abineau is a long narrow neck of land, which projects into the lake nearly in a due south direction; on each side of it there is an extensive bay, which affords good anchorage; the extremity of the point is covered with rocks, lying horizontally in beds, and extending a considerable way into the lake, nearly even with the surface of the water, so that it is only in a few places that boats can approach the shore. The rocks are of a slate colour, but spotted and streaked in various directions with a dirty yellow; in many places they are perforated with small holes, as if they had been exposed to the action of fire. The shores of the bays, on the contrary, are covered with sand; on digging to the depth of a few feet, however, I should imagine that in most parts of the shore the same sort of rocks would be found as those seen on the extremity of the point; for where the sandy part of the shore commences, it is evident that the rocks have been covered by the sand which has been washed up by the waves of the lake: the northern shore of the lake abounds very generally with rocks of the same description.

On the western side of Point Abineau the strand differs in no wise, to appearance, from that of the ocean: it is strewn with a variety of shells of a large size; quantities of gulls are continually seen hovering over it; and during a gale of wind from the west, a surge breaks in upon it, as tremendous as is to be seen on any part of the coast of England. The mounds of sand accumulated on Point Abineau are truly astonishing; those next to the lake, that have been washed by the storms of late years, are totally devoid of verdure; but others, situated behind them, towards the center of the point, seem coeval with the world itself, and are covered with oaks of the largest size from top to bottom. In general these mounds are of an irregular form; but in

some places, of the greatest height, they are so even and straight that it appears as if they had been thrown up by the hand of art, and you may almost fancy them to be the old works of some vast fortification. These regular mounds extend in all directions, but chiefly from north to south, which demonstrates that westerly winds were as prevalent formerly in this part of the country as they are at the present day. I should suppose that some of these mounds are upwards of one hundred feet above the level of the lake.

The ground on the eastern side of the point is neither so much broken nor so sandy as that on the opposite one, and there we found two farm houses, adjoining to each of which were about thirty acres of cleared land. At one of these we procured a couple of sheep, some fowls, and a quantity of potatoes, to add to our store of provisions, as there was reason to apprehend that our voyage would not be speedily terminated: whilst the men were digging for the latter, the old woman of the house spread her little table, and prepared for us the best viands which her habitation afforded, namely, coarse cake bread, roasted potatoes, and bear's flesh salted, which last we found by no means unpalatable. The haunch of a young cub is a dish much esteemed, and we frequently met with it at table in the upper country; it is extremely rich and oily, nevertheless they say it never cloy the stomach.

Towards evening we returned to the vessel, and the storm being much abated, passed, not an, uncomfortable night.

At day break the next morning I took the boat, and went on shore to join a party that, as I had been informed the preceding evening, was going a bear-hunting. On landing, I found the men and dogs ready, and having loaded our guns we advanced into the woods. The people here, as in the back parts of the United States, devote a very great part of their time to hunting, and they are well skilled in the pursuit of game of every description. They shoot almost universally with the rifle gun, and are as dextrous at the use of it as any men can be. The guns used by them are all imported from England. Those in most estimation carry balls of the size of thirty to the pound; in the States the hunters very commonly shoot with balls of a much smaller size, sixty of them.

them not weighing more than one pound ; but the people in Canada are of opinion that it is better to use the large balls, although more troublesome to carry through the woods, as they inflict much more destructive wounds than the others, and game seldom escapes after being wounded by them. Dogs of a large size are chosen for bear hunting : those most generally preferred seem to be of a breed between the blood hound and mastiff ; they will follow the scent of the bear, as indeed most field dogs will, but their chief use is to keep the bear at bay when wounded, or to follow him if he attempt to make off whilst the hunter is reloading his gun. Bears will never attempt to attack a man or a dog while they can make their escape, but once wounded or closely hemmed in they will fight most furiously. The young ones, at sight of a dog, generally take to a tree ; but the old ones, as if conscious of their ability to fight a dog, and at the same time that they cannot fail of becoming the prey of the hunter if they ascend a tree, never do so, unless indeed they see a hunter coming towards them on horseback, a sight which terrifies them greatly.

The Indians generally go in large parties to hunt bears, and on coming to the place where they suppose these animals are lurking, they form themselves into a large circle, and as they advance endeavour to rouse them. It is seldom that the white hunters muster together in sufficient numbers to pursue their game in this manner ; but whenever they have men enough to divide themselves so, they always do it. We proceeded in this manner at Point Abineau, where three or four men are amply sufficient to hem in a bear between the water and the main land. The point was a very favourable place for hunting this year, for the bears, intent, as I before mentioned, upon emigrating to the south, used, on coming down from the upper country, to advance to the extreme end of the point, as if desirous of getting as near as possible by land to the opposite side of the lake, and scarcely a morning came but what one or two of them were found upon it. An experienced hunter can at once discern the track of a bear, deer, or any other large animal, in the woods, and can tell with no small degree of precision how long a time before, it was, that the animal passed that way. On coming to a long valley,

valley, between two of the sand hills on the point, a place through which the bears generally passed in going towards the water, the hunters whom I accompanied at once told how many bears had come down from the upper country the preceding night, and also how many of them were cubs. To the eye of a common observer the track of these animals amongst the leaves is wholly imperceptible; indeed, in many instances, even after the hunters had pointed them out to me, I could but barely perceive the prints of their feet on the closest inspection; yet the hunters, on coming up to the place, saw these marks with a glance of the eye.

After killing a bear, the first care of the hunters is to strip him of his skin. This business is performed by them in a very few minutes, as they always carry knives about them particularly suited for the purpose; afterwards the carcase is cut up, an operation in which the tomahawk, an instrument that they, mostly, carry with them also, is particularly useful. The choicest parts of the animal are then selected and carried home, and the rest left in the woods. The Indians hold the paws of the bear in great estimation; stewed with young puppies, they are served up at all their principal feasts. On killing the animal, the paws are gashed with a knife, and, afterwards, hung over a fire, amidst the smoke, to dry. The skins of the bears are applied to numberless uses, in the country, by the farmers, who set no small value upon them. They are commonly cured by being spread upon a wall or between two trees, before the sun, and in that position scraped with a knife, or piece of iron, daily, which brings out the grease or oil, a very considerable quantity of which oozes from them. Raccoon and deer skins, &c. are cured in a similar manner. The Indians have a method of dressing these different skins with the hair on, and of rendering them at the same time as pliable as a piece of cloth; this is principally effected by rubbing the skins, with the hand, in the smoke of a wood fire.

Towards the middle of the day, the hunt being over, the party returned to the habitation on the point. On arriving there I found my companions, who had just come on shore, and after having strolled about the woods for a time, we all went on board the ship to dine.

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The sky had been very gloomy the whole of this day; it became more and more so as the evening approached, and the seamen foretold that before morning there would be a dreadful storm. At no time a friend to the watery element, I immediately formed the resolution of passing the night on shore; accordingly having got the boat manned after dinner, I took with me my servant, and landed at the head of the bay on the eastern side of the point. Here being left to ourselves, we pitched our tent by moonlight, under the shelter of one of the steep sand hills; and having kindled a large fire in the front of it, laid down, and were soon lulled to repose by the hollow roar of the wind amidst the tall trees of the surrounding forest. Not so my companions, who visited me at an early hour the next morning, and lamented sorely that they had not accompanied me on shore. There had been a tremendous sea running in the lake all night; the wind had shifted somewhat to the southward, and Point Abineau, in consequence, affording but little protection to the vessel, she had rolled about in a most alarming manner; one of the stancheons at her bow started by her violent working; the water came pouring in as from a pump; a scene of confusion ensued, and the sailors were kept busily employed the greater part of the night in stopping the leak. The vessel being old, crazy, and on her last voyage, serious apprehensions were entertained lest some worse accident should befall her before morning, and neither the crew nor the passengers felt themselves at all easy until day-light appeared, when the gale abated. We amused ourselves this morning in rambling through the woods, and along the shores of the lake, with our fowling pieces. On the strand we found great numbers of gulls, and different birds of prey, such as hawks, kites, &c.; here also we met with large flocks of sand larks, as they are called by the people of the country, in colour somewhat resembling the grey lapwing; their walk and manner also are so very similar, that, when on the ground, they might be taken for the same bird were they but of a larger size; they are not much bigger than a sparrow. In the woods we fell in for the first time with a large covey or flock of spruce partridges or pheasants, as the people call them in this neighbourhood. In colour, they are not much unlike the English partridge,

partridge, but of a larger size, and their flesh in flavour differs little from that of the English pheasant. They are different in many respects both from the partridge and pheasant found in Maryland and in the middle states, but in none more so than in their wonderful tameness, or rather stupidity. Before the flock took to flight I shot three birds singly from off one tree, and had I but been acquainted with the proper method of proceeding at the time, it is possible I might have shot them all in turn. It seems you must always begin by shooting the bird that sits lowest on the tree, and so proceed upwards, in which case the survivors are not at all alarmed. Ignorant, however, of this secret, I shot at one of the uppermost birds, and the disturbance that he made in falling through the branches on which the others were perched put the flock to flight immediately.

On returning from our ramble in the woods to the margin of the lake, we were agreeably surpris'd to find the wind quite favourable for prosecuting our voyage, and in a few minutes afterwards heard the signal gun, and saw the ship's boat coming for the purpose of taking us from shore. We got on board in time for dinner, but did not proceed on our voyage until midnight; so high a sea still continued running in the lake, that the captain thought it imprudent to venture out of the bay before that time. In the morning we found ourselves under the rich bold lands on the southern side of the lake; the water was smooth, the sky serene, and every one felt pleas'd with the voyage. It was on this day that we beheld the cloud over the Falls of Niagara, as I before mentioned, at the great distance of fifty-four miles.

Lake Erie is of an elliptical form; in length about three hundred miles, and in breadth, at the widest part, about ninety. The depth of water in this lake is not more than twenty fathoms, and in calm weather vessels may securely ride at anchor in any part of it; but when stormy, the anchorage in an open part of the lake is not safe, the sands at bottom not being firm, and the anchors apt therefore to lose their hold. Whenever there is a gale of wind the waters immediately become turbid, owing to the quantity of yellow sand that is washed up from the bottom of the lake; in calm weather the water is clear, and of a deep
greenish

greenish colour. The northern shore of the lake is very rocky, as likewise are the shores of the islands, of which there are several clusters towards the western extremity of the lake; but along most parts of the southern shore is a fine gravelly beach. The height of the land bordering on the lake is very unequal; in some places long ranges of steep mountains rise from the very edge of the water; in others the shores are so flat and so low, that when the lake is raised a little above its usual level, in consequence of a strong gale of wind setting in towards the shore, the country is deluged for miles. A young gentleman, who was sent in a bateau with dispatches across the lake, not long before we passed through the country, perished, with several of his party, owing to an inundation of this sort that took place on a low part of the shore. I must here observe, that when you navigate the lake in a bateau, it is customary to keep as close as possible to the land; and whenever there is any danger of a storm, you run the vessel on shore, which may be done with safety, as the bottom of it is perfectly flat. I before mentioned the peculiar advantage of a bateau over a keel boat in this respect. The young gentleman alluded to was coasting along in this manner, when a violent storm suddenly arose. The bateau was instantaneously turned towards the shore; unfortunately, however, in running her upon the beach some mismanagement took place, and she overfet. The waves had already begun to break in on the shore with prodigious impetuosity; each one of them rolled farther in than the preceding one; the party took alarm, and instead of making as strenuous exertions as it was supposed they might have made, to right the bateau, they took a few necessaries out of her, and attempted to save themselves by flight; but so rapidly did the water flow after them, in consequence of the increasing storm, that before they could proceed far enough up the country to gain a place of safety, they were all overwhelmed by it, two alone excepted, who had the presence of mind and ability to climb a lofty tree. To the very great irregularity of the height of the lands on both sides of it, is attributed the frequency of storms on Lake Erie. The shores of Lake Ontario are lower and more uniform than those of any of the other lakes;

and that lake is the most tranquil of any, as has already been noticed.

There is a great deficiency of good harbours along the shores of this Lake. On its northern side there are but two places which afford shelter to vessels drawing more than seven feet water, namely, Long Point and Point Abineau; and these only afford a partial shelter. If the wind should shift to the southward whilst vessels happen to be lying under them, they are thereby exposed to all the dangers of a rocky lee shore. On the southern shore, the first harbour you come to in going from Fort Erie, is that of Presqu' Isle. Vessels drawing eight feet water may there ride in perfect safety; but it is a matter of no small difficulty to get into the harbour, owing to a long sand bar which extends across the mouth of it. Presqu' Isle is situated at the distance of about sixty miles from Fort Erie. Beyond this, nearly midway between the eastern and western extremities of the lake, there is another harbour, capable of containing small vessels, at the mouth of Cayahoga River, and another at the mouth of Sandusky River, which falls into the lake within the north western territory of the States. It is very seldom that any of these harbours are made use of by the British ships; they, indeed, trade almost solely between Fort Erie and Detroit River; and when in prosecuting their voyages they chance to meet with contrary winds, against which they cannot make head, they for the most part return to Fort Erie, if bound to Detroit River; or to some of the bays amidst the clusters of islands situated towards the western extremity of the lake, if bound to Fort Erie. In going up the lake, it very often happens that vessels, even after they have got close under these islands, the nearest of which is not less than two hundred and forty miles from Fort Erie, are driven back by storms the whole way to that fort. Just as we were preparing to cast anchor under Middle Island, one of the nearest of them, a squall suddenly arose, and it was not without very great difficulty that we could keep our station: the captain told us afterwards, that he really feared at one time, that we should have been driven back to our old quarters.

It was about two o'clock on the third day from that of our quitting Point Abineau, that we reached Middle Island. We lay at anchor until the next morning, when the wind shifted a few points in our favour, and enabled us to proceed some miles farther on, to a place of greater safety, sheltered by islands on all sides; but beyond this the wind did not permit us to advance for three days. It is very seldom that vessels bound from Fort Erie to any place on Detroit River accomplish their voyage without stopping amongst these islands; for the same wind favourable for carrying them from the eastern to the western extremity of the lake will not waft them up the river. The river runs nearly in a south-west direction; its current is very strong; and unless the wind blows fresh, and nearly in an opposite direction to it, you cannot proceed. The navigation of Lake Erie, in general, is very uncertain; and passengers that cross it in any of the King's, or principal merchant vessels, are not only called upon to pay double the sum for their passage, demanded for that across Lake Ontario, but anchorage money besides, that is, a certain sum per diem as long as the vessel remains wind bound at anchor in any harbour. The anchorage money is about three dollars per day for each cabin passenger.

The islands at the western end of the lake, which are of various sizes, lie very close to each other, and the scenery amongst them is very pleasing. The largest of them are not more than fourteen miles in circumference, and many would scarcely be found to admeasure as many yards round. They are all covered with wood of some kind or other, even to the very smallest. The larger islands produce a variety of fine timber, amongst which are found oaks, hickory trees, and red cedars; the latter grow to a much larger size than in any part of the neighbouring country, and they are sent for even from the British settlements on Detroit River, forty miles distant. None of these islands are much elevated above the lake, nor are they diversified with any rising grounds; most of them, indeed, are as flat as if they had been overflowed with water, and in the interior parts of some of the largest of them there are extensive ponds and marshes. The fine timber, which

these islands produce, indicates that the soil must be uncommonly fertile. Here are found in great numbers, amongst the woods, racoons, and squirrels; bears are also at times found upon some of the islands during the winter season, when the lake is frozen between the main land and the islands; but they do not remain continually, as the other animals do. All the islands are dreadfully infested with serpents, and on some of them rattlesnakes are so numerous, that in the height of summer it is really dangerous to land: it was now late in September; yet we had not been three minutes on shore on Bass Island, before several of these noxious reptiles were seen amongst the bushes, and a couple of them, of a large size, were killed by the seamen.

Two kinds of rattlesnakes are found in this part of the country; the one is of a deep brown colour, clouded with yellow, and is seldom met with more than thirty inches in length. It usually frequents marshes and low meadows, where it does great mischief amongst cattle, which it bites mostly in the lips as they are grazing. The other sort is of a greenish yellow colour, clouded with brown, and attains nearly twice the size of the other. It is most commonly found between three and four feet in length, and as thick as the wrist of a large man. The rattlesnake is much thicker in proportion to its length than any other snake, and it is thickest in the middle of the body, which approaches somewhat to a triangular form, the belly being flat, and the back bone rising higher than any other part of the animal. The rattle, with which this serpent is provided, is at the end of the tail; it is usually about half an inch in breadth, one quarter of an inch in thickness, and each joint about half an inch long. The joint consists of a number of little cases of a dry horny substance, inclosed one within another, and not only the outermost of these little cases articulates with the outermost case of the contiguous joint, but each case, even to the smallest one of all, at the inside, is connected by a sort of joint with the corresponding case in the next joint of the rattle. The little cases or shells lie very loosely within one another, and the noise proceeds from their dry and hard coats striking one against the other. It is said that the animal gains a fresh joint to its rattle every year; of this, however,
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I have great doubts, for the largest snakes are frequently found to have the fewest joints to their rattles. A medical gentleman in the neighbourhood of Newmarket, behind the Blue Mountains, in Virginia, had a rattle in his possession, which contained no less than thirty-two joints; yet the snake from which it was taken scarcely admeasured five feet; rattlesnakes, however, of the same kind, and in the same part of the country, have been found of a greater length with not more than ten rattles. One of the snakes, which we saw killed on Bass Island, in Lake Erie, had no more than four joints in its rattle, and yet it was nearly four feet long.

The skin of the rattlesnake, when the animal is wounded, or otherwise enraged, exhibits a variety of beautiful tints, never seen at any other time. It is not with the teeth which the rattlesnake uses for ordinary purposes that it strikes its enemy, but with two long crooked fangs in the upper jaw, which point down the throat. When about to use these fangs, it rears itself up as much as possible, throws back its head, drops its under jaw, and springing forward upon its tail, endeavours to hook itself as it were upon its enemy. In order to raise itself on its tail it coils itself up previously in a spiral line, with the head in the middle. It cannot spring farther forward than about half its own length.

The flesh of the rattle-snake is as white as the most delicate fish, and is much esteemed by those who are not prevented from tasting it by prejudice. The soup made from it is said to be delicious, and very nourishing.

In my rambles about the islands under which we lay at anchor, I found many specimens of the exuvia of these snakes, which, in the opinion of the country people of Upper Canada, are very efficacious in the cure of the rheumatism, when laid over the part afflicted, and fastened down with a bandage. The body of the rattlesnake dried to a cinder over the fire, and then finely pulverised, and infused in a certain portion of brandy, is also said to be a never failing remedy against that disorder. I conversed with many people who had made use of this medicine, and they were firmly persuaded that they were indebted to it for a speedy cure.

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The liquor is taken inwardly, in the quantity of a wine glass full at once, about three times a day. No effect, more than from taking plain brandy, is perceived from taking this medicine on the first day; but at the end of the second day the body of the patient becomes suffused with a cold sweat, every one of his joints grow painful, and his limbs become feeble, and scarcely able to support him; he grows worse and worse for a day or two, but persevering in the use of the medicine for a few days, he gradually loses his pains, and recovers his wonted strength of body.

Many different kinds of serpents besides rattlesnakes are found on these islands in Lake Erie. I killed several totally different from any that I had ever met with in any other part of the country; amongst the number was one which I was informed was venomous in the highest degree: it was somewhat more than three feet in length; its back was perfectly black; its belly a vivid orange. I found it amongst the rocks on Middle Island, and on being wounded in the tail, it turned about to defend itself with inconceivable fury. Mr. Carver tells of a serpent that is peculiar to these islands, called the hissing snake: "It is," says he, "of the small speckled kind, and about eighteen inches long. When any thing approaches it, it flattens itself in a moment, and its spots, which are of various dyes, become visibly brighter through rage; at the same time it blows from its mouth with great force a subtle wind that is reported to be of a nauseous smell, and if drawn in with the breath of the unwary traveller will infallibly bring on a decline, that in a few months must prove mortal, there being no remedy yet discovered which can counteract its baneful influence." Mr. Carver does not inform us of his having himself seen this snake; I am tempted, therefore, to imagine, that he has been imposed upon, and that the whole account he has given of it is fabulous. I made very particular enquiries respecting the existence of such a snake, from those persons who were in the habit of touching at these islands, and neither they nor any other person I met with in the country had ever seen or heard of such a snake, except in Mr. Carver's Travels. Were a traveller to believe all the stories respecting snakes that are current in the country, he must

must believe that there is such a snake as the whip snake, which, as it is said, pursues cattle through the woods and meadows, lashing them with its tail, till overcome with the fatigue of running they drop breathless to the ground, when it preys upon their flesh; he must also believe that there is such a snake as the hoop snake, which has the power of fixing its tail firmly in a certain cavity inside of its mouth, and then of rolling itself forward like a hoop or wheel with such wonderful velocity that neither man nor beast can possibly escape from its devouring jaws.

The ponds and marshes in the interior parts of these islands abound with ducks and other wild fowl, and the shores swarm with gulls. A few small birds are found in the woods; but I saw none amongst them that were remarkable either for their song or plumage.

At sun-set, on the last day of September, we left the islands, and the next morning entered Detroit River. The river, at its mouth, is about five miles wide, and continues nearly the same breadth for a considerable distance. The shores are of a moderate height, and thickly wooded; but there was nothing particularly interesting in the prospect till we arrived within four or five miles of the new British post. Here the banks appeared diversified with Indian encampments and villages, and beyond them the British settlements were seen to great advantage. The river was crowded with Indian canoes and bateaux, and several pleasure boats belonging to the officers of the garrison, and to the traders, that had come out in expectation of meeting us, were seen cruising about backwards and forwards. The two other vessels of war, which we had left behind us at Fort Erie, as well as the trading vessels, had overtaken us just as we entered the river, and we all sailed up together with every bit of canvas, that we could muster, full spread. The day was uncommonly clear, and the scene altogether was pleasing and interesting.

The other vessels proceeded up the river to the British post; but ours, which was laden with presents for the Indians, cast anchor opposite to the habitation of the gentleman in the Indian department, whom I before mentioned, which was situated in the district of Malden. He gave us

us a most cordial invitation to stay at his house whilst we should remain in this part of the country; we gladly accepted of it, and accordingly went with him on shore.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

Description of the District of Malden.—Establishment of a new British Post there.—Island of Bois Blanc.—Difference between the British and Americans respecting the Right of Possession.—Block Houses, how constructed.—Captain E—'s Farm.—Indians.—Description of Detroit River, and the Country bordering upon it.—Town of Detroit.—Head Quarters of the American Army.—Officers of the Western Army.—Unsuccessful Attempt of the Americans to impress upon the Minds of the Indians an Idea of their Consequence.—Of the Country round Detroit.—Doubts concerning our Route back to Philadelphia.—Determine to go by Presqu' Isle.—Departure from Detroit.

Malden, October.

MALDEN is a district of considerable extent, situated on the eastern side of Detroit River, about eighteen miles below the town of Detroit. At the lower end of the district there are but few houses, and these stand very widely asunder; but at the upper end, bordering upon the river, and adjoining to the new British post that has been established since the evacuation of Detroit, a little town has been laid out, which already contains more than twenty houses, and is rapidly increasing. Hither several of the traders have removed who formerly resided at Detroit. This little town has as yet received no particular name, neither has the new post, but they merely go under the name of the new British post and town near the island of Bois-Blanc, an island in the river near two miles in length, and half a mile in breadth, that lies opposite to Malden.

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When the evacuation of Detroit was first talked of, the island was looked to as an eligible situation for the new post, and orders were sent to purchase it from the Indians, and to take possession of it in the name of his Britannic Majesty. Accordingly a party of troops went down for that purpose from Detroit; they erected a small block house on the northern extremity of it, and left a serjeant's guard there for its defence. Preparations were afterwards making for building a fort on it; but in the mean time a warm remonstrance against such proceedings came from the government of the United States *, who insisted upon it that
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* Notwithstanding that the government of the United States has thought it incumbent upon itself to remonstrate against our taking possession of this island, and thus to dispute every inch of ground respecting the right to which there could not be the smallest doubt, yet the generality of the people of the States affect to talk of every such step as idle and unnecessary, inasmuch as they are fully persuaded, in their own minds, that all the British dominions in North America must, sooner or later, become a part of their empire. Thus Mr. Imlay, in his account of the north western territory: "It is certain, that as the country has been more opened in America, and thereby the rays of the sun have acted more powerfully upon the earth, these benefits have tended greatly to soften the winter season; so that peopling Canada, for which we are much obliged to you, is a double advantage to us. First, it is settling and populating a country that must, sooner or later, from the natural order of things, become a part of our empire; and secondly, it is immediately meliorating the climate of the northern states," &c.

The greatest empires that have ever appeared on the face of the globe have dissolved in the course of time, and no one acquainted with history will, I take it for granted, presume to say that the extended empire of Britain, all powerful as it is at present, is so much more closely knit together than any other empire ever was before it, that it can never fall asunder; Canada, I therefore suppose, may, with revolving years, be disjointed from the mother country, as

well as her other colonies; but whenever that period shall arrive, which I trust is far distant, I am humbly of opinion that it will not form an additional knot in that extensive union of states which at present subsists on the continent of North America; indeed, were the British dominions in North America to be dis severed from the other members of the empire the ensuing year, I am still tempted to imagine that they would not become linked with the present federal American states, and for the following reasons:

First, because the constitution of the federal states, which is the bond that holds them together, is not calculated for such a large territory as that which the present states, together with such an addition, would constitute.

The constitution of the states is that of the people, who, through their respective representatives assembled together at some one place, must decide upon every measure that is to be taken for the public weal. This place, it is evident, ought in justice to be as central as possible to every state; the necessity, indeed, of having the place so situated has been manifested in the building of the new federal city. Were it not for this step, many of the most enlightened characters in the states have given it as their opinion, that the union could not have remained many years entire, for the states so far removed from the seat of the legislature, before the new city was founded, had complained grievously of the distance which their delegates had to travel to meet congress, and had begun to talk of the necessity of a separation of the states: and now,

the island was not within the limits of the British dominions. The point, it was found, would admit of some dispute, and as it could not be determined immediately, the plan of building the fort was relinquished for the time. The block house on the island, however, still remains guarded,

on the other hand, that a central spot has been fixed upon, those states to the northward, conveniently situated to Philadelphia, the present seat of the federal government, say that the new city will be so far removed from them, that the sending of delegates thither will be highly inconvenient to them, and so much so, as to call for a separation of the union on their part. In a former letter I stated the various opinions that were entertained by the people of the United States on this subject, and I endeavoured to shew that the seat of congress would be removed to the new federal city without endangering a partition of the states; but I am fully persuaded, that were Canada to become an independent state, and a place were to be fixed on central to all the states, supposing her to be one, that neither she, nor the state at the remote opposite end, would long continue, if they ever did submit, to send their delegates to a place so far removed, that it would require more than a fourth part of the year for them (the delegates) to travel, even with the utmost possible expedition, backward and forward, between the district which they represented and the seat of congress.

Secondly, I think the two Canadas will never become connected with the present states, because the people of these provinces, and those of the adjoining states, are not formed for a close intimacy with each other.

The bulk of the people of Upper Canada are refugees, who were driven from the states by the persecution of the republican party; and though the thirteen years which have passed over have nearly extinguished every spark of resentment against the Americans in the breasts of the people of England, yet this is by no means the case in Upper Canada; it is there common to hear, even from the children of the refugees, the most gross invectives poured out against the people of the states; and the people of the frontier states, in their turn, are as violent against the refugees and their posterity; and, indeed,

while Canada forms a part of the British empire, I am inclined, from what I have seen and heard in travelling through the country, to think that this spirit will not die away. In Lower Canada the same acrimonious temper of mind is not observable amongst the people, excepting indeed in those few parts of the country where the inhabited parts of the states approach closely to those of the province; but here appears to be a general disinclination amongst the inhabitants to have any political connection with the people of the states, and the French Canadians affect to hold them in the greatest contempt. Added to this, the prevalent language of the lower province, which has remained the same for almost forty years, notwithstanding the great pains that have been taken to change it, and which is therefore likely to remain so still, is another obstacle in the way of any close connection between the people of the lower province and those of the states. Even in conducting the affairs of the provincial legislative assembly, notwithstanding that most of the English inhabitants are well acquainted with the French language, yet a considerable degree of difficulty is experienced from the generality of the French delegates being totally ignorant of the English language, which, as I have already mentioned, they have an unconquerable aversion against learning.

Thirdly, I think the British dominions in North America will never be annexed to those of the states, because they are by nature formed for constituting a separate independent territory.

At present the boundary line between the British dominions and the States runs along the river St. Croix, thence along the high lands bordering upon New England till it meets the forty-fifth parallel of north latitude, and afterwards along the said parallel until it strikes the River St. Lawrence, or Cataragui, or Iroquois. Now the dominions south of the St. Lawrence are evidently not separated from the United States
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guarded, and possession will be kept of it until the matter in dispute be adjudged by the commissioners appointed, pursuant to the late treaty, for the purpose of determining the exact boundaries of the British dominions in this part of the continent, which were by no means clearly ascertained by the definitive treaty of peace between the States and Great Britain.

In this particular instance the dispute arises respecting the true meaning of certain words of the treaty. "The boundary line," it says, "is to run through the middle of Lake Erie until it arrive at the water communication between that lake and Lake Huron; thence along the middle of the said water communication." The people of the States construe the middle of the water communication to be the middle of the most approved and most frequented channel of the river; we, on the contrary, construe it to be the middle of the river, provided there is a tolerable channel on each side. Now the island of Bois Blanc clearly lies between the middle of the river and the British main; but then the deepest and most approved channel for ships of burthen is between the island and the British shore. In our acceptation of the word, therefore, the island

by any bold determinate boundary line; I therefore suppose that they may, in some manner, be connected with them; but the country to the northward, bounded on the north by Hudson's Bay, on the east by the ocean, on the south and west by the St. Lawrence, and that vast chain of lakes which extends to the westward, is separated from the United States by one of the most remarkable boundary lines that is to be found on the face of the globe between any two countries on the same continent; and from being bounded in such a remarkable manner, and thus detached as it were by nature from the other parts of the continent, it appears to me that it is calculated for forming a distinct separate state, or distinct union of states, from the present American federal states; that is, supposing, with the revolutions of time, that this arm of the British empire should be some time or other lopped off. I confess it appears strange to me, that any person should suppose, after looking attentively over a map of North Ame-

rica, that the British dominions, so extensive and so unconnected with them, could ever become joined in a political union with the present federal states on the continent. There is more reason to imagine that the Floridas, and the Spanish possessions to the east of the Mississippi, will be united therewith; for as the rivers which flow through the Spanish dominions are the only channels whereby the people of some of the western states can convey the produce of their own country to the ocean with convenience, it is natural to suppose that the people of these states will be anxious to gain possession of these rivers, for which purpose they must possess themselves of the country through which they pass. But there are certain bounds, beyond which a representative government cannot extend, and the ocean on the east and south, the St. Lawrence and the lakes on the north, and the Mississippi on the west, certainly appear to set bounds to the jurisdiction of the government of the United States, if indeed it can extend even so far.

unquestionably belongs to us; in that of the people of the States, to them. It appears to me, that our claim in this instance is certainly the most just; for although the best and most commodious channel be on our side, yet the channel on the opposite side of the island is sufficiently deep to admit through it, with perfect safety, the largest of the vessels at present on the lakes, and indeed as large vessels as are deemed suitable for this navigation.

Plans for a fort on the main land, and for one on the island of Bois Blanc, have been drawn; but as only the one fort will be erected, the building of it is postponed until it is determined to whom the island belongs: if within the British dominions, the fort will be erected on the island, as there is a still more advantageous position for one there than on the main land; in the mean time a large block house, capable of accommodating, in every respect comfortably, one hundred men and officers, has been erected on the main land, around which about four acres or more of ground have been reserved for his Majesty's use, in case the fort should not be built on the island.

A block house, which I have so frequently mentioned, is a building, whose walls are formed of thick square pieces of timber. It is usually built two stories high, in which case the upper story is made to project about two or three feet beyond the walls of the lower one, and loop holes are left in the floor round the edge of it, so that if an attempt were made to storm the house, the garrison could fire directly down upon the heads of the assailants. Loop holes are left also in various parts of the walls, some of which are formed, as is the case at this new block house at Malden, of a size sufficient to admit a small cannon to be fired through them. The loop holes are furnished with large wooden stoppers or wedges, which in the winter season, when there is no danger of an attack, are put in, and the interstices closely caulked, to guard against the cold; and indeed, to render the house warm, they are obliged to take no small pains in caulking the seams between the timber in every part. A block house, built on the most approved plan, is so constructed, that if one half of it were shot away, the other half would stand firm. Each piece of timber in the roof and walls is
jointed

jointed in such a manner as to be rendered independent of the next piece to it; one wall is independent of the next wall, and the roof is in a great measure independent of all of them, so that if a piece of artillery were played upon the house, that bit of timber alone against which the ball struck would be displaced, and every other one would remain uninjured. A block house is proof against the heaviest fire of musquetry. As these houses may be erected in a very short time, and as there is such an abundance of timber in every part of the country, wherewith to build them, they are met with in North America at almost every military outpost, and indeed in almost every fortress throughout the country. There are several in the upper town of Quebec.

Amongst the scattered houses at the lower end of the district of Malden, there are several of a respectable appearance, and the farms adjoining to them are very considerable. The farm belonging to our friend, Captain E ——, under whose roof we tarry, contains no less than two thousand acres. A very large part of it is cleared, and it is cultivated in a style which would not be thought meanly of even in England. His house, which is the best in the whole district, is agreeably situated, at the distance of about two hundred yards from the river; there is a full view of the river, and of the island of Bois Blanc, from the parlour windows, and the scene is continually enlivened by the number of Indian canoes that pass and repass before it. In front of the house there is a neat little lawn, paled in, and ornamented with clumps of trees, at the bottom of which, not far from the water, stands a large Indian wigwam, called the council house, in which the Indians are assembled whenever there are any affairs of importance to be transacted between them and the officers in the Indian department. Great numbers of these people come from the island of Bois Blanc, where no less than five hundred families of them are encamped, to visit us daily; and we in our turn go frequently to the island, to have an opportunity of observing their native manners and customs.

Our friend has told them, that we have crossed the big lake, the Atlantic, on purpose to come and see them. This circumstance has given them a very favourable opinion of us; they approve highly of the undertaking, and
say

say that we have employed our time to a good purpose. No people on earth have a higher opinion of their own consequence; indeed, they esteem themselves superior to every other race of men.

We remained for a short time in Malden, and then set off for Detroit in a neat little pleasure boat, which one of the traders obligingly lent to us. The river between the two places varies in breadth from two miles to half a mile. The banks are mostly very low, and in some places large marshes extend along the shores, and far up into the country. The shores are adorned with rich timber of various kinds, and bordering upon the marshes, where the trees have full scope to extend their branches, the woodland scenery is very fine. Amidst the marshes, the river takes some very considerable bends, and it is diversified at the same time with several large islands, which occasion a great diversity of prospect.

Beyond Malden no houses are to be seen on either side of the river, except indeed the few miserable little huts in the Indian villages, until you come within four miles or thereabouts of Detroit. Here the settlements are very numerous on both sides, but particularly on that belonging to the British. The country abounds with peach, apple, and cherry orchards, the richest I ever beheld; in many of them the trees, loaded with large apples of various dies, appeared bent down into the very water. They have many different sorts of excellent apples in this part of the country, but there is one far superior to all the rest, and which is held in great estimation, called the pomme caille; I do not recollect to have seen it in any other part of the world, though doubtless it is not peculiar to this neighbourhood. It is of an extraordinary large size, and deep red colour; not confined merely to the skin, but extending to the very core of the apple: if the skin be taken off delicately, the fruit appears nearly as red as when entire. We could not resist the temptation of stopping at the first of these orchards we came to, and for a few pence we were allowed to lade our boat with as much fruit as we could well carry away. The peaches were nearly out of season now, but from the few I tasted, I should suppose that they were of a good kind, far superior in flavour, size, and juiciness to those commonly met with in the orchards of the middle states.

The

The houses in this part of the country are all built in a similar style to those in Lower Canada; the lands are laid out and cultivated also similarly to those in the lower province; the manners and persons of the inhabitants are the same; French is the predominant language, and the traveller may fancy for a moment, if he pleases, that he has been wafted by enchantment back again into the neighbourhood of Montreal or Three Rivers. All the principal posts throughout the western country, along the lakes, the Ohio, the Illinois, &c. were established by the French; but except at Detroit and in the neighbourhood, and in the Illinois country, the French settlers have become so blended with the greater number who spoke English, that their language has every where died away.

Detroit contains about three hundred houses, and is the largest town in the western country. It stands contiguous to the river, on the top of the banks, which are here about twenty feet high. At the bottom of them there are very extensive wharfs for the accommodation of the shipping, built of wood, similar to those in the Atlantic sea-ports. The town consists of several streets that run parallel to the river, which are intersected by others at right angles. They are all very narrow, and not being paved, dirty in the extreme whenever it happens to rain; for the accommodation of passengers, however, there are footways in most of them, formed of square logs, laid transversely close to each other. The town is surrounded by a strong stockade, through which there are four gates; two of them open to the wharfs, and the two others to the north and south side of the town respectively. The gates are defended by strong block houses, and on the west side of the town is a small fort in form of a square, with bastions at the angles. At each of the corners of this fort is planted a small field-piece, and these constitute the whole of the ordnance at present in the place. The British kept a considerable train of artillery here, but the place was never capable of holding out for any length of time against a regular force: the fortifications, indeed, were constructed chiefly as a defence against the Indians.

Detroit is at present the head-quarters of the western army of the States; the garrison consists of three hundred men, who are quartered in barracks. Very little attention is paid by the officers to the minutiae of discipline, so that however well the men may have acquitted themselves in the field, they make but a poor appearance on parade. The belles of the town are quite au desespoir at the late departure of the British troops, though the American officers tell them they have no reason to be so, as they will find them much more sensible agreeable men than the British officers when they know them, a style of conversation, which, strange as it may appear to us, is yet not all uncommon amongst them. Three months, however, have not altered the first opinion of the ladies. I cannot better give you an idea of the unpolished, coarse, discordant manners of the generality of the officers of the western army of the States, than by telling you, that they cannot agree sufficiently amongst themselves to form a regimental mess; repeated attempts have been made since their arrival at Detroit to establish one, but their frequent quarrels would never suffer it to remain permanent. A duellist and an officer of the western army were nearly synonymous terms, at one period, in the United States, owing to the very great number of duels that took place amongst them when cantoned at Grenville.

About two thirds of the inhabitants of Detroit are of French extraction, and the greater part of the inhabitants of the settlements on the river, both above and below the town, are of the same description. The former are mostly engaged in trade, and they all appear to be much on an equality. Detroit is a place of very considerable trade; there are no less than twelve trading vessels belonging to it, brigs, sloops, and schooners, of from fifty to one hundred tons burthen each. The inland navigation in this quarter is indeed very extensive, Lake Erie, three hundred miles in length, being open to vessels belonging to the port, on the one side; and lakes Michigan and Huron, the first upwards of two hundred miles in length, and sixty in breadth, and the second, no less than one thousand miles in circumference, on the opposite side; not to speak of Lake St. Clair and Detroit River, which connect these former lakes together, or of the many large rivers which fall into them.

The

The stores and shops in the town are well furnished, and you may buy fine cloth, linen, &c. and every article of wearing apparel, as good in their kind, and nearly on as reasonable terms, as you can purchase them at New York or Philadelphia.

The inhabitants are well supplied with provisions of every description; the fish in particular, caught in the river and neighbouring lakes, are of a very superior quality. The fish held in most estimation is a sort of large trout, called the Michillimakinac white fish, from its being caught mostly in the straits of that name. The inhabitants of Detroit and the neighbouring country, however, though they have provisions in plenty, are frequently much distressed for one very necessary concomitant, namely, salt. Until within a short time past they had no salt but what was brought from Europe; but salt springs have been discovered in various parts of the country, from which they are now beginning to manufacture that article for themselves. The best and most profitable of the springs are retained in the hands of government, and the profits arising from the sale of the salt are to be paid into the treasury of the province. Throughout the western country they procure their salt from springs, some of which throw up sufficient water to yield several hundred bushels in the course of one week.

There is a large Roman catholic church in the town of Detroit, and another on the opposite side, called the Huron church, from its having been devoted to the use of the Huron Indians. The streets of Detroit are generally crowded with Indians of one tribe or other, and amongst them you see numberless old squaws leading about their daughters, ever ready to dispose of them, pro tempore, to the highest bidder. At night all the Indians, except such as get admittance into private houses, and remain there quietly, are turned out of the town, and the gates shut upon them.

The American officers here have endeavoured to their utmost to impress upon the minds of the Indians an idea of their own superiority over the British; but as they are very tardy in giving these people any presents, they do not pay much attention to their words. General Wayne, from continually promising them presents, but at the same time always

postponing the delivery when they come to ask for them, has significantly been nicknamed by them, General Wabang, that is General To-morrow.

The country around Detroit is very much cleared, and so likewise is that on the British side of the river for a considerable way above the town. The settlements extend nearly as far as Lake Huron; but beyond the River La Trenche, which falls into Lake St. Clair, they are scattered very thinly along the shores. The banks of the River La Trenche, or Thames, as it is now called, are increasing very fast in population, as I before mentioned, owing to the great emigration thither of people from the neighbourhood of Niagara, and of Detroit also since it has been evacuated by the British. We made an excursion, one morning in our little boat as far as Lake St. Clair, but met with nothing, either amongst the inhabitants, or in the face of the country, particularly deserving of mention. The country round Detroit is uncommonly flat, and in none of the rivers is there a fall sufficient to turn even a grist mill. The current of Detroit River itself is stronger than that of any others, and a floating mill was once invented by a Frenchman, which was chained in the middle of that river, where it was thought the stream would be sufficiently swift to turn the water wheel: the building of it was attended with considerable expence to the inhabitants, but after it was finished it by no means answered their expectations. They grind their corn at present by wind mills, which I do not remember to have seen in any other part of North America.

The soil of the country bordering upon Detroit River is rich though light, and it produces good crops both of Indian corn and wheat. The climate is much more healthy than that of the country in the neighbourhood of Niagara River; intermittent fevers however are by no means uncommon disorders. The summers are intensely hot, Fahrenheit's thermometer often rising above 100; yet a winter seldom passes over but what snow remains on the ground for two or three months.

Whilst we remained at Detroit, we had to determine upon a point of some moment to us travellers, namely, upon the route by which to return back towards the Atlantic. None of us felt much inclined to cross the lake
again.

again to Fort Erie, we at once therefore laid aside all thoughts of returning that way. Two other routes then presented themselves for our consideration; the one was to proceed by land from Detroit, through the north western territory of the United States, as far as the head waters of some one of the rivers which fall into the Ohio, having reached which, we might afterwards have proceeded upwards or downwards, as we found most expedient; the other was to cross by water to Presqu' Isle, on the south side of Lake Erie, and thence go down French Creek and the Alleghany River, as far as Pittsburgh on the Ohio, where being arrived we should likewise have had the choice of descending the Ohio and Mississippi, or of going on to Philadelphia, through Pennsylvania, according as we should find circumstances most convenient. The first of these routes was most suited to our inclination, but we soon found that we must give over all thoughts of proceeding by it. The way to have proceeded would have been to set out on horseback, taking with us sufficient provisions to last for a journey through a forest of upwards of two hundred miles in length, and trusting our horses to the food which they could pick up for themselves amongst the bushes. There was no possibility of procuring horses, however, for hire at Detroit or in the neighbourhood, and had we purchased them, which could not have been done but at a most exorbitant price, we should have found it a difficult matter perhaps to have got rid of them when we had ended our land journey, unless indeed we chose to turn them adrift in the woods, which would not have been perfectly suitable to our finances. But independent of this consideration there was another obstacle in our way, and that was the difficulty of procuring guides. The Indians were all preparing to set out on their hunting excursions, and had we even been able to have procured a party of them for an escort, there would have been some risk, we were told, of their deserting us before we reached our journey's end. If they fell in on their journey with a hunting party that had been very successful; if they came to a place where there was great abundance of game; or, in short, if we did not proceed just according to their fancy, impatient of every restraint, and without caring in the least for the hire we had promised them, they would, per-

haps, leave us in the whim of moment to shift for ourselves in the woods, a situation we had no desire to see ourselves reduced to; we determined therefore to proceed by Presqu' Isle. But now another difficulty arose, namely, how we were to get there: a small vessel, a very unusual circumstance indeed, was just about to sail, but it was so crowded with passengers, that there was not a single berth vacant, and moreover, if there had been, we did not wish to depart so abruptly from this part of the country. One of the principal traders, however, at Detroit, to whom we had carried letters, soon accommodated matters to our satisfaction, by promising to give orders to the master of one of the lake vessels, of which he was in part owner, to land us at that place. The vessel was to sail in a fortnight; we immediately therefore secured a passage in her, and having settled with the master that he should call for us at Malden, we set off once more for that place in our little boat, and in a few hours, from the time we quitted Detroit, arrived there.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Presents delivered to the Indians on the Part of the British Government.—Mode of distributing them.—Reasons why given.—What is the best Method of conciliating the good Will of the Indians.—Little pains taken by the Americans to keep up a good Understanding with the Indians.—Consequences thereof.—War between the Americans and Indians.—A brief Account of it.—Peace concluded by General Wayne.—Not likely to remain permanent.—Why.—Indian Manner of making Peace described.

Malden, October.

ADJOINING to our friend's house at Malden stands an extensive range of storehouses, for the reception of the presents yearly made by government to the Indians in this part of the country, in which several clerks are kept constantly employed. Before we had been long at Malden we had an opportunity of seeing some of the presents

sents delivered out. A number of chiefs of different tribes had previously come to our friend, who is at the head of the department in this quarter, and had given to him, each, a bundle of little bits of cedar wood, about the thickness of a small pocket book pencil, to remind him of the exact number of individuals in each tribe that expected to share the bounty of their great father. The sticks in these bundles were of different lengths, the longest denoted the number of warriors in the tribe, the next in size the number of women, and the smallest the number of children. Our friend on receiving them handed them over to his clerks, who made a memorandum in their books of the contents of each bundle, and of the persons that gave them, in order to prepare the presents accordingly. The day fixed upon for the delivery of the presents was bright and fair, and being in every respect favourable for the purpose, the clerks began to make the necessary arrangements accordingly.

A number of large stakes were first fixed down in different parts of the lawn, to each of which was attached a label, with the name of the tribe, and the number of persons in it, who were to be provided for; then were brought out from the stores several bales of thick blankets, of blue, scarlet, and brown cloth, and of coarse figured cottons, together with large rolls of tobacco, guns, flints, powder, balls, shot, case-knives, ivory and horn combs, looking-glasses, pipe-tomahawks, hatchets, scissars, needles, vermilion in bags, copper and iron pots and kettles, the whole valued at about £. 500 sterling. The bales of goods being opened, the blankets, cloths, and cottons were cut up into small pieces, each sufficient to make for one person a wrapper, a shirt, a pair of leggings, or whatever else it was intended for; and the portions of the different articles intended for each tribe were thrown together in a heap, at the bottom of the stake which bore its name. This business took up several hours, as there were no less than four hundred and twenty Indians to be served. No liquor, nor any silver ornaments, except to favourite chiefs in private, are ever given on the part of government to the Indians, notwithstanding they are so fond of both; and a trader who attempts to give these articles to them in exchange for the presents they have

have received from government, or, indeed, who takes from them, on any conditions, their presents, is liable to a very heavy penalty for every such act, by the laws of the province.

The presents having been all prepared, the chiefs were ordered to assemble their warriors, who were loitering about the grounds at the outside of the lawn. In a few minutes they all came, and having been drawn up in a large circle, our friend delivered a speech on the occasion, without which ceremony no business, according to Indian custom, is ever transacted. In this they were told, "That their great and good father, who lived on the opposite side of the big lake (meaning thereby the king) was ever attentive to the happiness of all his faithful people; and that, with his accustomed bounty, he had sent the presents which now lay before them to his good children the Indians; that he had sent the guns, the hatchets, and the ammunition for the young men, and the clothing for the aged, women, and children; that he hoped the young men would have no occasion to employ their weapons in fighting against enemies, but merely in hunting; and that he recommended it to them to be attentive to the old, and to share bountifully with them what they gained by the chase; that he trusted the great spirit would give them bright suns and clear skies, and a favourable season for hunting; and that when another year should pass over, if he still continued to find them good children, he would not fail to renew his bounties, by sending them more presents from across the big lake.

This speech was delivered in English, but interpreters attended, who repeated it to the different tribes in their respective languages, paragraph by paragraph, at the end of every one of which the Indians signified their satisfaction by a loud coarse exclamation of "Hoah! Hoah!" The speech ended, the chiefs were called forward, and their several heaps were shewn to them, and committed to their care. They received them with thanks, and beckoning to their warriors, a number of young men quickly started from the crowd, and in less than three minutes the presents were conveyed from the lawn, and laden on board the canoes, in waiting to convey them to the island and adjacent villages. The utmost regularity and propriety was manifested on this occasion

occasion in the behaviour of every Indian; there was not the smallest wrangling amongst them about their presents; nor was the least spark of jealousy observable in any one tribe about what the other had received; each one took up the heap allotted to it, and departed without speaking a word.

Besides the presents, such as I have described, others of a different nature again, namely, provisions, were dealt out this year amongst certain tribes of the Indians that were encamped on the island of Bois Blanc. These were some of the tribes that had been at war with the people of the United States, whose villages, fields of corn, and stores of provisions had been totally destroyed during the contest by General Wayne, and who having been thereby bereft of every means of support, had come, as soon as peace was concluded, to beg for subsistence from their good friends the British. "Our enemies," said they, "have destroyed our villages and stores of provisions; our women and children are left without food; do you then, who call yourselves our friends, shew us now that you really are so, and give them food to eat till the sun ripens our corn, and the great spirit gives another prosperous season for hunting." Their request was at once complied with; a large storehouse was erected on the island, and filled with provisions at the expence of government for their use, and regularly twice a week the clerks in the Indian department went over to distribute them. About three barrels of salted pork or beef, as many of flour, beans or peas, Indian corn, and about two carcases of fresh beef, were generally given out each time. These articles of provision the Indians received, not in the thankful manner in which they did the other presents, but seemingly as if they were due to them of right. One nation they think ought never to hesitate about giving relief to another in distress, provided it was not at enmity with it; and indeed, were their white brethren, the British, to be reduced by any calamity to a similar state of distress, the Indians would with the utmost cheerfulness share with them their provisions to the very last.

The presents delivered to the Indians, together with the salaries of the officers in the Indian department, are computed to cost the crown,

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as I before mentioned, about £.100,000 sterling, on an average, per annum. When we first gained possession of Canada, the expence of the presents was much greater, as the Indians were then more numerous, and as it was also found necessary to bestow upon them, individually, much larger presents than are now given, in order to overcome the violent prejudices against us which had been instilled into their minds by the French. These prejudices having happily been removed, and the utmost harmony having been established between them and the people on our frontiers, presents of a less value even than what are now distributed amongst them would perhaps be found sufficient to keep up that good understanding which now subsists between us; it could not, however, be deemed a very advisable measure to curtail them, as long as a possibility remained that the loss of their friendship might be incurred thereby; and, indeed, when we consider what a happy and numerous people the Indians were before Europeans intruded themselves into the territories allotted to them by nature; when we consider how many thousands have perished in battle, embroiled in our contests for power and dominion, and how many thousands more have perished by the use of the poisonous beverages which we have introduced amongst them; when we consider how many artificial wants have been raised in the minds of the few nations of them that yet remain, and how sadly the morals of these nations have been corrupted by their intercourse with the whites; when we consider, finally, that in the course of fifty years more no vestige even of these once virtuous and amiable people will probably be found in the whole of that extensive territory which lies between the Mississippi and the Atlantic, and was formerly inhabited solely by them; instead of wishing to lessen the value or the number of the few trifles that we find are acceptable to them in their present state, we ought rather to be desirous of contributing still more largely to their comfort and happiness.

Acceptable presents are generally found very efficacious in conciliating the affections of any uncivilized nation: they have very great influence over the minds of the Indians; but to conciliate their affections to the utmost, presents alone are not sufficient; you must appear to have their
interest

interest at heart in every respect; you must associate with them; you must treat them as men that are your equals, and, in some measure, even adopt their native manners. It was by such steps as these that the French, when they had possession of Canada, gained their favour in such a very eminent manner, and acquired so wonderful an ascendancy over them. The old Indians still say, that they never were so happy as when the French had possession of the country; and, indeed, it is a very remarkable fact, which I before mentioned, that the Indians, if they are sick, if they are hungry, if they want shelter from a storm, or the like, will always go to the houses of the old French settlers in preference to those of the British inhabitants. The necessity of treating the Indians with respect and attention is strongly inculcated on the minds of the English settlers, and they endeavour to act accordingly; but still they cannot banish wholly from their minds, as the French do, the idea that the Indians are an inferior race of people to them, to which circumstance is to be attributed the predilection of the Indians for the French rather than them; they all live together, however, on very amicable terms, and many of the English on the frontiers have indeed told me, that if they were but half as honest, and half as well conducted towards one another, as the Indians are towards them, the state of society in the country would be truly enviable.

On the frontiers of the United States little pains have hitherto been taken by the government, and no pains by the people, to gain the good will of the Indians; and the latter, indeed, instead of respecting the Indians as an independent neighbouring nation, have in too many instances violated their rights as men in the most flagrant manner. The consequence has been, that the people on the frontiers have been involved in all the calamities that they could have suffered from an avengeful and cruel enemy. Nightly murders, robberies, massacres, and conflagrations have been common. They have hardly ventured to stir, at times, beyond the walls of their little habitations; and for whole nights together have they been kept on the watch, in arms, to resist the onset of the Indians. They have never dared to visit their neighbours unarmed, nor to proceed alone, in open day, on a journey of

a few miles. The gazettes of the United States have daily teemed with the shocking accounts of the barbarities committed by the Indians, and volumes would scarcely suffice to tell the whole of the dreadful tales.

It has been said by persons of the States, that the Indians were countenanced in committing these enormities by people on the British frontiers, and liberal abuse has been bestowed on the government for having aided, by distributing amongst them guns, tomahawks, and other hostile weapons. That the Indians were incited by presents, and other means, to act against the people of the colonies, during the American war, must be admitted; but that, after peace was concluded, the same line of conduct was pursued towards them, is an aspersions equally false and malicious. To the conduct of the people of the States themselves alone, and to no other cause, is unquestionably to be attributed the continuance of the warfare between them and the Indians, after the definitive treaty of peace was signed. Instead of then taking the opportunity to reconcile the Indians, as they might easily have done by presents, and by treating them with kindness, they still continued hostile towards them; they looked upon them, as indeed they still do, merely as wild beasts, that ought to be banished from the face of the earth; and actuated by that insatiable spirit of avarice, and that restless and dissatisfied turn of mind, which I have so frequently noticed, instead of keeping within their territories, where millions of acres remained unoccupied, but no part, however, of which could be had without being paid for, they crossed their boundary lines, and fixed themselves in the territory of the Indians, without ever previously gaining the consent of these people. The Indians, nice about their boundary line beyond any other nations, perhaps, in the world, that have such extensive dominions in proportion to their numbers, made no scruple to attack, to plunder, and even to murder these intruders, when a fit opportunity offered. The whites endeavoured to repel their attacks, and shot them with as much unconcern as they would either a wolf or a bear. In their expeditions against the white settlers, the Indians frequently were driven back with loss; but their ill success only urged them to return with redoubled fury, and their

their well known revengeful disposition leading them on all occasions to seek blood for blood, they were not merely satisfied with murdering the whole families of the settlers who had wounded or killed their chiefs or warriors, but oftentimes, in order to appease the manes of their comrades, they crossed their boundary line in turn, and committed most dreadful depredations amongst the peaceable white inhabitants in the States, who were in no manner implicated in the ill conduct of the men who had encroached upon the Indian territories. Here also, if they happened to be repulsed, or to lose a friend, they returned to seek fresh revenge; and as it seldom happened that they did escape without loss, their excesses and barbarities, instead of diminishing, were becoming greater every year. The attention of the government was at last directed towards the melancholy situation of the settlers on the frontiers, and the result was, that congress determined that an army should be raised, at the expence of the States, to repel the foe.

An army was accordingly raised some time about the year 1790, which was put under the command of General St. Clair. It consisted of about fifteen hundred men; but these were not men that had been accustomed to contend against Indians, nor was the general, although an experienced officer, and well able to conduct an army against a regular force, at all qualified, as many persons had foreseen, and the event proved, to command on an expedition of such a nature as he was now about to be engaged in.

St. Clair advanced with his army into the Indian territory; occasional skirmishes took place, but the Indians still kept retreating before him, as if incapable of making any resistance against such a powerful force. Forgetful of the stratagems of the artful enemy he had to contend with, he boldly followed, till at last, having been drawn far into their territory, and to a spot suitable to their purpose, the Indians attacked him on all sides; his men were thrown into confusion; in vain he attempted to rally them. The Indians, emboldened by the disorder they saw in his ranks, came rushing down with their tomahawks and scalping knives. A dreadful havoc ensued. The greater part of the army was left dead on the fatal field; and of those that escaped the knife, the

most were taken prisoners. All the cannon, ammunition, baggage, and horses of St. Clair's army fell into the hands of the Indians on this occasion.

A great many young Canadians, and in particular many that were born of Indian women, fought on the side of the Indians in this action, a circumstance which confirmed the people of the States in the opinion they had previously formed, that the Indians were encouraged and abetted in their attacks upon them by the British. I can safely affirm, however, from having conversed with many of these young men who fought against St. Clair, that it was with the utmost secrecy they left their homes to join the Indians, fearful lest the government should censure their conduct; and that in espousing the quarrel of the Indians, they were actuated by a desire to assist a people whom they conceived to be injured, more than by an unextinguished spirit of resentment against men, whom they had formerly viewed in the light of rebels.

As the revenge of the Indians was completely glutted by this victory over St. Clair, it is not improbable, but that if pains had been taken immediately to negotiate a peace with them, it might have been obtained on easy terms; and had the boundary line then determinately agreed upon been faithfully observed afterwards by the people of the States, there is great reason to imagine that the peace would have been a permanent one. As this, however, was a questionable measure, and the general opinion was, that a peace could be made on better terms if preceded by a victory on the part of the States, it was determined to raise another army. Liberal supplies for that purpose were granted by congress, and three thousand men were soon collected together.

Great pains were taken to enlist for this new army men from Kentucky, and other parts of the frontiers, who had been accustomed to the Indian mode of fighting; and a sufficient number of rifle-men from the frontier were collected, to form a very large regiment. The command of the new army was given to the late General Wayne. Upon being appointed to it, his first care was to introduce strict discipline amongst his troops; he afterwards kept the army in motion on the frontier, but he did not attempt to penetrate far into the Indian country, nor

to

to take any offensive measures against the enemy for some time. This delay the general conceived would be attended with two great advantages; first, it would serve to banish from the minds of his men all recollection of the defeat of the late army; and secondly, it would afford him an opportunity of training perfectly to the Indian mode of fighting such of his men as were ignorant of it; for he saw no hopes of success but in fighting the Indians in their own way.

When the men were sufficiently trained he advanced, but it was with the utmost caution. He seldom proceeded farther than twelve miles in one day; the march was always ended by noon, and the afternoon was regularly employed in throwing up strong intrenchments round the camp, in order to secure the army from any sudden attack; and the spot that had been thus fortified on one day was never totally abandoned until a new encampment had been made on the ensuing one. Moreover, strong posts were established at the distance of forty miles, or thereabouts, from each other, in which guards were left, in order to ensure a safe retreat to the army in case it should not be successful. As he advanced, General Wayne sent detachments of his army to destroy all the Indian villages that were near him, and on these occasions the deepest stratagems were made use of. In some instances his men threw off their clothes, and by painting their bodies, disguised themselves so as to resemble Indians in every respect, then approaching as friends, they committed dreadful havoc. Skirmishes also frequently took place, on the march, with the Indians who hovered round the army. These terminated with various success, but mostly in favour of the Americans; as in their conduct, the knowledge and discipline of regular troops were combined with all the cunning and stratagem of their antagonists.

All this time the Indians kept retreating, as they had done formerly before St. Clair; and without being able to bring on a decisive engagement, General Wayne proceeded even to the Miami of the Lakes, so called in contradistinction to another River Miami, which empties itself into the Ohio. Here it was that that curious correspondence in respect to Fort Miami took place, the substance of which was related in most of the English and American prints, and by which General Wayne exposed himself
himself

himself to the censure of many of his countrymen, and General, then Colonel Campbell, who commanded in the fort, gained the public thanks of the traders in London.

The Miami Fort, situated on the river of the same name, was built by the English in the year 1793, at which time there was some reason to imagine that the disputes existing between Great Britain and the United States would not have been quite so amicably settled, perhaps, as they have been; at least that doubtless must have been the opinion of government, otherwise they would not have given orders for the construction of a fort within the boundary line of the United States, a circumstance which could not fail to excite the indignation of the people thereof. General Wayne, it would appear, had received no positive orders from his government to make himself master of it: could he have gained possession of it, however, by a coup-de-main, without incurring any loss, he thought that it could not but have been deemed an acceptable piece of service by the public, from whom he should have received unbounded applause. Vanity was his ruling passion, and actuated by it on this occasion, he resolved to try what he could do to obtain possession of the fort. Colonel Campbell, however, by his spirited and manly answer to the summons that was sent him, to surrender the fort on account of its being situated within the boundary line of the States, soon convinced the American general that he was not to be shaken by his remonstrances or intimidated by his menaces, and that his two hundred men, who composed the garrison, had sufficient resolution to resist the attacks of his army of three thousand, whenever he thought proper to march against the fort. The main division of the American army, at this time, lay at the distance of about four miles from the fort; a small detachment from it, however, was concealed in the woods at a very little distance from the fort, to be ready at the call of General Wayne, who, strange to tell, when he found he was not likely to get possession of it in consequence of the summons he sent, was so imprudent, and departed so much from the dignity of the general and the character of the soldier, as to ride up to the fort, and to use the most gross and illiberal language to the British soldiers on duty in it. His object in doing so was, I should suppose, to

provoke the garrison to fire upon him, in which case he would have had a pretext for storming the fort.

Owing to the great prudence, however, of Colonel Campbell, who had issued the strictest orders to his men and officers to remain silent, notwithstanding any insults that were offered to them, and not to attempt to fire, unless indeed an actual attack were made on the place, Wayne's plan was frustrated, much bloodshed certainly saved, and a second war between Great Britain and America perhaps averted.

General Wayne gained no great personal honour by his conduct on this occasion; but the circumstance of his having appeared before the British fort in the manner he did operated strongly in his favour in respect to his proceedings against the Indians. These people had been taught to believe by the young Canadians that were amongst them, that if any part of the American army appeared before the fort, it would certainly be fired upon; for they had no idea that the Americans would have come in sight of it without taking offensive measures, in which case resistance would certainly have been made. When, therefore, it was heard that General Wayne had not been fired upon, the Indians complained grievously of their having been deceived, and were greatly disheartened on finding that they were to receive no assistance from the British. Their native courage, however, did not altogether forsake them; they resolved speedily to make a stand, and accordingly having chosen their ground, awaited the arrival of General Wayne, who followed them closely.

Preparatory to the day on which they expected a general engagement, the Indians, contrary to the usages of most nations, observe a strict fast; nor does this abstinence from all sorts of food diminish their exertions in the field, as from their early infancy they accustom themselves to fasting for long periods together. The day before General Wayne was expected, this ceremony was strictly attended to, and afterwards, having placed themselves in ambush in the woods, they waited for his arrival. He did not, however, come to the ground on the day that they had imagined, from the reports given them by their scouts of his motions, he would have done; but having reason to think he would come on the subsequent

subsequent day, they did not move from their ambush. The second day passed over without his drawing nearer to them; but fully persuaded that he would come up with them on the next, they still lay concealed in the same place. The third day proved to be extremely rainy and tempestuous, and the scouts having brought word, that from the movements General Wayne had made there was no likelihood of his marching towards them that day, the Indians, now hungry after having fasted for three entire days, determined to rise from their ambush in order to take some refreshment. They accordingly did so, and having no suspicion of an attack, began to eat their food in security.

Before they began to eat, the Indians had divided themselves, I must observe, into three divisions, in order to march to another quarter, where they hoped to surprise the army of the States. In this situation, however, they were themselves surprised by General Wayne. He had received intelligence from his scouts, now equally cunning with those of the Indians, of their proceedings, and having made some motions as if he intended to move to another part of the country, in order to put them off their guard, he suddenly turned, and sent his light horse pouring down on them when they least expected it. The Indians were thrown into confusion, a circumstance which with them never fails to occasion a defeat; they made but a faint resistance, and then fled with precipitancy.

On his arrival at Philadelphia, in the beginning of the year 1796, I was introduced to General Wayne, and I had then an opportunity of seeing the plan of all his Indian campaigns. A most pompous account was given of this victory, and the plan of it excited, as indeed it well might, the wonder and admiration of all the old officers who saw it. The Indians were represented as drawn up in three lines, one behind the other, and after receiving with firmness the charge of the American army, as endeavouring with great skill and adroitness to turn its flanks, when, by the sudden appearance of the Kentucky riflemen and the light cavalry, they were put to flight. From the regularity with which the Indians fought on this occasion, it was argued that they must doubtless have been conducted by British officers of skill and experience.

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How absurd this whole plan was, however, was plainly to be deduced from the following circumstance, allowed both by the general and his aides de camp, namely, that during the whole action the American army did not see fifty Indians; and indeed every person who has read an account of the Indians must know that they never come into the field in such regular array, but always fight under covert, behind trees or bushes, in the most irregular manner. Notwithstanding the great pains that were taken formerly, both by the French and English, they never could be brought to fight in any other manner. It was in this manner, and no other, as I heard from several men who were in the action with them, that they fought against General Wayne; each one, as soon as the American troops were descried, instantly sheltered himself, and in retreating they still kept under covert. It was by fighting them also in their own way, and by sending parties of his light troops and cavalry to rout them from their lurking places, that General Wayne defeated them; had he attempted to have drawn up his army in the regular order described in the plan, he could not but have met with the same fate as St. Clair, and general Braddock did on a former occasion.

Between thirty and forty Indians, who had been shot or bayoneted as they attempted to run from one tree to another, were found dead on the field by the American army. It is supposed that many more were killed, but the fact of the matter could never be ascertained by them: a profound silence was observed on the subject by the Indians, so that I never could learn accurately how many of them had fallen; that however is an immaterial circumstance; suffice it to say that the engagement soon induced the Indians to sue for a peace. Commissioners were deputed by the government of the United States to meet their chiefs; the preliminaries were soon arranged, and a treaty was concluded, by which the Indians relinquished a very considerable part of their territory, bordering upon that of the United States.

The last and principal ceremony observed by the Indians in concluding a peace, is that of burying the hatchet. When this ceremony came to be performed, one of the chiefs arose, and lamenting that the last

peace concluded between them and the people of the States had remained unbroken for so short a time, and expressing his desire that this one should be more lasting, he proposed the tearing up of a large oak that grew before them, and the burying of the hatchet under it, where it would for ever remain at rest. Another chief said, that trees were liable to be levelled by the storms; that at any rate they would decay; and that as they were desirous that a perpetual peace should be established between them and their late enemies, he conceived it would better to bury the hatchet under the tall mountain which arose behind the wood. A third chief in turn addressed the assembly: "As for me," said he, "I am but a man, and I have not the strength of the great spirit to tear up the trees of the forest by the roots, or to remove mountains, under which to bury the hatchet; but I propose that the hatchet may be thrown into the deep lake, where no mortal can ever find it, and where it will remain buried for ever." This proposal was joyfully accepted by the assembly, and the hatchet was in consequence cast with great solemnity into the water. The Indians now tell you, in their figurative language, that there must be peace for ever. "On former times," say they, "when the hatchet was buried, it was only slightly covered with a little earth and a few leaves, and being always a very troublesome restless creature, it soon contrived to find its way above ground, where it never failed to occasion great confusion between us and our white brethren, and to knock a great many good people on the head; but now that it has been thrown into the deep lake, it can never do any more mischief amongst us; for it cannot rise of itself to the surface of the lake, and no one can go to the bottom to look for it." And that there would be a permanent peace between them I have no doubt, provided that the people of the States would observe the articles of the treaty as punctually as the Indians; but it requires little sagacity to predict that this will not be the case, and that ere long the hatchet will be again resumed. Indeed, a little time before we reached Malden, messengers from the southern Indians had arrived to sound the disposition of those who lived near the lake, and try if they were ready and willing to enter into a fresh war. Nor is this eagerness

eagerness for war to be wondered at, when from the report of the commissioners, who were sent down by the federal government to the new state of Tennessee, in order to put the treaty into effect, and to mark out the boundaries of that state in particular, it appeared that upwards of five thousand people, contrary to the stipulation of the treaty lately entered into with the Indians, had encroached upon, and settled themselves down in Indian territory, which people, the commissioners said, could not be persuaded to return, and in their opinion could not be forced back again into the States without very great difficulty*.

A large portion of the back settlers, living upon the Indian frontiers, are, according to the best of my information, far greater savages than the Indians themselves. It is nothing uncommon, I am told, to see hung up in their chimney corners, or nailed against the door of their habitations, similarly to the ears or brush of a fox, the scalps which they have themselves torn from the heads of the Indians whom they have shot; and in numberless publications in the United States I have read accounts of their having flayed the Indians, and employed their skins as they would have done those of a wild beast, for whatever purpose they could be applied to. An Indian is considered by them as nothing better than a destructive ravenous wild beast, without reason, without a soul, that ought to be hunted down like a wolf wherever it makes its appearance; and indeed, even amongst the bettermost sort of the inhabitants of the western country, the most illiberal notions are entertained respecting these unfortunate people, and arguments for their banishment, or rather extirpation, are adopted, equally contrary to justice and to humanity. "The Indian," say they, "who has no idea, or at least is unwilling to apply himself to agriculture, requires a thousand acres of land for the support of his family; an hundred acres will be enough for one of us and our children; why then should these heathens, who have no notion of arts and manufactures, who never have made any improvement in science, and have never been the inventors of any thing new or useful to the human species, be suffered to encumber the soil?"

* The substance of this report appeared in an extract of a letter from Lexington, in Kentucky, which I myself saw, and which was published in many of the newspapers in the United States.

“ The settlements making in the upper parts of Georgia, upon the fine lands of the Oconee and Okemulgee rivers, will,” says Mr. Imlay, speaking of the probable destination of the Indians of the south western territory, “ bid defiance to them in that quarter. The settlements of French Broad, aided by Holston, have nothing to fear from them; and the Cumberland is too puissant to apprehend any danger. The Spaniards are in possession of the Floridas (how long they will remain so must depend upon their moderation and good manners) and of the settlements at the Natchez and above, which will soon extend to the southern boundaries of Cumberland, so that they (the Indians) will be completely enveloped in a few years. Our people (alluding to those of the United States) will continue to *encroach* upon them on three sides, and *compel* them to live more domestic lives, and assimilate them to our mode of living, or cross to the western side of the Mississippi.”

O Americans! shall we praise your justice and your love of liberty, when thus you talk of encroachments and compulsion? Shall we commend your moderation, when we see ye eager to gain fresh possessions, whilst ye have yet millions of acres within your own territories unoccupied? Shall we reverence your regard for the rights of human nature, when we see ye bent upon banishing the poor Indian from the land where rest the bones of his ancestors, to him more precious than your cold hearts can imagine, and when we see ye tyrannizing over the hapless African, because nature has stamped upon him a complexion different from your own?

The conduct of the people of the States towards the Indians appears the more unreasonable and the more iniquitous, when it is considered that they are dwindling fast away of themselves; and that in the natural order of things there will not probably be a single tribe of them found in existence in the western territory by the time that the numbers of the white inhabitants of the country become so numerous as to render land one half as valuable there as it is at present within ten miles of Philadelphia or New York. Even in Canada, where the Indians are treated with so much kindness, they are disappearing faster, perhaps, than
any

any people were ever known to do before them, and are making room every year for the whites; and it is by no means improbable, but that at the end of fifty years there will not be a single Indian to be met with between Quebec and Detroit, except the few perhaps that may be induced to lead quiet domestic lives, as a small number now does in the village of Lorette near Quebec, and at some other places in the lower province.

It is well known, that before Europeans got any footing in North America, the increase of population amongst the Indian nations was very slow, as it is at this day amongst those who remain still unconnected with the whites. Various reasons have been assigned for this. It has been asserted, in the first place, that the Indian is of a much cooler temperament than the white man, has less ardour in pursuit of the female, and is furnished with less noble organs of generation. This assertion is perhaps true in part: they are chaste to a proverb when they come to Philadelphia, or any other of the large towns, though they have a predilection in general for white women, and might there readily indulge their inclination; and there has never been an instance that I can recollect, of their offering violence to a female prisoner, though oftentimes they have carried off from the settlements very beautiful women; that, however, they should not have been gifted by the Creator with ample powers to propagate their species would be contrary to every thing we see either in the animal or the vegetable world; it seems to be with more justice that their slow increase is ascribed to the conduct of the women. The dreadful practice amongst them, of prostituting themselves at a very early age, cannot fail, I should imagine, to vitiate the humours, and must have a tendency to occasion sterility. Added to this, they suckle the few children they have for several years, during which time, at least amongst many of the tribes, they avoid all connection with their husbands; moreover, finding great inconveniency attendant upon a state of pregnancy, when they are following their husbands, in the hunting season, from one camp to another, they have been accused of making use of certain herbs, the specific virtues of which they are well acquainted with, in order to procure abortion.

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If one or more of these causes operated against the rapid increase of their numbers before the arrival of Europeans on the continent, the subsequent introduction of spirituous liquors amongst them, of which both men and women drink to the greatest excess whenever an opportunity offers, was sufficient in itself not only to retard this slow increase, but even to occasion a diminution of their numbers. Intermittent fevers and various other disorders, whether arising from an alteration in the climate, owing to the clearing of the woods, or from the use of the poisonous beverages introduced amongst them by the whites, it is hard to say, have likewise contributed much of late years to diminish their numbers. The Shawnee, one of the most warlike tribes, has been lessened nearly one half by sickness. Many other reasons could be adduced for their decrease, but it is needless to enumerate them. That their numbers have gradually lessened, as those of the whites have increased, for two centuries past, is incontrovertible; and they are too much attached to old habits to leave any room to imagine that they will vary their line of conduct, in any material degree, during years to come, so that they must of consequence still continue to decrease.

In my next letter I intend to communicate to you a few observations that I have made upon the character, manners, customs, and personal and mental qualifications, &c. of the Indians. So much has already been written on these subjects, that I fear I shall have little to offer to your perusal but what you may have read before. I am induced to think, however, that it will not be wholly unpleasing to you to hear the observations of others confirmed by me, and if you should meet with any thing new in what I have to say, it will have the charm of novelty at least to recommend it to your notice. I am not going to give you a regular detail of Indian manners, &c.; it would be absurd in me, who have only been with them for a few weeks, to attempt to do so. If you wish to have an account of Indian affairs at large, you must read Le P. Charlevoix, Le P. Hennipin, Le Hontan, Carver, &c. &c. who have each written volumes on the subject.

L E T T E R XXXV.

A brief Account of the Persons, Manners, Character, Qualifications, mental and corporeal, of the Indians, interspersed with Anecdotes.

Malden.

WHAT I shall first take notice of in the persons of the Indians, is the colour of their skins, which, in fact, constitutes the most striking distinction between their persons and ours. In general their skin is of a copper cast; but a most wonderful difference of colour is observable amongst them; some, in whose veins there is no reason to think that any other than Indian blood flows, not having darker complexions than natives of the south of France or of Spain, whilst others, on the contrary, are nearly as black as negroes. Many persons, and particularly some of the most respectable of the French missionaries, whose long residence amongst the Indians ought to have made them competent judges of the matter, have been of opinion, that their natural colour does not vary from ours; and that the darkness of their complexion arises wholly from their anointing themselves so frequently with unctuous substances, and from their exposing themselves so much to the smoke of wood fires, and to the burning rays of the sun. But although it is certain that they think a dark complexion very becoming; that they take great pains from their earliest age to acquire such an one; and that many of them do, in process of time, contrive to vary their original colour very considerably; although it is certain likewise, that when first born their colour differs but little from ours; yet it appears evident to me, that the greater part of them are indebted for their different hues to nature alone. I have been induced to form this opinion from the following consideration, namely; that those children which are born of parents of a dark colour are almost universally of the same dark cast as those from whom they sprang. Nekig, that is, The Little Otter, an Ottoway chief of great notoriety, whose village is on Detroit River, and with whom we have become intimately acquainted, has a complexion that differs but little from

that of an African; and his little boys, who are the very image of the father, are just as black as himself. With regard to Indian children being white on their first coming into the world, it ought by no means to be concluded from thence, that they would remain so if their mothers did not bedaub them with grease, herbs, &c. as it is well known that negro children are not perfectly black when born, nor indeed for many months afterwards, but that they acquire their jetty hue gradually, on being exposed to the air and sun, just as in the vegetable world the tender blade, on first peeping above ground, turns from white to a pale greenish colour, and afterwards to a deeper green.

Though I remarked to you in a former letter, that the Mississaguic, who live about Lake Ontario, were of a much darker cast than any other tribe of Indians I met with, yet I do not think that the different shades of complexion observable amongst the Indians are so much confined to particular tribes as to particular families; for even amongst the Mississaguic I saw several men that were comparatively of a very light colour. Judging of the Creeks, Cherokees, and other southern Indians, from what I have seen of them at Philadelphia, and at other towns in the States, whither they often come in large parties, led either by business or curiosity, it appears to me that their skin has a redder tinge, and more warmth of colouring in it, if I may use the expression, than that of the Indians in the neighbourhood of the lakes; it appears to me also, that there is less difference of colour amongst them than amongst those last mentioned.

Amongst the female Indians also, in general, there is a much greater sameness of colour than amongst the men. I do not recollect to have seen any of a deeper complexion than what might be termed a dirty copper colour.

The Indians universally have long, straight, black, coarse hair, and black eyes, rather small than full sized; they have, in general, also, high prominent cheek bones, and sharp small noses, rather inclining to an aquiline shape; they have good teeth, and their breath, in general, is as sweet as that of a human being can be. The men are for the most part very well made; it is a most rare circumstance to meet with a deformed person

person amongst them: they are remarkably straight; have full open chests; their walk is firm and erect, and many amongst them have really a dignified deportment. Very few of them are under the middle stature, and none of them ever become very fat or corpulent. You may occasionally see amongst them stout robust men, closely put together, but in general they are but slightly made. Their legs, arms, and hands, are for the most part extremely well shaped; and very many amongst them would be deemed handsome men in any country in the world.

The women, on the contrary, are mostly under the middle size; and have higher cheek bones, and rounder faces than the men. They have very ungraceful carriages; walk with their toes turned considerably inwards, and with a shuffling gait; and as they advance in years they grow remarkably fat and coarse. I never saw an Indian woman of the age of thirty, but what her eyes were sunk, her forehead wrinkled, her skin loose and shrivelled, and her whole person, in short, forbidding; yet, when young, their faces and persons are really pleasing, not to say sometimes very captivating. One could hardly imagine, without witnessing it, that a few years could possibly make such an alteration as it does in their persons. This sudden change is chiefly owing to the drudgery imposed on them by the men after a certain age; to their exposing themselves so much to the burning rays of the sun; sitting so continually in the smoke of wood fires; and, above all, to the general custom of prostituting themselves at a very early age.

Though the Indians are profusely furnished with hair on their heads, yet on none of the other parts of the body, usually covered with it amongst us, is the smallest sign of hair visible, except, indeed, on the chins of old men, where a few slender straggling hairs are sometimes seen, not different from what may be occasionally seen on women of a certain age in Europe. Many persons have supposed that the Indians have been created without hair on those parts of the body where it appears wanting; others, on the contrary, are of opinion, that nature has not been less bountiful to them than to us; and that this apparent deficiency of hair is wholly owing to their plucking it out themselves by the roots, as soon as it appears above the skin. It is

well known, indeed, that the Indians have a great dislike to hair, and that such of the men as are ambitious of appearing gayer than the rest, pluck it not only from their eye-brows and eye-lashes, but also from every part of the head, except one spot on the back part of the crown, where they leave a long lock. For my own part, from every thing I have seen and heard, I am fully persuaded, that if an Indian were to lay aside this custom of plucking out the hair, he would not only have a beard, but likewise hair on the same parts of the body as white people have; I think, however, at the same time, that this hair would be much finer, and not grow as thickly as upon our bodies, notwithstanding that the hair of their heads is so much thicker than ours. The few hairs that are seen on the faces of old men are to be attributed to the carelessness of old people about their external appearance.

To pluck out their hair, all such as have any connection with the traders make use of a pliable worm, formed of flattened brass wire. This instrument is closely applied, in its open state, to the surface of the body where the hair grows; it is then compressed by the finger and thumb; a great number of hairs are caught at once between the spiral evolutions of the wire, and by a sudden twitch they are all drawn out by the roots. An old squaw, with one of these instruments, would deprive you of your beard in a very few minutes, and a slight application of the worm two or three times in the year would be sufficient to keep your chin smooth ever afterwards. A very great number of the white people, in the neighbourhood of Malden and Detroit, from having submitted to this operation, appear at first sight as little indebted to nature for beards as the Indians. The operation is very painful, but it is soon over, and when one considers how much time and trouble is saved and ease gained by it in the end, it is only surprising that more people do not summon up resolution, and patiently submit to it.

The long lock of hair on the top of the head, with the skin on which it grows, constitutes the true scalp; and in scalping a person that has a full head of hair, an experienced warrior never thinks of taking off more of the skin than a bit of about the size of a crown piece, from the part
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of the head where this lock is usually left. They ornament this solitary lock of hair with beads, silver trinkets, &c. and on grand occasions with feathers. The women do not pluck any of the hair from off their heads, and pride themselves upon having it as long as possible. They commonly wear it neatly platted up behind, and divided in front on the middle of the forehead. When they wish to appear finer than usual, they paint the small part of the skin, which appears on the separation of the hair, with a streak of vermilion; when neatly done, it looks extremely well, and forms a pleasing contrast to the jetty black of their hair.

The Indians, who have any dealings with the English or American traders, and all of them have that live in the neighbourhood, and to the east of the Mississippi, and in the neighbourhood of the great lakes to the north-west, have now totally laid aside the use of furs and skins in their dress, except for their shoes or moccasins, and sometimes for their leggings, as they find they can exchange them to advantage for blankets and woollen cloths, &c. which they consider likewise as much more agreeable and commodious materials for wearing apparel. The moccasin is made of the skin of the deer, elk, or buffalo, which is commonly dressed without the hair, and rendered of a deep brown colour by being exposed to the smoke of a wood fire. It is formed of a single piece of leather, with a seam from the toe to the instep, and another behind, similar to that in a common shoe; by means of a thong, it is fastened round the instep, just under the ankle-bone, and is thus made to fit very close to the foot. Round that part where the foot is put in, a flap of the depth of an inch or two is left, which hangs loosely down over the string by which the moccasin is fastened; and this flap, as also the seam, are tastefully ornamented with porcupine quills and beads: the flap is edged with tin or copper tags filled with scarlet hair, if the moccasin be intended for a man, and with ribands if for a woman. An ornamented moccasin of this sort is only worn in dress, as the ornaments are expensive, and the leather soon wears out; one of plain leather answers for ordinary use. Many of the white people on the In-

dian frontiers wear this kind of shoe; but a person not accustomed to walk in it, or to walk barefoot, cannot wear it abroad, on a rough road, without great inconvenience, as every unevenness of surface is felt through the leather, which is soft and pliable: in a house it is the most agreeable sort of shoe that can be imagined: the Indians wear it universally.

Above the moccasins all the Indians wear what are called leggings, which reach from the instep to the middle of the thigh. They are commonly made of blue or scarlet cloth, and are formed so as to fit close to the limbs, like the modern pantaloons; but the edges of the cloth annexed to the seam, instead of being turned in, are left on the outside, and are ornamented with beads, ribands, &c. when the leggings are intended for dress. Many of the young warriors are so desirous that their leggings should fit them neatly, that they make the squaws, who are the tailors, and really very good ones, sew them tight on their limbs, so that they cannot be taken off, and they continue to wear them constantly till they are reduced to rags. The leggings are kept up by means of two strings, one on the outside of each thigh, which are fastened to a third, that is tied round the waist.

They also wear round the waist another string, from which are suspended two little aprons, somewhat more than a foot square, one hanging down before and the other behind, and under these a piece of cloth, drawn close up to the body between the legs, forming a sort of truss. The aprons and this piece of cloth, which are all fastened together, are called the breech cloth. The utmost ingenuity of the squaws is exerted in adorning the little aprons with beads, ribands, &c.

The moccasins, leggings, and breech cloth constitute the whole of the dress which they wear when they enter upon a campaign, except indeed it be a girdle, from which hangs their tobacco pouch and scalping knife, &c.; nor do they wear any thing more when the weather is very warm; but when it is cool, or when they dress themselves to visit their friends, they put on a short shirt, loose at the neck and wrists, generally made of coarse figured cotton or callico of some gaudy pattern, not unlike what would be used for window or bed curtains.

curtains at a common inn in England. Over the shirt they wear either a blanket, large piece of broad cloth, or else a loose coat made somewhat similarly to a common riding frock; a blanket is more commonly worn than any thing else. They tie one end of it round their waist with a girdle, and then drawing it over their shoulders, either fasten it across their breasts with a skewer, or hold the corners of it together in the left hand. One would imagine that this last mode of wearing it could not but be highly inconvenient to them, as it must deprive them in a great measure of the use of one hand; yet it is the mode in which it is commonly worn, even when they are shooting in the woods; they generally, however, keep the right arm disengaged when they carry a gun, and draw the blanket over the left shoulder.

The dress of the women differs but very little from that of the men. They wear moccasins, leggings, and loose short shirts, and like them they throw over their shoulders, occasionally, a blanket or piece of broad cloth, but most generally the latter; they do not tie it round their waist, however, but suffer it to hang down so as to hide their legs; instead also of the breech cloth, they wear a piece of cloth folded closely round their middle, which reaches from the waist to the knees. Dark blue or green cloths in general are preferred to those of any other colour; a few of the men are fond of wearing scarlet.

The women in warm weather appear in the villages without any other covering above their waists than these shirts, or shifts if you please so to call them, though they differ in no respect from the shirts of the men; they usually, however, fasten them with a broach round the neck. In full dress they also appear in these shirts, but then they are covered entirely over with silver broaches, about the size of a sixpenny piece. In full dress they likewise fasten pieces of ribands of various colours to their hair behind, which are suffered to hang down to their very heels. I have seen a young squaw, that has been a favourite with the men, come forth at a dance with upwards of five guineas worth of ribands streaming from her hair.

On their wrists the women wear silver bracelets when they can procure them; they also wear silver ear-rings; the latter are in general of
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a very small size; but it is not merely one pair which they wear, but several. To admit them, they bore a number of holes in their ears, sometimes entirely round the edges. The men wear ear-rings likewise, but of a sort totally different from those worn by the women; they mostly consist of round flat thin pieces of silver, about the size of a dollar, perforated with holes in different patterns; others, however, equally large, are made in a triangular form. Some of the tribes are very select in the choice of the pattern, and will not wear any but the one sort of pendants. Instead of boring their ears, the men slit them along the outward edge from top to bottom, and as soon as the gash is healed hang heavy weights to them in order to stretch the rim thus separated as low down as possible. Some of them are so successful in this operation, that they contrive to draw the rims of the ear in form of a bow, down to their very shoulders, and their large ear-rings hang dangling on their breasts. To prevent the rim thus extended from breaking, they bind it with brass wire; however, I observed that there was not one in six that had his ears perfect; the least touch, indeed, is sufficient to break the skin, and it would be most wonderful if they were able to preserve it entire, engaged so often as they are in drunken quarrels, and so often liable to be entangled in thickets whilst pursuing their game.

Some of the men wear pendants in their noses, but these are not so common as ear-rings. The chiefs and principal warriors wear breast plates, consisting of large pieces of silver, sea shells, or the like. Silver gorgets, such as are usually worn by officers, please them extremely, and to favourite chiefs they are given out, amongst other presents, on the part of government. Another sort of ornament is likewise worn by the men, consisting of a large silver clasp or bracelet, to which is attached a bunch of hair dyed of a scarlet colour, usually taken from the knee of the buffalo. This is worn on the narrow part of the arm above the elbow, and it is deemed very ornamental, and also a badge of honour, for no person wears it that has not distinguished himself in the field. Silver ornaments are universally preferred to those of any other metal.

The Indians not only paint themselves when they go to war, but likewise

wife when they wish to appear full dressed. Red and black are their favourite colours, and they daub themselves in the most fantastic manner. I have seen some with their faces entirely covered with black, except a round spot in the center, which included the upper lip and end of the nose, which was painted red; others again I have seen with their heads entirely black, except a large red round spot on each ear; others with one eye black and the other red, &c.; but the most common style of painting I observed, was to black their faces entirely over with charcoal, and then wetting their nails, to draw parallel undulating lines on their cheeks. They generally carry a little looking glass about them to enable them to dispose of their colours judiciously. When they go to war they rub in the paint with grease, and are much more particular about their appearance, which they study to render as horrible as possible; they then cover their whole body with red, white, and black paint, and seem more like devils than human beings. Different tribes have different methods of painting themselves.

Though the Indians spend so much of their time in adorning their persons, yet they take no pains to ornament their habitations, which for the most part are wretched indeed. Some of them are formed of logs, in a style somewhat similar to the common houses in the United States; but the greater part of them are of a moveable nature, and formed of bark. The bark of the birch tree is deemed preferable to every other sort, and where it is to be had is always made use of; but in this part of the country not being often met with, the bark of the elm tree is used in its stead. The Indians are very expert in stripping it from a tree; and frequently take the entire bark from off the trunk in one piece. The skeletons of their huts consist of slender poles, and on them the bark is fastened with strips of the tough rind of some young tree: this, if found, proves a very effectual defence against the weather. The huts are built in various forms: some of them have walls on every side, doors, and also a chimney in the middle of the roof; Others are open on one side, and are nothing better than sheds. When built in this last style, four of them are commonly placed together, so as to form a quadrangle, with the open parts towards the inside, and a fire common.

common to them all is kindled in the middle. In fine weather these huts are agreeable dwellings; but in the depth of winter they must be dreadfully uncomfortable. Others of their huts are built in a conical shape. The Nadowessies, Mr. Carver tells us, live entirely in tents formed of skins. A great many of the families that were encamped on the island of Bois Blanc, I observed, lived in the canvas tents which they had taken from St. Clair's army. Many of the Indian nations have no permanent place of residence, but move about from one spot to another, and in the hunting season they all have moveable encampments; which last are in general very rude, and insufficient to give them even tolerable shelter from a fall of rain or snow. The hunting season commences on the fall of the leaf, and continues till the snow dissolves.

In the depth of winter, when the snow is frozen on the ground, they form their hunting sheds of the snow itself; a few twigs platted together being simply placed overhead to prevent the snow which forms the roof from falling down. These snowy habitations are much more comfortable, and warmer in winter time than any others that can be erected, as they effectually screen you from the keen piercing blasts of the wind, and a bed of snow is far from being uncomfortable. To accustom the troops to encamp in this style, in case of a winter campaign, a party of them, headed by some of the young officers, used regularly to be sent from Quebec by the late governor, into the woods, there to shift for themselves during the month of February. Care was always taken, however, to send with them two or three experienced persons, to shew them how to build the huts, otherwise death might have been the consequence to many. In these encampments they always sleep with their feet to the fire; and indeed in the Indian encampments in general, during cold weather, they sleep on the ground with their feet to the fire; during mild weather, many of them sleep on benches of bark in their huts, which are raised from two to four feet from the ground.

The utensils in an Indian hut are very few; one or two brass or iron kettles procured from the traders, or, if they live removed from them, pots formed of stone, together with a few wooden spoons and dishes made by themselves, constitute in general the whole of them. A stone

of a very soft texture, called the *soap stone*, is very commonly found in the back parts of North America, particularly suited for Indian workmanship. It receives its name from appearing to the touch as soft and smooth as a bit of soap; and indeed it may be cut with a knife almost equally easily. In Virginia they use it powdered for the boxes of their wheels instead of grease. Soft, however, as is this stone, it will resist fire equally with iron. The soap stone is of a dove colour; others nearly of the same quality, are found in the country, of a black and red colour, which are still commonly used by the Indians for the bowls of their pipes.

The bark canoes, which the Indians use in this part of the country, are by no means so neatly formed as those made in the country upon, and to the north of, the River St. Lawrence: they are commonly formed of one entire piece of elm bark, taken from the trunk of the tree, which is bound on ribs formed of slender rods of tough wood. There are no ribs, however, at the ends of these canoes, but merely at the middle part, where alone it is that passengers ever sit. It is only the center, indeed, which rests upon the water; the ends are generally raised some feet above the surface, the canoes being of a curved form. They bring them into this shape by cutting, nearly midway between the stem and stern, two deep slits, one on each side, in the back, and by lapping the disjointed edges one over the other. No pains are taken to make the ends of the canoes water tight, since they never touch the water.

On first inspection you would imagine, from its miserable appearance, that an elm bark canoe, thus constructed, were not calculated to carry even a single person safely across a smooth piece of water; it is nevertheless a remarkably safe sort of boat, and the Indians will resolutely embark in one of them during very rough weather. They are so light that they ride securely over every wave, and the only precaution necessary in navigating them is to sit steady. I have seen a dozen people go securely in one, which might be easily carried by a single able-bodied man. When an Indian takes his family to any distance in a canoe, the women, the girls, and boys, are furnished each with a paddle, and are kept busily

at work ; the father of the family gives himself no trouble but in steering the vessel.

The Indians that are connected with the traders have now, very generally, laid aside bows and arrows, and seldom take them into their hands, except it be to amuse themselves for a few hours, when they have expended their powder and shot : their boys, however, still use them universally, and some of them shoot with wonderful dexterity. I saw a young Shawnese chief, apparently not more than ten years old, fix three arrows running in the body of a small black squirrel, on the top of a very tall tree, and during an hour or two that I followed him through the woods, he scarcely missed his mark half a dozen times. It is astonishing to see with what accuracy, and at the same time with what readiness, they mark the spot where their arrows fall. They will shoot away a dozen arrows or more, seemingly quite careless about what becomes of them, and as inattentive to the spot where they fall as if they never expected to find them again, yet afterwards they will run and pick them every one up without hesitation. The southern Indians are much more expert at the use of the bow than those near the lakes, as they make much greater use of it.

With the gun, it seems to be generally allowed, that the Indians are by no means so good marksmen as the white people. I have often taken them out shooting with me, and I always found them very slow in taking aim ; and though they generally hit an object that was still, yet they scarcely ever touched a bird on the wing, or a squirrel that was leaping about from tree to tree.

The expertness of the Indians in throwing the tomahawk is well known. At the distance of ten yards they will fix the sharp edge of it in an object nearly to a certainty. I have been told, however, that they are not fond of letting it out of their hands in action, and that they never attempt to throw it but when they are on the point of overtaking a flying foe, or are certain of recovering it. Some of them will fasten a string of the length of a few feet to the handle of the tomahawk, and will launch it forth, and draw it back again into their hand
with

with great dexterity; they will also parry the thrust or cuts of a sword with the tomahawk very dexterously.

The common tomahawk is nothing more than a light hatchet, but the most approved sort has on the back part of the hatchet, and connected with it in one piece, the bowl of a pipe, so that when the handle is perforated, the tomahawk answers every purpose of a pipe: the Indians, indeed, are fonder of smoking out of a tomahawk than out of any other sort of pipe. That formerly given to the Indians by the French traders, instead of a pipe, had a large spike on the back part of the hatchet; very few of these instruments are now to be found amongst them; I never saw but one. The tomahawk is commonly worn by the left side, stuck in a belt.

For the favourite chiefs, very elegant pipe tomahawks, inlaid with silver, are manufactured by the armourers in the Indian department. Captain E—— has given me one of this kind, which he had made for himself; it is so much admired by the Indians, that when they have seen it with me, they have frequently asked me to lend it to them for an hour or so to smoke out of, just as children would ask for a pretty plaything; they have never failed to return it very punctually.

The armourers here alluded to are persons kept at the expence of government to repair the arms of the Indians when they happen to break, which is very commonly the case.

An Indian child, soon after it is born, is swathed with cloths or skins, and being then laid on its back, is bound down on a piece of thick board, spread over with soft moss. The board is left somewhat longer and broader than the child, and bent pieces of wood, like pieces of hoops, are placed over its face to protect it, so that if the machine were suffered to fall the child would not probably be injured. The women, when they go abroad, carry their children thus tied down on their backs, the board being suspended by a broad band, which they wear round their foreheads. When they have any business to transact at home, they hang the board on a tree, if there be one at hand, and set them a swinging from side to side, like a pendulum, in order to exercise the children; sometimes also, I observed, they unloosened the children from the boards,

and putting them each into a sort of little hammock, fastened them between two trees, and there suffered them to swing about. As soon as they are strong enough to crawl about on their hands and feet they are liberated from all confinement, and suffered, like young puppies, to run about, stark naked, into water, into mud, into snow, and, in short, to go wheresoever their choice leads them; hence they derive that vigour of constitution which enables them to support the greatest fatigue, and that indifference to the changes of the weather which they possess in common with the brute creation. The girls are covered with a loose garment as soon as they have attained four or five years of age, but the boys go naked till they are considerably older.

The Indians, as I have already remarked, are for the most part very slightly made, and from a survey of their persons one would imagine that they were much better qualified for any pursuits that required great agility than great bodily strength. This has been the general opinion of most of those who have written on this subject. I am induced, however, from what I have myself been witness to, and from what I have collected from others, to think that the Indians are much more remarkable for their muscular strength than for their agility. At different military posts on the frontiers, where this subject has been agitated, races, for the sake of experiment, have frequently been made between soldiers and Indians, and provided the distance was not great, the Indians have almost always been beaten; but in a long race, where strength of muscle was required, they have without exception been victorious; in leaping also the Indians have been infallibly beaten by such of the soldiers as possessed common activity: but the strength of the Indians is most conspicuous in the carrying of burthens on their backs; they esteem it nothing to walk thirty miles a day for several days together under a load of eight stone, and they will walk an entire day under a load without taking any refreshment. In carrying burdens they make use of a sort of frame, somewhat similar to what is commonly used by a glazier to carry glass; this is fastened by cords, or strips of tough bark or leather, round their shoulders, and when the load is fixed upon the broad ledge at the bottom of the frame, two bands are thrown round the
whole,

whole, one of which is brought across the forehead, and the other across the breast, and thus the load is supported. The length of way an Indian will travel in the course of the day, when unencumbered with a load, is astonishing. A young Wyandot, who, when peace was about to be made between the Indians and General Wayne, was employed to carry a message from his nation to the American officer, travelled but little short of eighty miles on foot in one day; and I was informed by one of the general's aids-de-camp, who saw him when he arrived at the camp, that he did not appear in the least degree fatigued.

Le P. Charlevoix observes, that the Indians seem to him to possess many personal advantages over us; their senses, in particular, he thinks much finer than ours; their sight is, indeed, quick and penetrating, and it does not fail them till they are far advanced in years, notwithstanding that their eyes are exposed so many months each winter to the dazzling whiteness of the snow, and to the sharp irritating smoke of wood fires. Disorders in the eyes are almost wholly unknown to them; nor is the slightest blemish ever seen in their eyes, excepting it be a result from some accident. Their hearing is very acute, and their sense of smelling so nice, that they can tell when they are approaching a fire long before it is in sight.

The Indians have most retentive memories; they will preserve to their deaths a recollection of any place they have once passed through; they never forget a face that they have attentively observed but for a few seconds; at the end of many years they will repeat every sentence of the speeches that have been delivered by different individuals in a public assembly; and has any speech been made in the council-house of the nation, particularly deserving of remembrance, it will be handed down with the utmost accuracy from one generation to another, though perfectly ignorant of the use of hieroglyphicks and letters; the only memorials of which they avail themselves are small pieces of wood, such as I told you were brought by them to Captain E——, preparatory to the delivery of the presents, and belts of wampum; the former are only used on trifling occasions, the latter never but on very grand and solemn ones. Whenever a conference, or a talk,

as they term it, is about to be held with any neighbouring tribe, or whenever any treaty or national compact is about to be made, one of these belts, differing in some respect from every other that has been made before, is immediately constructed; each person in the assembly holds this belt in his hand whilst he delivers his speech, and when he has ended, he presents it to the next person that rises, by which ceremony each individual is reminded, that it behoves him to be cautious in his discourse, as all he says will be faithfully recorded by the belt. The talk being over, the belt is deposited in the hands of the principal chief.

On the ratification of a treaty, very broad splendid belts are reciprocally given by the contracting parties, which are deposited amongst the other belts belonging to the nation. At stated intervals they are all produced to the nation, and the occasions upon which they were made are mentioned; if they relate to a talk, one of the chiefs repeats the substance of what was said over them; if to a treaty, the terms of it are recapitulated. Certain of the squaws, also, are entrusted with the belts, whose business it is to relate the history of each one of them to the younger branches of the tribe; this they do with great accuracy, and thus it is that the remembrance of every important transaction is kept up.

The wampum is formed of the inside of the clam shell, a large sea shell bearing some similitude to that of a scallop, which is found on the coasts of New England and Virginia. The shell is sent in its original rough state to England, and there cut into small pieces, exactly similar in shape and size to the modern glass bugles worn by ladies, which little bits of shell constitute wampum. There are two sorts of wampum, the white and the purple; the latter is most esteemed by the Indians, who think a pound weight of it equally valuable with a pound of silver. The wampum is strung upon bits of leather, and the belt is composed of ten, twelve, or more strings, according to the importance of the occasion on which it is made; sometimes also the wampum is sowed in different patterns on broad belts of leather.

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The use of wampum appears to be very general amongst the Indian nations, but how it became so, is a question that would require discussion, for it is well known that they are a people obstinately attached to old customs, and that would not therefore be apt to adopt, on the most grand and solemn occasion, the use of an article that they had never seen until brought to them by strangers; at the same time it seems wholly impossible that they should ever have been able to have made wampum from the clam shell for themselves; they fashion the bowls of tobacco pipes, indeed, from stone, in a very curious manner, and with astonishing accuracy, considering that they use no other instrument than a common knife, but then the stone which they commonly carve thus is of a very soft kind; the clam shell, however, is exceedingly hard, and to bore and cut it into such small pieces as are necessary to form wampum, very fine tools would be wanting. Probably they made some use of the clam shell, and endeavoured to reduce it to as small bits as they could with their rude instruments before we came amongst them, but on finding that we could cut it so much more neatly than they could, laid aside the wampum before in use for that of our manufacture. Mr. Carver tells us, that he found sea shells very generally worn by the Indians who resided in the most interior parts of the continent, who never could have visited a sea shore themselves, and could only have procured them at the expence of much trouble from other nations.

The Indians are exceedingly sagacious and observant, and by dint of minute attention, acquire many qualifications to which we are wholly strangers. They will traverse a trackless forest, hundreds of miles in extent, without deviating from the straight course, and will reach to a certainty the spot whither they intended to go on setting out: with equal skill they will cross one of the large lakes, and though out of sight of the shores for days, will to a certainty make the land at once, at the very place they desired. Some of the French missionaries have supposed that the Indians are guided by instinct, and have pretended that Indian children can find their way through a forest as easily as a person of maturer years; but this is a most absurd notion. It is unquestionably by a close attention to the growth of the trees, and position

tion of the sun, that they find their way. On the northern side of a tree, there is generally the most moss, and the bark on that side in general differs from that on the opposite one. The branches towards the south are for the most part more luxuriant than those on the other sides of trees, and several other distinctions also subsist between the northern and southern sides, conspicuous to Indians, who are taught from their infancy to attend to them, which a common observer would perhaps never notice. Being accustomed from their childhood, likewise, to pay great attention to the position of the sun, they learn to make the most accurate allowance for its apparent motion from one part of the heavens to another, and in any part of the day they will point to the part of the heavens where it is, although the sky be obscured by clouds or mists.

An instance of their dexterity in finding their way through an unknown country came under my observation when I was at Staunton, situated behind the Blue Mountains, Virginia. A number of the Creek nation had arrived at that town in their way to Philadelphia, whither they were going upon some affairs of importance, and had stopped there for the night. In the morning some circumstance or another, what could not be learned, induced one half of the Indians to set off without their companions, who did not follow until some hours afterwards. When these last were ready to pursue their journey, several of the townspeople mounted their horses to escort them part of the way. They proceeded along the high road for some miles, but all at once, hastily turning aside into the woods, though there was no path, the Indians advanced confidently forward; the people who accompanied them, surpris'd at this movement, informed them that they were quitting the road to Philadelphia, and expressed their fears lest they should miss their companions, who had gone on before. They answered, that they knew better; that the way through the woods was the shortest to Philadelphia; and that they knew very well that their companions had entered the woods at the very place they did. Curiosity led some of the horsemen to go on, and to their astonishment, for there was apparently no track, they overtook the other Indians in the thickest part of the wood; but what appeared most singular was, that the route which they took was found,

on examining a map, to be as direct for Philadelphia as if they had taken the bearings by a mariner's compass. From others of their nation, who had been at Philadelphia at a former period, they had probably learned the exact direction of that city from their village, and had never lost sight of it, although they had already travelled three hundred miles through woods, and had upwards of four hundred miles more to go before they could reach the place of their destination.

Of the exactness with which they can find out a strange place that they have been once directed to by their own people, a striking example is-furnished us, I think, by Mr. Jefferson, in his account of the Indian graves in Virginia. These graves are nothing more than large mounds of earth in the woods, which, on being opened, are found to contain skeletons in an erect posture: the Indian mode of sepulture has been too often described to remain unknown to you. But to come to my story. A party of Indians that were passing on to some of the sea ports on the Atlantic, just as the Creeks above mentioned were going to Philadelphia, were observed, all on a sudden, to quit the straight road by which they were proceeding, and without asking any questions, to strike through the woods in a direct line to one of these graves, which lay at the distance of some miles from the road. Now very near a century must have passed over since the part of Virginia, in which this grave was situated, had been inhabited by Indians; and these Indian travellers, who went to visit it by themselves, had, unquestionably, never been in that part of the country before; they must have found their way to it simply from the description of its situation that had been handed down to them by tradition.

The Indians, for the most part, are admirably well acquainted with the geography of their own country. Ask them any questions relative to the situation of a particular place in it, and if there be a convenient spot at hand, they will, with the utmost facility, trace upon the ground with a stick a map, by no means inaccurate, of the place in question, and the surrounding country; they will point out the course of the rivers, and by directing your attention to the sun, make you acquainted with the different bearings. I happened once to be sitting in a house at

the western extremity of Lake Erie, whilst we were detained there by contrary winds, and was employed in looking over a pocket map of the state of New York, when a young Seneka warrior entered. His attention was attracted by the sight of the map, and he seemed at once to comprehend the meaning of it; but never having before seen a general map of the state of New York, and being wholly ignorant of the use of letters, he could not discover to what part of the country it had a reference; simply, however, by laying my finger upon the spot where we then were, and by shewing to him the line that denoted Buffalo Creek, on which his village was situated, I gave him the clue to the whole, and having done so, he quickly ran over the map, and with the utmost accuracy pointed out by name, every lake and river for upwards of two hundred miles distant from his village. All the lakes and rivers in this part of the country still retain the Indian names, so that had he named them wrong, I could have at once detected him. His pleasure was so great on beholding such a perfect map of the country, that he could not refrain from calling some of his companions, who were loitering at the door, to come and look at it. They made signs to me to lend it to them; I did so, and having laid it on a table, they sat over it for more than half an hour, during which time I observed they frequently testified their pleasure to one another on finding particular places accurately laid down, which they had been acquainted with. The older men also seemed to have many stories to tell the others, probably respecting the adventures they had met with at distant parts of the country, and which they were now glad of having an opportunity of elucidating by the map before them.

Whenever a track of ground is about to be purchased by government from the Indians, for no private individuals can purchase lands from them by the laws of the province, a map of the country is drawn, and the part about to be contracted for, is particularly marked out. If there be any mistakes in these maps, the Indians will at once point them out; and after the bargain is made, they will, from the maps, mark out the boundaries of the lands they have ceded with the greatest accuracy, notching the trees, if there be any, along the boundary line, and if not, placing
stakes

stakes or stones in the ground to denote where it runs. On these occasions regular deeds of sale are drawn, with accurate maps of the lands which have been purchased attached to them, and these deeds are signed in form by the contracting parties. I saw several of them in possession of our friend Captain E——, which were extremely curious on account of the Indian signatures. The Indians, for the most part, take upon them the name of some animal, as, The Blue Snake; The Little Turkey; The Big Bear; The Mad Dog, &c. and their signatures consist of the outline, drawn with a pen, of the different animals whose names they bear. Some of the signatures at the bottom of these deeds were really well executed, and were lively representations of the animals they were intended for.

The Indians in general possess no small share of ingenuity. Their domestic wooden utensils, bows and arrows, and other weapons, &c. are made with the utmost neatness; and indeed the workmanship of them is frequently such as to excite astonishment, when it is considered that a knife and a hatchet are the only instruments they make use of. On the handles of their tomahawks, on their powder horns, on the bowls of their pipes, &c. you oftentimes meet with figures extremely well designed, and with specimens of carving far from contemptible. The embroidery upon their moccasins and other garments shews that the females are not less ingenious in their way than the men. Their porcupine quill work would command admiration in any country in Europe. The soft young quills of the porcupine are those which they use, and they dye them of the most beautiful and brilliant colours imaginable. Some of their dyes have been discovered, but many of them yet remain unknown, as do also many of the medicines with which they perform sometimes most miraculous cures. Their dyes and medicines are all procured from the vegetable world.

But though the Indians prove by their performances, that they have some relish for the works of art, yet they are by no means ready to bestow commendations on every thing curious for its workmanship that is shewn to them. Trinkets or ornaments for dress, though ever so gaudy, or ever so neatly manufactured, they despise, unless somewhat similar in

their kind to what they themselves are accustomed to wear, and fashioned exactly to their own taste, which has remained nearly the same since Europeans first came amongst them; nor will they praise any curious or wonderful piece of mechanism, unless they can see that it is intended to answer some useful purpose. Nothing that I could shew them attracted their attention, I observed, so much as a light double-barrelled gun, which I commonly carried in my hand when walking about their encampments. This was something in their own way; they at once perceived the benefit that must accrue to the sportsman from having two barrels on the one stock, and the contrivance pleased them; well acquainted also with the qualities of good locks, and the advantages attending them, they expressed great satisfaction at finding those upon my piece so superior to what they perhaps had before seen.

It is not every new scene either, which to them, one would imagine, could not fail to appear wonderful, that will excite their admiration.

A French writer, I forget who, tells us of some Iroquois Indians that walked through several of the finest streets of Paris, but without expressing the least pleasure at any thing they saw, until they at last came to a cook's shop; this called forth their warmest praise; a shop where a man was always sure of getting something to satisfy his hunger, without the trouble and fatigue of hunting and fishing, was in their opinion one of the most admirable institutions possible: had they been told, however, that they must have paid for what they eat, they would have expressed equal indignation perhaps at what they saw. In their own villages they have no idea of refusing food to any person that enters their habitation in quality of a friend.

The Indians, whom curiosity or business leads to Philadelphia, or to any other of the large towns in the States, find, in general, as little deserving of notice in the streets and houses there as these Iroquois at Paris; and there is not one of them but what would prefer his own wigwam to the most splendid habitations they see in any of these places. The shipping, however, at Philadelphia and the other sea-ports, seldom fails to excite their admiration, because they at once see the utility and
 advantage

advantage of large vessels over canoes, which are the only vessels they have. The young Wyandot, whom I before mentioned, as having made such a wonderful day's journey on foot, happened to be at Philadelphia when I was there, and he appeared highly delighted with the river, and the great number of ships of all sizes upon it; but the tide attracted his attention more than any thing else whatsoever. On coming to the river the first day, he looked up at the sun, and made certain observations upon the course of the stream, and general situation of the place, as the Indians never fail to do on coming to any new or remarkable spot. The second time, however, he went down to the water, he found to his surprise that the river was running with equal rapidity in a contrary direction to what he had seen it run the day before. For a moment he imagined that by some mistake he must have got to the opposite side of it; but soon recollecting himself, and being persuaded that he stood on the very same spot from whence he had viewed it the day before, his astonishment became great indeed. To obtain information upon such an interesting point, he immediately sought out an aid-de-camp of General Wayne, who had brought him to town. This gentleman, however, only rendered the appearance still more mysterious to him, by telling him, that the great spirit, for the convenience of the white men, who were his particular favourites, had made the rivers in their country to run two ways; but the poor Wyandot was satisfied with the answer, and replied, "Ah, my friend, if the great spirit would make the Ohio "to run two ways for us, we should very often pay you a visit at Pitts-burgh*." During his stay at Philadelphia he never failed to visit the river every day.

Amongst the public exhibitions at Philadelphia, the performances of the horse riders and tumblers at the amphitheatre appear to afford them the greatest pleasure; they entertain the highest opinion of these people who are so distinguished for their feats of activity, and rank them amongst the ablest men in the nation. Nothing, indeed, gives more delight to the Indians than to see a man that excels in any bodily exercise; and tell them even of a person that is distinguished for his great

* A town situated at the very head of the Ohio.

strength,

strength, for his swiftness in running, for his dexterous management of the bow or the gun, for his cunning in hunting, for his intrepid and firm conduct in war, or the like, they will listen to you with the greatest pleasure, and readily join in praises of the hero.

The Indians appear, on the first view, to be of a very cold and phlegmatic disposition, and you must know them for some time before you can be persuaded to the contrary. If you shew them any artificial production which pleases them, they simply tell you, with seeming indifference, "that it is pretty;" "that they like to look at it;" "that it is a clever invention:" nor do they testify their satisfaction and pleasure by emotions seemingly much warmer in their nature, on beholding any new or surprising spectacle, or on hearing any happy piece of intelligence. The performances at the amphitheatre at Philadelphia, though unquestionably highly interesting to them, never drew forth from them, I observed, more than a smile or a gentle laugh, followed by a remark in a low voice to their friend sitting next to them. With equal indifference do they behold any thing terrible, or listen to the accounts of any dreadful catastrophe that has befallen their families or their nation. This apathy, however, is only assumed, and certainly does not proceed from a real want of feeling: no people on earth are more alive to the calls of friendship; no people have a greater affection for their offspring in their tender years; no people are more sensible of an injury: a word in the slightest degree insulting will kindle a flame in their breasts, that can only be extinguished by the blood of the offending party; and they will traverse forests for hundreds of miles, exposed to the inclemency of the severest weather, and to the pangs of hunger, to gratify their revenge; they will not cease for years daily to visit, and silently to mourn over the grave of a departed child; and they will risk their lives, and sacrifice every thing they possess, to assist a friend in distress; but at the same time, in their opinion, no man can be esteemed a good warrior or a dignified character that openly betrays any extravagant emotions of surprise, of joy, of sorrow, or of fear, on any occasion whatsoever. The excellence of appearing thus indifferent to what would excite the strongest emotions in the minds of any other people, is forcibly inculcated on
2
them

them from their earliest youth; and such an astonishing command do they acquire over themselves, that even at the stake, when suffering the severest tortures that can be inflicted on the human body by the flames and the knife, they appear unmoved, and laugh, as it is well known, at their tormentors.

This affected apathy on the part of the Indians makes them appear uncommonly grave and reserved in the presence of strangers; in their own private circles, however, they frequently keep up gay and sprightly conversations; and they are possessed, it is said, of a lively and ready turn of wit. When at such a place as Philadelphia, notwithstanding their appearing so indifferent to every thing before them whilst strangers are present, yet, after having retired by themselves to an apartment for the night, they will frequently sit up for hours together, laughing and talking of what they have seen in the course of the day. I have been told by persons acquainted with their language, that have overheard their discourse on such occasions, that their remarks are most pertinent, and that they sometimes turn what has passed before them into such ludicrous points of view, that it is scarcely possible to refrain from laughter.

But though the Indians, in general, appear so reserved in the presence of strangers, yet the firmness of their dispositions forbids them from ever appearing embarrassed, and they would sit down to table in a palace, before the first crowned head on the face of the earth, with as much unconcern as they would sit down to a frugal meal in one of their own cabins. They deem it highly becoming in a warrior, to accommodate his manners to those of the people with whom he may happen to be, and as they are wonderfully observant, you will seldom perceive any thing of awkwardness or vulgarity in their behaviour in the company of strangers. I have seen an Indian, that had lived in the woods from his infancy, enter a drawing room in Philadelphia, full of ladies, with as much ease and as much gentility as if he had always lived in the city, and merely from having been told, preparatory to his entering, the form usually observed on such occasions. But the following anecdote will put this matter in a stronger point of view.

Our

Our friend Nekig, the Little Otter, had been invited to dine with us at the house of a gentleman at Detroit, and he came accordingly, accompanied by his son, a little boy of about nine or ten years of age. After dinner a variety of fruits were served up, and amongst the rest some peaches, a dish of which was handed to the young Indian. He helped himself to one with becoming propriety; but immediately afterwards he put the fruit to his mouth, and bit a piece out of it. The father eyed him with indignation, and spoke some words to him in a low voice, which I could not understand, but which, on being interpreted by one of the company, proved to be a warm reprimand for his having been so deficient in observation as not to peel his peach, as he saw the gentleman opposite to him had done. The little fellow was extremely ashamed of himself; but he quickly retrieved his error, by drawing a plate towards him, and peeling the fruit with the greatest neatness.

Some port wine, which he was afterwards helped to, not being by any means agreeable to his palate, the little fellow made a wry face, as a child might naturally do, after drinking it. This called forth another reprimand from the father, who told him, that he despaired of ever seeing him a great man or a good warrior if he appeared then to dislike what his host had kindly helped him to. The boy drank the rest of his wine with seeming pleasure.

The Indians scarcely ever lift their hands against their children; but if they are unmindful of what is said to them, they sometimes throw a little water in their faces, a species of reprimand of which the children have the greatest dread, and which produces an instantaneous good effect. One of the French missionaries tells us of his having seen a girl of an advanced age so vexed at having some water thrown in her face by her mother, as if she was still a child, that she instantly retired, and put an end to her existence. As long as they remain children, the young Indians are attentive in the extreme to the advice of their parents; but arrived at the age of puberty, and able to provide for themselves, they no longer have any respect for them, and they will follow their own
will

will and pleasure in spite of all their remonstrances, unless, indeed, their parents be of an advanced age. Old age never fails to command their most profound veneration.

No people are possessed of a greater share of natural politeness than the Indians: they will never interrupt you whilst you are speaking; nor, if you have told them any thing which they think to be false, will they bluntly contradict you; "We dare say brother," they will answer, "that you yourself believe what you tell us to be true; but it appears to us so improbable that we cannot give our assent to it."

In their conduct towards one another nought but gentleness and harmony is observable. You are never witness, amongst them, to such noisy broils and clamorous contentions as are common amongst the lower classes of people in Europe; nor do you perceive amongst them any traces of the coarse vulgar manners of these latter people; they behave on all occasions like gentlemen, and could not so many glaring proofs be adduced to the contrary, you never could imagine that they were that ferocious savage people in war which they are said to be. It must be understood, however, that I only speak now of the Indians in their sober state; when intoxicated with spirits, which is but too often the case, a very different picture is presented to our view, and they appear more like devils incarnate than human beings; they roar, they fight, they cut each other, and commit every sort of outrage; indeed so sensible are they of their own infirmities in this state, that when a number of them are about to get drunk, they give up their knives and tomahawks, &c. to one of the party, who is on honour to remain sober, and to prevent mischief, and who generally does behave according to this promise. If they happen to get drunk without having taken this precaution, their squaws take the earliest opportunity to deprive them of their weapons.

The Indians prefer whiskey and rum to all other spirituous liquors; but they do not seem eager to obtain these liquors so much for the pleasure of gratifying their palates as for the sake of intoxication. There is not one in a hundred that can refrain from drinking to excess if he have it in his power; and the generality of them having once got a taste of any intoxicating liquor, will use every means to gain more; and to do so

they at once become mean, fervile, deceitful, and depraved, in every sense of the word. Nothing can make amends to these unfortunate people for the introduction of spirituous liquors amongst them. Before their acquaintance with them, they were distinguished beyond all other nations for their temperance in eating and drinking; for their temperance in eating, indeed, they are still remarkable; they esteem it indecorous in the highest degree even to appear hungry; and on arriving at their villages, after having fasted, perhaps, for several days preceding, they will sit down quietly, and not ask for any food for a considerable time; and having got wherewith to satisfy their appetite, they will eat with moderation, as though the calls of hunger were not more pressing than if they had feasted the hour before. They never eat on any occasion in a hurry.

The Indians are by nature of a very hospitable generous disposition, where no particular circumstances operate to the contrary; and, indeed, even when revenge would fain persuade them to behave differently, yet having once professed a friendship for a stranger, and pledged themselves for his safety, nothing can induce them to deviate from their word. Of their generosity I had numberless proofs in the presents which they gave me; and though it must be allowed, that when they make presents they generally expect others in return, yet I am convinced, from the manner in which they presented different trifles to me, that it was not with an expectation of gaining more valuable presents in return that they gave them to me, but merely through friendship. It is notorious, that towards one another they are liberal in the extreme, and for ever ready to supply the deficiencies of their neighbours with any superfluities of their own. They have no idea of amassing wealth for themselves individually; and they wonder that persons can be found in any society, so destitute of every generous sentiment, as to enrich themselves at the expense of others, and to live in ease and affluence, regardless of the misery and wretchedness of members of the same community to which they themselves belong. Their dresses, domestic utensils, and weapons, are the only articles of property to which they lay an exclusive claim; every thing else is the common property of the tribe, in promoting the general welfare in which every individual feels himself deeply interested.

interested. The chiefs are actuated by the same laudable spirit, and instead of being the richest, are, in many instances, the poorest persons in the community; for whilst others have leisure to hunt, &c. it frequently happens that the whole of their time is occupied in settling the public affairs of the nation.

The generality of the Indian nations appear to have two sorts of chiefs; council chiefs, and war chiefs. The former are hereditary, and are employed principally in the management of their civil affairs; but they may be war chiefs at the same time: the latter are chosen from amongst those who have distinguished themselves the most in battle, and are solely employed in leading the warriors in the field. The chiefs have no power of enforcing obedience to their commands, nor do they ever attempt to give their orders in an imperious manner; they simply advise. Each private individual conceives that he is born in a state of perfect liberty, and he disdains all controul, but that which his own reason subjects him to. As they all have one interest, however, at heart, which is the general welfare of the nation, and as it is well known that the chiefs are actuated by no other motives, whatever measures they recommend are generally attended to, and at once adopted. Savages as they are, yet in no civilized community, I fear, on earth, shall we find the same public spirit, the same disinterestedness, and the same regard to order, where order is not enforced by the severity of laws, as amongst the Indians.

The Indians have the most sovereign contempt for any set of people that have tamely relinquished their liberty; and they consider such as have lost it, even after a hard struggle, as unworthy any rank in society above that of old women: to this cause, and not to the difference that subsists between their persons, is to be attributed, I conceive, the rooted aversion which the Indians universally have for negroes. You could not possibly affront an Indian more readily, than by telling him that you think he bears some resemblance to a negro; or that he has negro blood in his veins: they look upon them as animals inferior to the human species, and will kill them with as much unconcern as a dog or a cat.

An American officer, who, during the war with Great Britain, had been sent to one of the Indian nations resident on the western frontier of the States, to persuade them to remain neuter in the contest, informed me, that whilst he remained amongst them some agents arrived in their village to negotiate, if possible, for the release of some negro slaves whom they had carried off from the American settlements. One of these negroes, a remarkably tall handsome fellow, had been given to an Indian woman of some consequence in the nation, in the manner in which prisoners are usually disposed of amongst them. Application was made to her for his ransom. She listened quietly to what was said; resolved at the same time, however, that the fellow should not have his liberty, she stepped aside into her cabin, and having brought out a large knife, walked up to her slave, and without more ado plunged it into his bowels: "Now," says she, addressing herself coolly to the agents; "now I give you leave to take away your negro." The poor creature that had been stabbed fell to the ground, and lay writhing about in the greatest agonies, until one of the warriors took compassion on him, and put an end to his misery by a blow of a tomahawk.

At Detroit, Niagara, and some other places in Upper Canada, a few negroes are still held in bondage. Two of these hapless people contrived, whilst we remained at Malden, to make their escape from Detroit, by stealing a boat, and proceeding in the night down the river. As the wind would not permit them to cross the lake, it was conjectured that they would be induced to coast along the shore until they reached a place of safety; in hopes, therefore, of being able to recover them, the proprietor came down to Malden, and there procured two trusty Indians to go in quest of them. The Indians, having received a description of their persons, set out; but had scarcely proceeded an hundred yards, when one of them, who could speak a few words of English, returned, to ask the proprietor if he would give him permission to scalp the negroes if they were at all refractory, or refused coming. His request was peremptorily refused, for it was well known that, had it been granted, he would have at once killed them to avoid the trouble of bringing them back. "Well," says he, "if you will not let me scalp both, you won't be
"angry

“angry with me, I hope, if I scalp one.” He was told in answer, that he must bring them both back alive. This circumstance appeared to mortify him extremely, and he was beginning to hesitate about going, when, sorry am I to say, the proprietor, fearful lest the fellows should escape from him, gave his assent to the Indian’s request, but at the same time he begged that he would not destroy them if he could possibly avoid it. What the result was I never learned; but from the apparent satisfaction with which the Indian set out after he had obtained his dreadful permission, there was every reason to imagine that one of the negroes at least would be sacrificed.

This indifference in the mind of the Indians about taking away the life of a fellow creature, makes them appear, it must be confessed, in a very unamiable point of view. I fear also, that in the opinion of many people, all the good qualities which they possess, would but ill atone for their revengeful disposition, and for the cruelties which, it is well known, they sometimes inflict upon the prisoners who have fallen into their power in battle. Great pains have been taken, both by the French and English missionaries, to represent to them the infamy of torturing their prisoners; nor have these pains been bestowed in vain; for though in some recent instances it has appeared that they still retain a fondness for this horrid practice, yet I will venture, from what I have heard, to assert, that of late years not one prisoner has been put to the torture, where twenty would have been a hundred years ago. Of the prisoners that fell into their hands on St. Clair’s defeat, I could not learn, although I made strict enquiries on the subject, that a single man had been fastened to the stake. As soon as the defeat was known, rewards were held out by the British officers, and others that had influence over them, to bring in their prisoners alive, and the greater part of them were delivered up unhurt; but to eradicate wholly from their breasts the spirit of revenge has been found impossible. You will be enabled to form a tolerable idea of the little good effect which education has over their minds in this respect, from the following anecdotes of Captain Joseph Brandt, a war chief of the Mohawk nation.

This

This Brandt, at a very early age, was sent to a college in New England, where, being possessed of a good capacity, he soon made very considerable progress in the Greek and Latin languages. Uncommon pains were taken to instil into his mind the truths of the gospel. He professed himself to be a warm admirer of the principles of christianity, and in hopes of being able to convert his nation on returning to them, he absolutely translated the gospel of St. Matthew into the Mohawk language; he also translated the established form of prayer of the church of England. Before Brandt, however, had finished his course of studies, the American war broke out, and fired with that spirit of glory which seems to have been implanted by nature in the breast of the Indian, he immediately quitted the college, repaired to his native village, and shortly afterwards, with a considerable body of his nation, joined some British troops under the command of Sir John Johnston. Here he distinguished himself by his valour in many different engagements, and was soon raised, not only to the rank of a war chief, but also to that of a captain in his Majesty's service.

It was not long, however, before Brandt sullied his reputation in the British army. A skirmish took place with a body of American troops; the action was warm, and Brandt was shot by a musquet-ball in the heel; but the Americans in the end were defeated, and an officer with about sixty men taken prisoners. The officer, after having delivered up his sword, had entered into conversation with Colonel Johnston, who commanded the British troops, and they were talking together in the most friendly manner, when Brandt, having stolen sily behind them, laid the American officer lifeless on the ground with a blow of his tomahawk. The indignation of Sir John Johnston, as may readily be supposed, was roused by such an act of treachery, and he resented it in the warmest language. Brandt listened to him unconcernedly, and when he had finished, told him, that he was sorry what he had done had caused his displeasure, but that indeed his heel was extremely painful at the moment, and he could not help revenging himself on the only chief of the party that he saw taken. Since he had killed the officer, his heel, he added, was much less painful to him than it had been before.

When

When the war broke out, the Mohawks resided on the Mohawk River, in the state of New York, but on peace being made, they emigrated into Upper Canada, and their principal village is now situated on the Grand River, which falls into Lake Erie on the north side, about sixty miles from the town of Newark or Niagara ; there Brandt at present resides. He has built a comfortable habitation for himself, and any stranger that visits him may rest assured of being well received, and of finding a plentiful table well served every day. He has no less than thirty or forty negroes, who attend to his horses, cultivate his grounds, &c. These poor creatures are kept in the greatest subjection, and they dare not attempt to make their escape, for he has assured them, that if they did so he would follow them himself, though it were to the confines of Georgia, and would tomahawk them wherever he met them. They know his disposition too well not to think that he would adhere strictly to his word.

Brandt receives from government half pay as a captain, besides annual presents, &c. which in all amount, it is said, to £.500 per annum. We had no small curiosity, as you may well imagine, to see this Brandt, and we procured letters of introduction to him from the governor's secretary, and from different officers and gentlemen of his acquaintance, with an intention of proceeding from Newark to his village. Most unluckily, however, on the day before that of our reaching the town of Newark or Niagara, he had embarked on board a vessel for Kingston, at the opposite end of the lake. You may judge of Brandt's consequence, when I tell you, that a lawyer of Niagara, who crossed Lake Ontario in the same vessel with us, from Kingston, where he had been detained for some time by contrary winds, informed us, the day after our arrival at Niagara, that by his not having reached that place in time to transact some law business for Brandt, and which had consequently been given to another person, he should be a loser of one hundred pounds at least.

Brandt's sagacity led him, early in life, to discover that the Indians had been made the dupe of every foreign power that had got footing in America ; and, indeed, could he have had any doubts on the subject, they would have been removed when he saw the British, after having
demanded

demanding and received the assistance of the Indians in the American war, so ungenerously and unjustly yield up the whole of the Indian territories, east of the Mississippi and south of the lakes, to the people of the United States; to the very enemies, in short, they had made to themselves at the request of the British. He perceived with regret that the Indians, by espousing the quarrels of the whites, and by espousing different interests, were weakening themselves; whereas, if they remained aloof, and were guided by the one policy, they would soon become formidable, and be treated with more respect; he formed the bold scheme, therefore, of uniting the Indians together in one grand confederacy, and for this purpose sent messengers to different chiefs, proposing that a general meeting should be held of the heads of every tribe, to take the subject into consideration; but certain of the tribes, suspicious of Brandt's designs, and fearful that he was bent upon acquiring power for himself by this measure, opposed it with all their might. Brandt has in consequence become extremely obnoxious to many of the most warlike, and with such a jealous eye do they now regard him, that it would not be perfectly safe for him to venture to the upper country.

He has managed the affairs of his own people with great ability, and leased out their superfluous lands for them, for long terms of years, by which measure a certain annual revenue is ensured to the nation, probably as long as it will remain a nation. He wisely judged, that it was much better to do so than to suffer the Mohawks, as many other tribes had done, to sell their possessions by piecemeal, the sums of money they received for which, however great, would soon be dissipated if paid to them at once.

Whenever the affairs of his nation shall permit him to do so, Brandt declares it to be his intention to sit down to the further study of the Greek language, of which he professes himself to be a great admirer, and to translate from the original, into the Mohawk language, more of the New Testament; yet this same man, shortly before we arrived at Niagara, killed his only son with his own hand. The son, it seems, was a drunken good for nothing fellow, who had often avowed his intention
of

of destroying his father. One evening he absolutely entered the apartment of his father, and had begun to grapple with him, perhaps with a view to put his unnatural threats into execution, when Brandt drew a short sword, and felled him to the ground. Brandt speaks of this affair with regret, but at the same time without any of that emotion which another person than an Indian might be supposed to feel. He consoles himself for the act, by thinking that he has benefitted the nation, by ridding them of a rascal.

Brandt wears his hair in the Indian style, and also the Indian dress; instead of the wrapper, or blanket, he wears a short coat, such as I have described, similar to a hunting frock.

Though infinite pains have been taken by the French Roman Catholics, and other missionaries, to propagate the gospel amongst the Indians, and though many different tribes have been induced thereby to submit to baptism, yet it does not appear, except in very few instances, that any material advantages have resulted from the introduction of the Christian religion amongst them. They have learned to repeat certain forms of prayer; they have learned to attend to certain outward ceremonies; but they still continue to be swayed by the same violent passions as before, and have imbibed nothing of the genuine spirit of christianity.

The Moravian missionaries have wrought a greater change in the minds of the Indians than any others, and have succeeded so far as to induce some of them to abandon their savage mode of life, to renounce war, and to cultivate the earth. It is with the Munfies, a small tribe resident on the east side of Lake St. Clair, that they have had the most success; but the number that have been so converted is small indeed. The Roman Catholics have the most adherents, as the outward forms and parade of their religion are particularly calculated to strike the attention of the Indians, and as but little restraint is laid on them by the missionaries of that persuasion, in consequence of their profession of the new faith. The Quakers, of all people, have had the least success amongst them; the doctrine of non-resistance, which they set out with preaching, but ill accords with the opinion of the Indian; and amongst some tribes,

where they have attempted to inculcate it, particularly amongst the Shawnefe, one of the most warlike tribes to the north of the Ohio, they have been exposed to very imminent danger*.

The Indians, who yet remain ignorant of divine revelation, seem almost universally to believe in the existence of one supreme, beneficent, all wise, and all powerful spirit, and likewise in the existence of subordinate spirits, both good and bad. The former, having the good of mankind at heart, they think it needless to pay homage to them, and it is only to the evil ones, of whom they have an innate dread, that they pay their devotions, in order to avert their ill intentions. Some distant tribes, it is said, have priests amongst them, but it does not appear that they have any regular forms of worship. Each individual repeats a prayer, or makes an offering to the evil spirit, when his fear and apprehensions suggest the necessity of his so doing.

The belief of a future state, in which they are to enjoy the same pleasures as they do in this world, but to be exempted from pain, and from the trouble of procuring food, seems to be very general amongst them. Some of the tribes have much less devotion than others; the Shawnefe, a warlike daring nation, have but very little fear of evil spirits, and consequently have scarcely any religion amongst them. None of this nation, that I could learn, have ever been converted to Christianity.

It is a very singular and remarkable circumstance, that notwithstanding the striking similarity which we find in the persons, manners, customs, dispositions, and religion of the different tribes of Indians from one end of the continent of North America to the other, a similarity so great

* The great difficulty of converting the Indians to christianity does not arise from their attachment to their own religion, where they have any, so much as from certain habits which they seem to have imbibed with the very milk of their mothers.

A French missionary relates, that he was once endeavouring to convert an Indian, by describing to him the rewards that would attend the good, and the dreadful punishment which must inevitably await the wicked, in a future world, when the Indian, who had some time before lost his dearest friend, suddenly interrupted him, by

asking him, whether he thought his departed friend was gone to heaven or to hell. I sincerely trust, answered the missionary, that he is in heaven. Then I will do as you bid me, added the Indian, and lead a sober life, for I should like to go to the place where my friend is. Had he, on the contrary, been told that his friend was in hell, all that the reverend father could have said to him of fire and brimstone would have been of little avail in persuading him to have led any other than the most dissolute life, in hopes of meeting with his friend to sympathise with him under his sufferings.

as hardly to leave a doubt on the mind but that they must all have had the same origin, the languages of the different tribes should yet be so materially different. No two tribes speak exactly the same language; and the languages of many of those, who live at no great distance asunder, vary so much, that they cannot make themselves at all understood to each other. I was informed that the Chippeway language was by far the most general, and that a person intimately acquainted with it would soon be able to acquire a tolerable knowledge of any other language spoken between the Ohio and Lake Superior. Some persons, who have made the Indian languages their study, assert, that all the different languages spoken by those tribes, with which we have any connection, are but dialects of three primitive tongues, viz. the Huron, the Algonquin, and the Sioux; the two former of which, being well understood, will enable a person to converse, at least slightly, with the Indians of any tribe in Canada or the United States. All the nations that speak a language derived from the Sioux, have, it is said, a hissing pronunciation; those who speak one derived from the Huron, have a guttural pronunciation; and such as speak any one derived from the Algonquin, pronounce their words with greater softness and ease than any of the others. Whether this be a just distinction or not I cannot pretend to determine; I shall only observe, that all the Indian men I ever met with, as well those whose language is said to be derived from the Huron, as those whose language is derived from the Algonquin, appear to me to have very few labial sounds in their language, and to pronounce the words from the throat, but not so much from the upper as the lower part of the throat towards the breast. A slight degree of hesitation is observable in their speech, and they articulate seemingly with difficulty, and in a manner somewhat similar to what a person, I should suppose, would be apt to do if he had a great weight laid on his chest, or had received a blow on his breast or back so violent as to affect his breath. The women, on the contrary, speak with the utmost ease, and the language, as pronounced by them, appears as soft as the Italian. They have, without exception, the most delicate harmonious voices I ever heard, and the most pleasing gentle laugh that it is possible to conceive. I have oftentimes

fat amongst a group of them for an hour or two together, merely for the pleasure of listening to their conversation, on account of its wonderful softness and delicacy.

The Indians, both men and women, speak with great deliberation, and never appear to be at a loss for words to express their sentiments.

The native music of the Indians is very rude and indifferent, and equally devoid of melody and variety. Their famous war song is nothing better than an insipid recitative. Singing and dancing with them go hand in hand; and when a large number of them, collected together, join in the one song, the few wild notes of which it consists, mingled with the sound of their pipes and drums, sometimes produce, when heard at a distance, a pleasing effect on the ear; but it is then and then only that their music is tolerable.

The first night of our arrival at Malden, just as we were retiring to rest, near midnight, we were most agreeably entertained in this manner with the sound of their music on the island of Bois Blanc. Eager to hear more of it, and to be witness to their dancing, we procured a boat, and immediately crossed the river to the spot where they were assembled. Three elderly men, seated under a tree, were the principal musicians. One of these beat a small drum, formed of a piece of a hollow tree covered with a skin, and the two others marked time equally with the drum, with rattles formed of dried squashes or gourds filled with pease. At the same time these men sung, indeed they were the leaders of the song, which the dancers joined in. The dancers consisted solely of a party of squaws, to the number of twenty or thereabouts, who, standing in a circle, with their faces inwards and their hands folded round each other's necks, moved, thus linked together, sideways, with close short steps, round a small fire. The men and women never dance together, unless indeed a pretty squaw be introduced by some young fellow into one of the men's dances, which is considered as a very great mark of favour. This is of a piece with the general conduct of the Indians, who look upon the women in a totally different light from what we do in Europe, and condemn them as slaves to do all the drudgery. I have seen a young chief with no less than three women attendant on him to run after his arrows, when he was amusing himself

himself with shooting squirrels; I have also seen Indians, when moving for a few miles from one place to another, mount their horses and canter away at their ease, whilst their women were left not only to walk, but to carry very heavy loads on their backs after them.

After the women had danced for a time, a larger fire was kindled, and the men assembled from different parts of the island, to the number of fifty or sixty, to amuse themselves in their turn. There was little more variety in their dancing than in that of the women. They first walked round the fire in a large circle, closely, one after another, marking time with short steps to the music; the best dancer was put at their head, and gave the step; he was also the principal singer in the circle. After having made one round, the step was altered to a wider one, and they began to stamp with great vehemence upon the ground; and every third or fourth round, making little leaps off the ground with both feet, they turned their faces to the fire and bowed their heads, at the same time going on sideways. At last, having made a dozen or two rounds, towards the end of which each one of them had begun to stamp on the ground with inconceivable fury, but more particularly the principal dancer, they all gave a loud shout at once, and the dance ended.

In two or three minutes another dance was begun, which ended as soon, and nearly in the same way as the other. There was but little difference in the figures of any of them, and the only material difference in the songs was, that in some of them the dancers, instead of singing the whole of the air, came in simply with responses to the airs sung by the old men. They beckoned to us to join them in their dance, which we immediately did, as it was likely to please them, and we remained on the island with them till two or three o'clock in the morning. There is something inconceivably terrible in the sight of a number of Indians dancing thus round a fire in the depths of thick woods, and the loud shrieks at the end of every dance adds greatly to the horror which their first appearance inspires.

Scarcely a night passed over but what there were dances, similar to those I have described, on the island. They never think of dancing till the night is considerably advanced, and they keep it up till daybreak.

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In the day time they lie sleeping in the sun, or sit smoking tobacco, that is, when they have nothing particular to engage them. Though the most diligent persevering people in the world when roused into action, yet when at peace with their neighbours, and having got wherewith to satisfy the calls of hunger, they are the most slothful and indolent possible.

The dances mentioned are such as the Indians amuse themselves with in common. On grand occasions they have a variety of others much more interesting to a spectator. The dances which you see in common amongst the Shawnese, and certain other tribes, are also, it is said, much more entertaining than those I have described. There were several families of the Shawnese encamped on the island of Bois Blanc when we were there; but as there was not a sufficient number to form a dance by themselves, we were never gratified with a sight of their performances.

Of their grand dances the war dance must undoubtedly, from every account I have received of it, for I never had any opportunity of seeing it myself, be the one most worthy the attention of a stranger. It is performed both on setting out and returning from their war parties, and likewise at other times, but never except on some very particular and solemn occasion. The chiefs and warriors who are about to join in this dance dress and paint themselves as if actually out on a warlike expedition, and they carry in their hands their warlike weapons. Being assembled, they seat themselves down on their hams, in a circle, round a great fire, near to which is placed a large post; after remaining a short time in this position, one of the principal chiefs rises, and placing himself in the center, begins to rehearse, in a sort of recitative, all the gallant actions which he has ever performed; he dwells particularly on the number of enemies he has killed, and describes the manner in which he scalped them, making gestures all the time, and brandishing his weapons, as if actually engaged in performing the horrid operation. At the end of every remarkable story he strikes his war club on the post with great fury. Every chief and warrior tells of his deeds in turn. The song of one warrior often occupies several hours, and the dance itself

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sometimes lasts for three or four entire days and nights. During this period no one is allowed to sleep, a person who stands at the outside of the circle being appointed (whose business it is) to rouse any warrior that appears in the least drowsy. A deer, a bear, or some other large animal is put to roast at the fire as soon as the dance begins, and while it lasts each warrior rises at will to help himself to a piece of it. After each person in the circle has in turn told of his exploits, they all rise, and join in a dance truly terrifying; they throw themselves into a variety of postures, and leaping about in the most frantic manner, brandish their knives and other weapons; at the same time they set up the war hoop, and utter the most dreadful yells imaginable. In this manner the dance terminates.

The Indian flute or pipe is formed of a thick cane, similar to what is found on the banks of the Mississippi, and in the southern parts of the United States. It is about two feet or more in length, and has eight or nine holes in it, in one row. It is held in the same manner as the oboe or clarinet, and the sound is produced by means of a mouth piece not unlike that of a common whistle. The tones of the instrument are by no means unharmonious, and they would admit of a pleasing modulation, but I never met with an Indian that was able to play a regular air upon it, not even any one of the airs which they commonly sing, although I saw several that were extremely fond of amusing themselves with the instrument, and that would sit for hours together over the embers of their cabin fires, playing over a few wild melancholy notes. Every Indian that can bring a sound out of the instrument, and stop the holes, which any one may do, thinks himself master of it; and the notes which they commonly produce are as unconnected and unmeaning as those which a child would bring forth from a halfpenny whistle.

In addition to what I have said on the subject of the Indians, I shall only observe, that notwithstanding they are such a very friendly hospitable people, yet few persons, who had ever tasted of the pleasures and comforts of civilized life, would feel any inclination to reside amongst them,

them, on becoming acquainted with their manner of living. The filthiness and wretchedness of their smoky habitations, the nauseousness of their common food to a person not even of a delicate palate, and their general uncleanness, would be sufficient, I think, to deter any one from going to live amongst them from choice, supposing even that no other reasons operated against his doing so. For my own part, I had fully determined in my own mind, when I first came to America, not to leave the continent without spending a considerable time amongst them, in the interior parts of the country, in order to have an opportunity of observing their native manners and customs in their utmost purity; but the samples I have seen of them during my stay in this part of the country, although it has given me a most favourable opinion of the Indians themselves, has induced me to relinquish my purpose. Content therefore with what I have seen myself, and with what I have heard from others, if chance should not bring me again into their way in prosecuting my journey into the settled parts of the States, I shall take no further pains to cultivate a more intimate acquaintance with them.

LETTER XXXVI.

Departure from Malden.—Storm on Lake Erie.—Driven back amongst the Islands.—Shipwreck narrowly avoided.—Voyage across the Lake.—Land at Fort Erie.—Proceed to Buffalo Creek.—Engage Indians to go through the Woods.—Set out on Foot.—Journey through the Woods.—Description of the Country beyond Buffalo Creek.—Vast Plains.—Grand Appearance of the Trees here.—Indian Dogs.—Arrival at the Settlements on Genesee River.—First Settlers.—Their general Character.—Description of the Country bordering on Genesee River.—Fever common in Autumn.—Proceed on Foot to Bath.

Bath, November.

TOWARDS the latter end of the month of October, the schooner in which we had engaged a passage to Presqu' Isle made her appearance before Malden, where she was obliged to lay at anchor for three days, the wind not being favourable for going farther down the river; at the end of that time, however, it veered about, and we repaired on board, after having taken a long farewell of our friend Captain E——, whose kindness to us had been unbounded, and was doubly grateful, inasmuch as it was totally unexpected by us young strangers, who had not the slightest acquaintance with him previous to our coming into the country, and had not been introduced to him even by letter.

The wind, though favourable, was very light on the morning of our embarkation, but the current being strong we were soon carried down to the lake. In the afternoon we passed the islands, which had the most beautiful appearance imaginable. The rich woods with which the shores were adorned, now tinged with the hues of autumn, afforded in their decline a still more pleasing variety to the eye than when they were clothed in their fullest verdure; and their gaudy colours, intermingled with the shadows of the rocks, were seen fancifully reflected in the unruffled surface of the surrounding lake. At day-break the next morning we found ourselves entirely clear of the land; but instead of the

azure sky and gentle breezes which had favoured us the preceding day, we had thick hazy weather, and every appearance in the heavens indicated that before many hours were over we should have to contend with some of those dangerous storms that are so frequent on Lake Erie. It was not long indeed ere the winds began to blow, and the waves to rise in a tremendous manner, and we soon became spectators of a number of those confused and disgusting scenes which a gale of wind never fails to occasion in a small vessel crowded with passengers. A number of old French ladies, who were going to see their grandchildren in Lower Canada, and who now for the first time in their lives found themselves on the water, occupied the cabin. The hold of the vessel, boarded from end to end, and divided simply by a sail suspended from one of the beams, was filled on one side with steerage passengers, amongst which were several women and children; and on the opposite one with passengers who had paid cabin price, but were unable to get any better accommodation, amongst which number was our party. Not including either the old ladies in the cabin, or the steerage passengers, we sat down to dinner each day twenty-six in number, which circumstance, when I inform you that the vessel was only seventy tons burthen, will best enable you to conceive how much we must have been crowded. The greater part of the passengers, drooping under sea-sickness, begged for heaven's sake that the captain would put back; but bent upon performing his voyage with expedition, which was a matter of the utmost consequence indeed, now that the season was so far advanced; and there was a possibility that he might be blocked up by the ice on his return, he was deaf to their entreaties. What the earnest entreaties, however, of the passengers could not effect, the storm soon compelled him to. It was found absolutely necessary to seek for a place of shelter to avoid its fury; and accordingly the helm having been ordered up, we made the best of our way back again to the islands, in a bay between two of which we cast anchor. This bay, situated between the Bass Islands, which are among the largest in the cluster, is called, from its being so frequently resorted to by vessels that meet with contrary winds

winds in going down the lake, Put-in-Bay, vulgarly termed by the sailors Pudding Bay.

Here we lay securely sheltered by the land until four o'clock the next morning, when the watch upon deck gave the alarm that the vessel was driving from her anchor, and going fast towards the shore. The captain started up, and perceiving that the wind had shifted, and the land no longer afforded any protection to the vessel, he immediately gave orders to slip the cable, and hoist the jib, in order to wear the vessel round, and thus get free, if possible, of the shore. In the hurry and confusion of the moment, however, the mainsail was hoisted at the same time with the jib, the vessel was put aback, and nothing could have saved her from going at once on shore but the letting fall of another anchor instantaneously. I can only account for this unfortunate mistake by supposing that the men were not sufficiently roused from their slumbers, on coming upon deck, to hear distinctly the word of command. Only one man had been left to keep the watch, as it was thought that the vessel was riding in perfect safety, and from the time that the alarm was first given until the anchor was dropped scarcely four minutes elapsed.

The dawn of day only enabled us to see all the danger of our situation. We were within one hundred yards of a rocky lee shore, and depending upon one anchor, which, if the gale increased, the captain feared very much would not hold. The day was wet and squally, and the appearance of the sky gave us every reason to imagine that the weather, instead of growing moderate, would become still more tempestuous than it either was or had been; nevertheless, buoyed up by hope, and by a good share of animal spirits, we eat our breakfasts regardless of the impending danger, and afterwards sat down to a game of cards; but scarcely had we played for one hour when the dismal cry was heard of, "All hands aloft," as the vessel was again drifting towards the shore. The day being very cold, I had thrown a blanket over my shoulders, and had fastened it round my waist with a girdle, in the Indian fashion; but being incapable of managing it like an Indian, I stopped to disencumber myself of it before I went on deck, so that, as it happened, I was the last man

below. The readiest way of going up was through the hatchway, and I had just got my foot upon the ladder, in order to ascend, when the vessel struck with great force upon the rocks. The women shrieking now flocked round me, begging for God's sake that I would stay by them; at the same time my companions urged me from above to come up with all possible speed. To my latest hour I shall never forget the emotions which I felt at that moment; to have staid below would have been useless; I endeavoured, therefore, to comfort the poor creatures that clung to me, and then disengaging myself from them, forced my way upon deck, where I was no sooner arrived than the hatches were instantly shut down upon the wretched females, whose shrieks resounded through the vessel, notwithstanding all the bustle of the seamen, and the tremendous roaring of the breakers amongst the adjacent rocks.

Before two minutes had passed over, the vessel struck a second time, but with a still greater shock; and at the end of a quarter of an hour, during which period she had gradually approached nearer towards the shore, she began to strike with the fall of every wave.

The general opinion now seemed to be in favour of cutting away the masts, in order to lighten the vessel; and the axes were actually upraised for that purpose, when one of my companions, who possessed a considerable share of nautical knowledge from having been in the navy, opposed the measure. It appeared to him, that as the pumps were still free, and as the vessel had not yet made more water than could be easily got under, the cutting away of the masts would only be to deprive ourselves of the means of getting off the rock if the wind should veer about; but he advised the captain to have the yards and topmasts cut away. The masts were spared, and his advice was in every other respect attended to. The wind unfortunately, however, still continued to blow from the same point, and the only alteration observable in it was its blowing with still greater force than ever.

As the storm increased, the waves began to roll with greater turbulence than before; and with such impetuosity did they break over the bows of the vessel, that it was with the very utmost difficulty that I, and half a dozen more who had taken our station on the fore-castle, could
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hold by our hands fast enough to save ourselves from being carried overboard. For upwards of four hours did we remain in this situation, expecting every instant that the vessel would go to pieces, and exposed every three or four minutes to the shock of one of the tremendous breakers which came rolling towards us. Many of the billows appeared to be half as high as the foretop, and sometimes, when they burst over us, our breath was nearly taken away by the violence of the shock. At last, finding ourselves so benumbed with cold that it would be impossible for us to make any exertions in the water to save ourselves if the vessel was wrecked, we determined to go below, there to remain until we should be again forced up by the waves.

Some of the passengers now began to write their wills on scraps of paper, and to inclose them in what they imagined would be most likely to preserve them from the water; others had begun to take from their trunks what they deemed most valuable; and one unfortunate thoughtless man, who was moving with his family from the upper country, we discovered in the very act of loading himself with dollars from head to foot, so that had he fallen into the water in the state we found him, he must inevitably have been carried to the bottom.

Words can convey no idea of the wildness that reigned in the countenance of almost every person as the night approached; and many, terrified with the apprehensions of a nightly shipwreck, began to lament that the cable had not been at once cut, so as to have let the vessel go on shore whilst day-light remained: this indeed had been proposed a few hours after the vessel began to strike; but it was overruled by the captain, who very properly refused to adopt a measure tending to the immediate and certain destruction of his vessel, whilst a possibility remained that she might escape.

Till nine o'clock at night the vessel kept striking every minute, during which time we were kept in a state of the most dreadful suspense about our fate; but then happily the wind shifted one or two points in our favour, which occasioned the vessel to roll instead of striking. At midnight the gale grew somewhat more moderate; and at three in the morning it was so far abated, that the men were enabled to haul on the
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anchor, and in a short time to bring the vessel once more into deep water, and out of all danger. Great was the joy, as may well be imagined, which this circumstance diffused amongst the passengers; and well pleased was each one, after the fatigue and anxiety of the preceding day, to think he might securely lay himself down to rest.

The next morning the sun arose in all his majesty from behind one of the distant islands. The azure sky was unobscured by a single cloud, the air felt serenely mild, and the birds, as if equally delighted with man that the storm was over, sweetly warbled forth their songs in the adjacent woods; in short, had it not been for the disordered condition in which we saw our vessel, and every thing belonging to us, the perils we had gone through would have appeared like a dream.

The first object of examination was the rudder. The tiller was broken to atoms; and the sailors who went over the stern reported, that of the four gudgeons or hooks on which the rudder was suspended, only one was left entire, and that one was much bent. On being unshipped, the bottom of it was found to be so much shivered that it actually resembled the end of a broom. The keel, there was every reason to suppose, was in the same shattered condition; nevertheless the vessel, to the great astonishment of every person on board, did not make much water. Had she been half as crazy as the King's vessel in which we went up the lake, nothing could have saved her from destruction.

A consultation was now held upon what was best to be done. To proceed on the voyage appeared totally out of the question; and it only remained to determine which way was the easiest and readiest to get back to Malden. All was at a stand, when an officer in the American service proposed the beating out of an iron crow bar, and the manufacturing of new gudgeons. This was thought to be impracticable; but necessity, the mother of invention, having set all our heads to work, an anvil was formed of a number of axes laid upon a block of wood; a large fire was kindled, and a party of us acting as smiths in turns, by the end of three hours contrived to hammer out one very respectable gudgeon.

In the mean time others of the passengers were employed in making a new tiller, and others undertook to fish for the cable and anchor that had

had been slipped, whilst the sailors were kept busily employed at the rigging. By nightfall the vessel was so far refitted that no apprehensions were any longer entertained about our being able to reach Malden in safety, and some began to think there would be no danger in prosecuting the voyage down the lake. The captain said that his conduct must be regulated entirely by the appearance of the weather on the following day.

Early the next morning, whilst we yet remained stretched in our births, our party was much surprised at hearing the sound of strange voices upon deck; but our surprise was still greater, when on a nearer approach we recognized them to be the voices of two young friends of ours, who, like ourselves, had crossed the Atlantic to make a tour of the continent of North America, and whom, but a few days before we had quitted Philadelphia, we had accompanied some miles from that city on their way towards the south. They had travelled, it seemed, from Philadelphia to Virginia, afterwards to Kentucky, and had found their way from the Ohio to Detroit on horseback, after encountering numberless inconveniences. There they had engaged a passage in a little sloop bound to Fort Erie, the last vessel which was to quit that port during the present season. They had embarked the preceding day, and in the night had run in to Put-in-Bay, as the wind was not favourable for going down the lake. The commander of the sloop offered to stay by our vessel, and to give her every assistance in his power, if our captain chose to proceed down the lake with him. The offer was gladly accepted, and it was agreed that the two vessels should sail together as soon as the wind was favourable.

After having breakfasted, we proceeded with our young friends, in the ship's boat, to that part of the island off which we had been exposed to so much danger. Here we found the shore strewn with the oars, spars, &c. which had been washed overboard, and from the dreadful manner in which they were shattered, no doubt remained on our minds, but that if the vessel had been wrecked, two thirds of the passengers at least must have perished amidst the rocks and breakers. We spent the day rambling about the woods, and recounting to each other our adventures

since the last separation, and in the evening returned to our respective ships. About midnight the wind became fair, and whilst we lay wrapt in sleep the vessels put to sea.

All hopes of being able to get on shore at Presqu' Isle were now over, for the captain, as our vessel was in such a ticklish condition, was fearful of venturing in there, lest he might lose sight of the sloop; we made up our minds, therefore, for being carried once more to our old quarters, Fort Erie; and after a most disagreeable passage of four days, during which we encountered several squalls not a little alarming, landed there in safety.

Our friends immediately set out for Newark, from whence, if the season would admit of it, and a favourable opportunity offered, they proposed to sail to Kingston, and proceed afterwards to Lower Canada; we, on the contrary, desirous of returning by a different route from that by which we had come up the country, crossed over to Buffalo Creek, in hopes of being able to procure horses at the Indian village there, to carry us through the Genesee country. To our disappointment we found, that all the Indians of the village who had horses had already set out with them on their hunting expedition; but the interpreters told us, that if we would consent to walk through the woods, as far as the settlements of the white people, the nearest of which was ninety miles from Buffalo Creek, he did not doubt but that he could find Indians in the village who would undertake to carry our baggage for us; and that once arrived at the back settlements, we should find it no difficult matter to hire horses. We readily agreed to his proposals, and he in consequence soon picked out from the Indians five men, amongst which was a war chief, on whom he told us we might place every reliance, as he was a man of an excellent character. The Indians, it was settled, were to have five dollars apiece for their services, and we were to furnish them with provisions and liquor. The interpreter, who was a white man, put us on our guard against giving them too much of the latter; but he advised us always to give them some whenever we took any ourselves, and advised us also to eat with them, and to behave towards them in every respect as if they were our equals. We had already
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seen enough of the Indians, to know that this advice was good, and indeed to have adopted of ourselves the line of conduct which he recommended, even if he had said nothing on the subject.

Having arranged every thing to our satisfaction, we returned to Fort Erie; there we disposed of all our superfluous baggage, and having made some addition to the stores of dried provisions and biscuits which our kind friend Captain E—— had furnished us with on leaving his hospitable roof, we embarked, with all belonging to us, in the ship's boat, for the village on Buffalo Creek, where we had settled to pass the night, in order to be ready to start early the next morning.

The Indians were with us according to appointment at day break; they divided the baggage, fastened their loads each on their carrying frames, and appeared perfectly ready to depart, when their chief requested, through the interpreter, "that we would give them before they set out a little of that precious water we possessed, to wash their eyes with, which would dispel the mists of sleep that still hung over them, and thus enable them to find out with certainty the intricate path through the thick forest we were about to traverse;" in other words, that we would give them some brandy. It is always in figurative language of this kind that the Indians ask for spirits. We dispensed a glass full of the precious liquor, according to their desire, to each of them, as well as to their squaws and children, whom they brought along with them to share our bounty, and then, the Indians having taken up their loads, we penetrated into the woods, along a narrow path scarcely discernible, owing to the quantities of withered leaves with which it was strewed.

After proceeding a few miles, we stopped by the side of a little stream of clear water to breakfast; on the banks of another stream we eat our dinner; and at a third we stopped for the night. Having laid down their loads, the Indians immediately began to erect poles, and cover them with pieces of bark, which they found lying on the ground, and which had evidently been left there by some travellers who had taken up their quarters for the night at this same place some time before; but we put a stop to their work, by shaking out from the bag in which it

was deposited, our travelling tent. They perceived now that they must employ themselves in a different manner, and knowing perfectly well what was to be done, they at once set to work with their tomahawks in cutting poles and pegs. In less than five minutes, as we all bore a part, the poles and pegs were cut, and the tent pitched.

One of the Indians now made signs to us to lend him a bag, having received which he ran into the woods, and was soon out of sight. We were at a loss to guess what he was in pursuit of; but in a little time he returned with the bag full of the finest cranberries I ever beheld. In the mean time another of them, of his own accord, busied himself in carrying heaps of dried leaves into the tent, which, with our buffalo skins, afforded luxurious beds to men like us, that had slept on nothing better than a board for upwards of a month past. In the upper country it is so customary for travellers to carry their own bedding, that even at our friend Captain E——'s house we had no other accommodation at night than the floor of an empty room, on which we spread our skins. As for themselves, the Indians thought of no covering whatsoever, but simply stretched themselves on the ground beside the fire, where they lay like dogs or cats till morning. At day-break we started, and stopped as on the preceding day beside streams of water to eat our breakfasts and dinners.

From Buffalo Creek to the place where we encamped on the first night, distant about twenty-five miles, the country being very flat, and the trees growing so closely together that it was impossible to see farther forward in any direction than fifty yards, our journey after a short time became very uninteresting. Nothing in its kind, however, could exceed the beauty of the scenery that we met with during our second day's journey. We found the country, as we passed along, interspersed with open plains of great magnitude, some of them not less, I should suppose, than fifteen or twenty miles in circumference. The trees on the borders of these having ample room to spread, were luxuriant beyond description, and shot forth their branches with all the grandeur and variety which characterizes the English timber, particularly the oak. The woods round the plains were indented in every direction

with bays and promontories, as Mr. Gilpin terms it, whilst rich clumps of trees, interspersed here and there, appeared like so many clusters of beautiful islands. The varied hues of the woods at this season of the year, in America, can hardly be imagined by those who never have had an opportunity of observing them; and indeed, as others have often remarked before, were a painter to attempt to colour a picture from them, it would be condemned in Europe as totally different from any thing that ever existed in nature.

These plains are covered with long coarse grass, which, at a future day, will probably afford feeding to numerous herds of cattle; at present they are totally unfrequented. Throughout the north-western territory of the States, and even beyond the head waters of the Mississippi, the country is interspersed with similar plains; and the farther you proceed to the westward, the more extensive in general are they. Amidst those to the westward are found numerous herds of buffaloes, elks, and other wild graminivorous animals; and formerly animals of the same description were found on these plains in the state of New York, but they have all disappeared long since, owing to their having been so constantly pursued both by the Indians and white people.

Very different opinions have been entertained respecting the deficiency of trees on these extended tracts of land, in the midst of a country that abounds so generally with wood. Some have attributed it to the poverty of the soil; whilst others have maintained, that the plains were formerly covered with trees, as well as other parts of the country, but that the trees have either been destroyed by fire, or by buffaloes, beavers, and other animals.

It is well known that buffaloes, in all those parts of the country where they are found wild, commit great depredations amongst the trees, by gnawing off the bark; they are also very fond of feeding upon the young trees that spring up from seed, as well as upon the suckers of the old ones; it may readily be imagined, therefore, that the entire of the trees, on very extended tracts of land, might be thus killed by them; and as the American timber, when left exposed to the weather, soon decays, at

the end of a few years no vestige of the woods would be found on these tracts, any more than if they had been consumed by fire.

It appears to me, however, that there is more weight in the opinion of those, who ascribe the deficiency of trees on the plains to the unfriendliness of the soil; for the earth towards the surface is universally very light, and of a deep black colour, and on digging but a few inches downwards you come to a cold stiff clay. On Long Island, in the state of New York, plains are met with nearly similar to these in the back country, and the Dutch farmers, who have made repeated trials of the soil, find that it will not produce wheat or any other grain, and, in short, nothing that is at all profitable except coarse grafs. I make no doubt but that whenever a similar trial comes to be made of the soil of the plains to the westward, it will be found equally incapable of producing any thing but what it does at present.

After having passed over a great number of these plains of different sizes, we entered once more into the thick woods; but the country here appeared much more diversified with rising grounds than it was in any part we had already traversed. As we were ascending to the top of a small eminence in the thickest part of these woods, towards the close of our second day's journey, our Indian chief, *China-breast-plate*, who received that name in consequence of his having worn in the American war a thick china dish as an ornament on his breast, made a sign to us to follow him to the left of the path. We did so, and having proceeded for a few yards, suddenly found ourselves on the margin of a deep extensive pit, not unlike an exhausted quarry, that had lain neglected for many years. The area of it contained about two acres, and it approached to a circular form; the sides were extremely steep, and seemed in no place to be less than forty feet high; in some parts they were considerably higher. Near the center of the place was a large pond, and round the edges of it, as well as round the bottom of the precipice, grew several very lofty pines. The walls of the precipice consisted of a whitish substance not unlike lime-stone half calcined, and round the margin of the pit, at top, lay several heaps of loose matter resembling lime-rubbish. *China-breast-plate*, standing on the brink of the precipice, began

began to tell us a long story, and pointing to a distant place beyond it, frequently mentioned the word Niagara. Whether, however, the story related to the pit, or whether it related to the Falls of Niagara, the smoke arising from which it is by no means improbable might be seen, at times, from the elevated spot where we stood, or whether the story related to both, we could in no way learn, as we were totally unacquainted with the Seneca language, and he was nearly equally ignorant of the English. I never met with any person afterwards who had seen this place, or who knew any thing relating to it. Though we made repeated signs to *China-bread-plate* that we did not understand his story, he still went on with it for near a quarter of an hour; the other Indians listened to it with great attention, and seemed to take no small interest in what he said.

I should have mentioned to you before, that both the Indians and the white Americans pronounce the word Niagara differently from what we do. The former lay the accent on the second syllable and pronounce the word full and broad as if written Nee-awg-ara. The Americans likewise lay the accent on the second syllable; but pronounce it short, and give the same sound to the letters I and A as we do. Niagara, in the language of the neighbouring Indians, signifies a mighty rushing or fall of water.

On the second evening of our expedition we encamped on a small hill, from whose top there was a most pleasing romantic view, along a stream of considerable size which wound round its base, and as far as our eyes could reach, appeared tumbling in small falls over ledges of rocks. A fire being kindled, and the tent pitched as usual, the Indians sat down to cook some squirrels which we had killed on the borders of the plains. These animals the Indians had observed, as we came along, on the top of a large hollow tree; they immediately laid down their loads, and each taking out his tomahawk, and setting to work at a different part of the tree, it was felled down in less than five minutes, and such of the squirrels as escaped their dogs we readily shot for them.

The

The Indian dogs, in general, have short legs, long backs, large pricked up ears, and long curly tails; they differ from the common English cur dogs in no respect so much as in their barking but very seldom. They are extremely sagacious, and seem to understand even what their masters say to them in a low voice, without making any signs, either with the hand or head.

Whilst the squirrels were roasting on a forked stick stuck in the ground, and bent over the fire, one of the Indians went into the woods, and brought out several small boughs of a tree, apparently of the willow tribe. Having carefully scraped the bark off from these, he made a sort of frame with the twigs, in shape somewhat like a gridiron, and heaping upon it the scraped bark, placed it over the fire to dry. When it was tolerably crisp he rubbed it between his hands, and put it up in his pouch for the purpose of smoking.

The Indians smoke the bark of many different trees, and a great variety of herbs and leaves besides tobacco. The most agreeable of any of the substances which they smoke are the leaves of the sumach tree, *rhus-toxicodendron*. This is a graceful shrub, which bears leaves somewhat similar to those of the ash. Towards the latter end of autumn they turn of a bright red colour, and when wanted for smoking are plucked off and dried in the sun. Whilst burning they afford a very agreeable perfume. These leaves are very commonly smoked, mixed with tobacco, by the white people of the country; the smoke of them by themselves alone is said to be prejudicial to the lungs. The sumach tree bears tufted bunches of crimson flowers. One of these bunches dipped lightly, for a few times, into a bowl of punch, gives the liquor a very agreeable acid, and in the southern states it is common to use them for that purpose, but it is a dangerous custom, as the acid, though extremely agreeable to the palate, is of a poisonous quality, and never fails to produce a most alarming effect on the bowels if used too freely.

A sharp frost set in this night, and on the following morning, at day-break, we recommenced our journey with crossing the river already mentioned up to our waists in water, no very pleasing task. Both on this
and

and the subsequent day we had to wade through several other considerable streams.

A few squirrels were the only wild animals which we met with in our journey through the woods, and the most solemn silence imaginable reigned throughout, except where a wood pecker was heard now and then tapping with its bill against a hollow tree. The birds in general flock towards the settlements, and it is a very rare circumstance to meet with them in the depth of the forest.

The third evening we encamped as usual. No sooner had we come to our resting place, than the Indians threw off their clothes, and rolled themselves on the grass just as horses would do, to refresh themselves, the day having proved very hot, notwithstanding the frost the preceding night. We were joined this evening by another party of the Seneca Indians, who were going to a village situated on the Genesee River, and in the morning we all set out together. Early in the day we came to several plains similar to those we had before met with, but not so extended, on the borders of one of which we saw, for the first time, a bark hut apparently inhabited. On going up to it, our surprise was not a little to find two men, whose appearance and manners at once bespoke them not to be Americans. After some conversation we discovered them to be two Englishmen, who had formerly lived in London as *valets de chambre*, and having scraped together a little money, had set out for New York, where they expected at once to become great men; however they soon found to their cost, that the expence of living in that city was not suited to their pockets, and they determined to go and settle in the back country. They were at no loss to find persons who had land to dispose of, and happening to fall in with a jobber who owned some of these plains, and who painted to them in lively colours the advantage they would derive from settling on good land already cleared to their hand, they immediately purchased a considerable track of this barren ground at a round price, and set out to fix themselves upon it. From the neighbouring settlements, which were about ten miles off, they procured the assistance of two men, who after having built for them the bark hut in which we found them, left them with a promise of returning

ing in a short time to erect a log house. They had not, however, been punctual to their word, and unable to wield an axe, or to do any one thing for themselves, these unfortunate wretches sat moping in their hut, supporting themselves on some salt provisions they had brought with them, but which were now nearly exhausted. The people in the settlements, whom, on arriving there, we asked some few questions respecting these poor creatures, turned them into the greatest ridicule imaginable for being so helpless; and indeed they did present a most striking picture of the folly of any man's attempting to settle in America without being well acquainted with the country previously, and competent to do every sort of country work for himself.

It was not without very great vexation that we perceived, shortly after leaving this hut, evident symptoms of drunkenness in one of the Indians, and on examining our brandy cask it was but too plain that it had been pillaged. During the preceding part of our journey we had kept a watchful eye upon it, but drawing towards the end of our expedition, and having had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the Indians, we had not paid sufficient attention to it this day; and though it could not have been much more than five minutes out of our sight, yet in that short space of time the screw had been forced, and the cask drained to the last drop. The Indian, whom we discovered to be drunk, was advanced a little before the others. He went on for some time staggering about from side to side, but at last, stopping and laying hold of his scalping knife, which they always carry with them by their sides, he began to brandish it with a threatening air. There is but one line of conduct to be pursued when you have to deal with Indians in such a situation, and that is, to act with the most determined resolution. If you betray the smallest symptoms of fear, or appear at all wavering in your conduct, it only serves to render them more ungovernable and furious. I accordingly took him by the shoulder, pushed him forward, and presenting my piece, gave him to understand that I would shoot him if he did not behave himself properly. My companions, whilst I was taking care of him, went back to see in what state the other Indians were. Luckily the liquor, though there was reason to apprehend they had all had a share

share of it, had not made the same impression upon them. One of them, indeed, was beginning to be refractory, and absolutely threw down his load, and refused to go farther; but a few words from *China-breast-plate* induced him to resume it, and to go on. On coming up to the first Indian, and seeing the sad state he was in, they shook their heads, and crying, "No good Indian," "No good Indian," endeavoured by signs to inform us that it was he who had pillaged the cask, and drank all the brandy; but as it was another Indian who carried the cask, no doubt remained but that they must all have had a share of the plunder; that the first fellow, however, had drank more than the rest was apparent; for in a few minutes he dropped down speechless under his load; the others hastened to take it off from his back, and having divided it amongst themselves, they drew him aside from the path, and threw him under some bushes, where he was left to sleep till he should come again to his senses.

About noon we reached the Genesee River, at the opposite side of which was situated the village where we expected to procure horses. We crossed the river in canoes, and took up our quarters at a house at the uppermost end of the village, where we were very glad to find our Indian friends could get no accommodation, for we knew well that the first use they would make of the money we were going to give them would be to buy liquor, and intoxicate themselves, in which state they would not fail of becoming very troublesome companions; it was scarcely dark indeed when news was brought us from a house near the river, that they went to after we had discharged them, that they were grown quite outrageous with the quantity of spirits they had drank, and were fighting and cutting each other in a most dreadful manner. They never resent the injuries they receive from any person that is evidently intoxicated, but attribute their wounds entirely to the liquor, on which they vent their execrations for all the mischief it has committed.

Before I dismiss the subject entirely, I must observe to you, that the Indians did not seem to think the carrying of our baggage was in any manner degrading to them; and after having received their due, they shook hands with us, and parted from us, not as from employers who had hired

them, but as from friends whom they had been assisting, and were now sorry to leave.

The village where we stopped consisted of about eight or nine straggling houses; the best built one among them was that in which we lodged. It belonged to a family from New England, who about six years before had penetrated to this spot, then covered with woods, and one hundred and fifty miles distant from any other settlement. Settlements are now scattered over the whole of the country which they had to pass through in coming to it. The house was commodious and well built, and the people decent, civil, and reputable. It is a very rare circumstance to meet with such people amongst the first settlers on the frontiers; in general they are men of a morose and savage disposition, and the very outcasts of society, who bury themselves in the woods, as if desirous to shun the face of their fellow creatures; there they build a rude habitation, and clear perhaps three or four acres of land, just as much as they find sufficient to provide their families with corn: for the greater part of their food they depend on their rifle guns. These people, as the settlements advance, are succeeded in general by a second set of men, less savage than the first, who clear more land, and do not depend so much upon hunting as upon agriculture for their subsistence. A third set succeed these in turn, who build good houses, and bring the land into a more improved state. The first settlers, as soon as they have disposed of their miserable dwellings to advantage, immediately penetrate farther back into the woods, in order to gain a place of abode suited to their rude mode of life. These are the lawless people who encroach, as I have before mentioned, on the Indian territory, and are the occasion of the bitter animosities between the whites and the Indians. The second settlers, likewise, when displaced, seek for similar places to what those that they have left were when they first took them. I found, as I proceeded through this part of the country, that there was scarcely a man who had not changed his place of abode seven or eight different times.

As none but very miserable horses were to be procured at this village on the Genesee River, and as our expedition through the woods had given us a relish for walking, we determined to proceed on foot, and
merely

merely to hire horses to carry our baggage; accordingly, having engaged a pair, and a boy to conduct them, we set off early on the second morning from that of our arrival at the village, for the town of Bath.

The country between these two places is most agreeably diversified with hill and dale, and as the traveller passes over the hills which overlook the Genesee River and the flats bordering upon it, he is entertained with a variety of noble and picturesque views. We were particularly struck with the prospect from a large, and indeed very handsome house in its kind, belonging to a Major Wadsworth, built on one of these hills. The Genesee River, bordered with the richest woods imaginable, might be seen from it for many miles, meandering through a fertile country; and beyond the flats, on each side of the river, appeared several ranges of blue hills rising up one behind another in a most fanciful manner, the whole together forming a most beautiful landscape. Here, however, in the true American taste, the greatest pains were taking to diminish, and, indeed, to shut out all the beauties of the prospect; every tree in the neighbourhood of the house was felled to the ground; instead of a neat lawn, for which the ground seemed to be singularly well disposed, a wheat field was laid down in front of it; and at the bottom of the slope, at the distance of two hundred yards from the house, a town was building by the major, which, when completed, would effectually screen from the dwelling house every sight of the river and mountains. The Americans, as I before observed, seem to be totally dead to the beauties of nature, and only to admire a spot of ground as it appears to be more or less calculated to enrich the occupier by its produce.

The Genesee River takes its name from a lofty hill in the Indian territory, near to which it passes, called by the Indians Genesee, a word signifying, in their language, a grand extensive prospect.

The flats bordering upon the Genesee River are amongst the richest lands that are to be met with in North America, to the east of the Ohio. Wheat, as I told you in a former letter, will not grow upon them; and it is not found that the soil is impoverished by the successive crops

of Indian corn and hemp that are raised upon them year after year. The great fertility of these flats is to be ascribed to the regular annual overflowing of the Genesee River, whose waters are extremely muddy, and leave no small quantity of slime behind them before they return to their natural channel. That river empties itself into Lake Ontario: it is somewhat more than one hundred miles in length, but only navigable for the last forty miles of its course, except at the time of the inundations; and even then the navigation is not uninterrupted the whole way down to the lake, there being three considerable falls in the river about ten miles above its mouth: the greatest of these falls is said to be ninety feet in perpendicular height. The high lands in the neighbourhood of the Genesee River are stony, and are not distinguished for their fertility, but the valleys are all extremely fruitful, and abound with rich timber.

The summers in this part of the country are by no means so hot as towards the Atlantic, and the winters are moderate; it is seldom, indeed, that the snow lies on the ground much longer than six or seven weeks; but notwithstanding this circumstance, and that the face of the country is so much diversified with rising grounds, yet the whole of it is dreadfully unhealthy; scarcely a family escapes the baneful effects of the fevers that rage here during the autumn season. I was informed by the inhabitants, that much fewer persons had been attacked by the fever the last season than during former years, and of these few a very small number died, the fever having proved much less malignant than it was ever known to be before. This circumstance led the inhabitants to hope, that as the country became more cleared it would become much more healthy. It is well known, indeed, that many parts of the country, which were extremely healthy while they remained covered with wood, and which also proved healthy after they had been generally cleared and settled, were very much otherwise when the trees were first cut down: this has been imputed to the vapours arising from the newly cleared lands on their being first exposed to the burning rays of the sun, and which, whilst the newly cleared spots remain surrounded by woods, there is not a sufficient circulation of air to dispel. The

unhealthiness of the country at present does not deter numbers of people from coming to settle here every year, and few parts of North America can boast of a more rapid improvement than the Genesee country during the last four years.

In our way to Bath we passed through several small towns that had been lately begun, and in these the houses were comfortable and neatly built; but the greater part of those of the farmers were wretched indeed; one at which we stopped for the night, in the course of our journey, had not even a chimney or window to it; a large hole at the end of the roof supplied the deficiency of both; the door was of such a nature, also, as to make up in some measure for the want of a window, as it admitted light on all sides. A heavy fall of snow happened to take place whilst we were at this house, and as we lay stretched on our skins beside the fire, at night, the snow was blown, in no small quantities, through the crevices of the door, under our very ears.

At some of these houses we got plenty of venison, and good butter, milk, and bread; but at others we could get nothing whatsoever to eat. At one little village, consisting of three or four houses, the people told us, that they had not even sufficient bread and milk for themselves; and, indeed, the scantiness of the meal to which we saw them sitting down confirmed the truth of what they said. We were under the necessity of walking on for nine miles beyond this village before we could get any thing to satisfy our appetites.

The fall of snow, which I have mentioned, interrupted our progress through the woods very considerably the subsequent morning; it all disappeared, however, before the next night, and in the course of the third day from that on which we left the banks of the Genesee River we reached the place of our destination.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Account of Bath.—Of the Neighbourhood.—Singular Method taken to improve it.—Speculators.—Description of one, in a Letter from an American Farmer.—Conborton Creek.—View of the Navigation from Bath downwards.—Leave Bath for Newtown.—Embark in Canoes.—Stranded in the Night.—Seek for Shelter in a neighbouring House.—Difficulty of procuring Provisions.—Resume our Voyage.—Lockartsburgh.—Description of the eastern Branch of the Susquehanna River.—French Town.—French and Americans ill suited to each other.—Wilkesbarré.—Mountains in the Neighbourhood.—Country thinly settled towards Philadelphia.—Description of the Wind-Gap in the Blue Mountains.—Summary Account of the Moravian Settlement at Bethlehem.—Return to Philadelphia.

Philadelphia, November.

BATH is a post town, and the principal town in the western parts of the state of New York. Though laid out only three years ago, yet it already contains about thirty houses, and is increasing very fast. Amongst the houses are several stores or shops well furnished with goods, and a tavern that would not be thought meanly of in any part of America. This town was founded by a gentleman who formerly bore the rank of captain in his Majesty's service; he has likewise been the founder of Williamsburgh and Falkner's Town; and indeed to his exertions, joined to those of a few other individuals, may be ascribed the improvement of the whole of this part of the country, best known in America by the name of the Genesee Country, or the County of the Lakes, from its being watered by that river, and a great number of small lakes.

The landed property of which this gentleman, who founded Bath, &c. has had the active management, is said to have amounted originally to no less than six millions of acres, the greater part of which belonged to an individual in England. The method he has taken to improve this
property

property has been, by granting land in small portions and on long credits to individuals who would immediately improve it, and in larger portions and on a shorter credit to others who purchased on speculation, the lands in both cases being mortgaged for the payment of the purchase money; thus, should the money not be paid at the appointed time, he could not be a loser, as the lands were to be returned to him, and should they happen to be at all improved, as was most likely to be the case, he would be a considerable gainer even by having them returned on his hands; moreover, if a poor man, willing to settle on his land, had not money sufficient to build a house and to go on with the necessary improvements, he has at once supplied him, having had a large capital himself, with what money he wanted for that purpose, or sent his own workmen, of whom he keeps a prodigious number employed, to build a house for him, at the same time taking the man's note at three, four, or five years, for the cost of the house, &c. with interest. If the man should be unable to pay at the appointed time, the house, mortgaged like the lands, must revert to the original proprietor, and the money arising from its sale, and that of the farm adjoining, partly improved, will in all probability be found to amount to more than what the poor man had promised to pay for it: but a man taking up land in America in this manner, at a moderate price, cannot fail, if industrious, of making money sufficient to pay for it, as well as for a house, at the appointed time.

The numbers that have been induced by these temptations, not to be met with elsewhere in the States, to settle in the Genesee County, is astonishing; and numbers are still flocking to it every year, as not one third of the lands are yet disposed of. It was currently reported in the county, as I passed through it, that this gentleman, of whom I have been speaking, had, in the notes of the people to whom he had sold land payable at the end of three, or four, or five years, the immense sum of two millions of dollars. The original cost of the land was not more than a few pence per acre; what therefore must be the profits!

It may readily be imagined, that the granting of land on such very easy terms could not fail to draw crowds of speculators (a sort of gentry with
which

which America abounds in every quarter) to this part of the country; and indeed we found, as we passed along, that every little town and village throughout the country abounded with them, and each place, in consequence, exhibited a picture of idleness and dissipation. The following letter, supposed to come from a farmer, though somewhat ludicrous, does not give an inaccurate description of one of these young speculators, and of what is going on in this neighbourhood. It appeared in a news-paper published at Wilkesbarré, on the Susquehanna, and I give it to you verbatim, because, being written by an American, it will perhaps carry more weight with it than any thing I could say on the same subject.

“ To the Printers of the Wilkesbarré Gazette.

“ Gentlemen,

“ It is painful to reflect, that speculation has raged to such a degree of late, that honest industry, and all the humble virtues that walk in her train, are discouraged and rendered unfashionable.

“ It is to be lamented too, that dissipation is sooner introduced in new settlements than industry and economy.

“ I have been led to these reflections by conversing with my son, who has just returned from the Lakes or Genesee, though he has neither been to the one or the other;—in short, he has been to Bath, the celebrated Bath, and has returned both a speculator and a gentleman; having spent his money, swopped away my horse, caught the fever and ague, and, what is infinitely worse, that horrid disorder which some call the terra-phobia*.

“ We can hear nothing from the poor creature now (in his ravings) but of the captain and Billy—of ranges—townships—numbers—thousands—hundreds—acres—Bath—fairs—races—heats—bets—purses—silk stockings—fortunes—fevers—agues, &c. &c. &c. My son has part of a township for sale, and it is diverting enough to hear him narrate its pedigree, qualities, and situation. In fine, it lies near

* Our farmer does not seem to have well understood the import of this word, but we may readily guess at his meaning.

“ Bath,

" Bath, and the captain himself once owned, and for a long time re-
 " served it. It cost my son but five dollars per acre; he was offered
 " six in half a minute after his purchase; but he is positively deter-
 " mined to have eight, besides some precious reserves. One thing is
 " very much in my boy's favour—he has six years credit. Another
 " thing is still more so—he is not worth a sou, nor ever will be at this
 " rate. Previous to his late excursion the lad worked well, and was
 " contented at home on my farm; but now work is out of the question
 " with him. There is no managing my boy at home; these golden
 " dreams still beckon him back to Bath, where, as he says, no one need
 " either work or starve; where, though a man may have the ague
 " nine months in the year, he may console himself in spending the other
 " three fashionably at the races.

" *A Farmer.*"

" *Hanover, October 25th, 1796.*"

The town of Bath stands on a plain, surrounded on three sides by hills
 of a moderate height. The plain is almost wholly divested of its trees;
 but the hills are still uncleared, and have a very pleasing appearance from
 the town. At the foot of the hills runs a stream of pure water, over a
 bed of gravel, which is called Conhocton Creek. There is a very con-
 siderable fall in this creek just above the town, which affords one of the
 finest seats for mills possible. Extensive saw and flour mills have already
 been erected upon it, the principal saw in the former of which gave,
 when we visited the mill, one hundred and twenty strokes in a minute,
 sufficient to cut, in the same space of time, seven square feet, superficial
 measure, of oak timber; yet the miller informed us, that when the wa-
 ter was high it would cut much faster.

Conhocton Creek, about twenty miles below Bath, falls into Tyoga
 River, which, after a course of about thirty miles, empties itself into the
 eastern branch of the River Susquehannah. During floods you may go
 down in light bateaux along the creek, Tyoga and Susquehannah rivers,
 the whole way from Bath to the Chesapeake Bay, without interruption;
 and in the fall of the year there is generally water sufficient for canoes

from Bath downwards; but owing to the great drought that prevailed through every part of the country this year, the depth of water in the creek was found insufficient to float even a canoe of the smallest size. Had it been practicable, it was our intention to have proceeded from Bath by water; but finding that it was not, we once more set off on foot, and pursued our way along the banks of the river till we came to a small village of eight or ten houses, called Newtown, about thirty miles distant from Bath. Here we found the stream tolerably deep, and the people informed us, that excepting at one or two narrow shoals, they were certain that in every part of it, lower down, there was sufficient water for canoes; accordingly, determined to be our own watermen, being five in number including our servants, we purchased a couple of canoes from two farmers, who lived on the banks of the river, and having lashed them together, in order to render them more steady and safe, we put our baggage on board, and boldly embarked.

It was about three o'clock on a remarkably clear though cold afternoon that we left the village, and the current being strong, we hoped to be able to reach before night a tavern, situated, as we were told, on the banks of the river, about six miles below Newtown. For the first two miles we got on extremely well; but beyond this the river proving to be much shallower than we had been led to believe, we found it a matter of the utmost difficulty to proceed. Our canoes repeatedly struck upon the shoals, and so much time was consumed in setting them again free, that before we had accomplished more than two thirds of our voyage the day closed. As night advanced a very sensible change was observable in the weather; a heavy shower of hail came pouring down, and, involved in thick darkness, whilst the moon was obscured by a cloud, our canoes were drifted by the current, to which, being unable to see our way, we had consigned them, on a bank in the middle of the river. In endeavouring to extricate ourselves we unfortunately, owing to the darkness, took a wrong direction, and at the end of a few minutes found our canoes so firmly wedged in the gravel that it was impossible to move them. Nothing now remained to be done but for every one of us to jump into the water, and to put his shoulder to the canoes. This
we

we accordingly did, and having previously unlash'd, in order to render them more manageable, we in a short time contrived to haul one of them into deep water; here, however, the rapidity of the current was so great, that notwithstanding all our endeavours to the contrary, the canoe was forcibly swept away from us, and in the attempt to hold it fast we had the misfortune to see it nearly filled with water.

Deprived thus of one of our canoes, and of a great part of our baggage in it, which, for ought we knew, was irrecoverably lost, we determined to proceed more cautiously with the remaining one; having returned, therefore, to the bank, we carried every thing that was in the canoe on our shoulders to the shore, which was about forty yards distant; no very easy or agreeable task, as the water reached up to our waists, and the current was so strong that it was with the utmost difficulty we could keep our feet. The canoe being emptied, we brought it, as nearly as we could guess, to the spot where the other one had been swept away from us, and one of the party then getting into it with a paddle, we committed it, pursuant to his desire, to the stream, hoping that it would be carried down after the other, and that thus we should be able to recover both it and the things which it contained. In a few seconds the stream carried the canoe out of our sight, for the moon shone but faintly through the clouds, and being all of us totally unacquainted with the river, we could not but feel some concern for the personal safety of our companion. Before many minutes, however, were elapsed, we had the satisfaction of hearing his voice at a distance, and having made the best of our way along the shore to the spot from whence the sound proceeded, we had the satisfaction to find that he had been carried in safety close beside the canoe which had been lost; we were not a little pleased also at finding our portmanteaus at the bottom of the canoe, though well soaked in water; but such of our clothes as we had taken off preparatory to going into the water, together with several light articles, were all lost.

It froze so very hard now, that in a few minutes our portmanteaus, and such of our garments as had been wetted, were covered with a coat of ice, and our limbs were quite benumbed, in consequence of our hav-

ing waded so often through the river. Desirous, however, as we were to get to a house, we determined, in the first instance, to dispose of our baggage in a safe place, lest it might be pillaged. A deep hollow that appeared under some fallen trees seemed well adapted for the purpose, and having stowed it there, and covered it with leaves, we advanced forward. There were no traces whatsoever of a path in the woods where we landed, and for upwards of a mile we had to force our way through the bushes along the banks of the river; but at the end of that distance, we hit upon one, which in a short time brought us to a miserable little log house. At this house no accommodation whatsoever was to be had, but we were told, that if we followed the path through the woods for about a mile farther, we should come to a waggon road, upon which we should find another house, where probably we might gain admittance. We reached this house according to the directions we had received; we readily gained admittance into it, and the blaze of an immense wood fire, piled half way up the chimney, soon made us amends for what we had suffered from the inclemency of the weather. The coldness of the air, together with the fatigue which we had gone through in the course of the day, had by this time given a keen edge to our appetites; no sooner therefore had we warmed ourselves than we began to make enquiries about what we could get to satisfy the calls of hunger; but had we asked for a sheep or an ox for supper at an inn in England, the man of the house could not, I verily believe, have been more amazed than was our American landlord at these enquiries: "The women were in bed"—"He knew not where to find the keys"—"He did not believe there was any thing in the pantry"—"Provisions were very scarce in the country"—"If he gave us any there would not be enough for the family in the morning"—Such were his answers to us. However we plied him so closely, and gave him such a pitiable description of our sufferings, that at length he was moved; the keys were found, the pantry opened, and to satisfy the hunger of five hungry young men, two little flour cakes, scarcely as big as a man's hand each, and about a pint and a half of milk, were brought forth. He vowed he could give us nothing more; his wife would never pardon him if he

did not leave enough for their breakfasts in the morning; obliged therefore to remain satisfied, we eat our little pittance, and then laid ourselves down to rest on our skins, which we had brought with us on our shoulders.

In the morning we found that the man had really made an accurate report of the state of his pantry. There was barely enough in it for the family, and unable to get a single morsel to eat, we set out for the little house where we had first stopped the preceding night, which was the only one within two or three miles, there hoping to find the inhabitants better provided for: not a bit of bread however was to be had here; but the woman of the house told us, that she had some Indian corn meal, and that if we could wait for an hour or two she would bake a loaf for us. This was most grateful intelligence: we only begged of her to make it large enough, and then set off to search in the interim for our canoes and baggage. At several other places, in going down the Susquehannah, we afterwards found an equal scarcity of provisions with what we did in this neighbourhood. One morning in particular, after having proceeded for about four or five miles in our canoe, we stopped to breakfast; but nothing eatable was there to be had at the first house we went to, except a few potatoes that were roasting before the fire. The people very cheerfully gave us two or three, and told us at the same time, that if we went to some houses at the opposite side of the river we should most probably find better fare: we did so; but here the inhabitants were still more destitute. On asking them where we should be likely to get any thing to eat, an old woman answered, that if we went to a village about four miles lower down the river, we should find a house, she believed, where, "*they did keep victuals,*" an expression so remarkable that I could not help noting it down immediately. We reached this house, and finding it well stocked with provisions of every kind, took care to provide ourselves, not only with what we wanted for immediate use, but also with what we might want on a future occasion, in case we came to any place equally destitute of provisions as those which we had before stopped at; a precaution that was far from proving unnecessary.

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But to return. We found our canoes and baggage just as we had left them, and having embarked once more, we made the best of our way down to the house where we had bespoke breakfast, which stood on the banks of the river. The people here were extremely civil; they assisted us in making fresh paddles in lieu of those which we had lost the night before; and for the trifle which we gave them above what they asked us for our breakfasts they were very thankful, a most unusual circumstance in the United States.

After breakfast we pursued our way for about seven miles down the river, but in the course of this distance we were obliged to get into the water more than a dozen different times, I believe, to drag the canoes over the shoals; in short, by the time we arrived at a house in the afternoon, we were so completely disgusted with our water conveyance, that had we not been able to procure two men, as we did in the neighbourhood, to conduct our canoes to the mouth of Tyoga River, where there was reason to imagine that the water would be found deeper, we should certainly have left them behind us. The men set out at an early hour in the morning, and we proceeded some time afterwards on foot along the banks, but so difficult was the navigation, that we reached Tyoga Point or Lochartzburg, a small town built at the mouth of the river, several hours before them.

On arriving at this place, we heard to our disappointment, that the Susquehannah, although generally at this season of the year navigable for boats drawing four feet water, was now nearly as low as the Tyoga River, so that in many places, particularly at the rapids, there was scarcely sufficient water to float a canoe over the sharp rocks with which the bed of the river abounds; in fine, we were informed that the channel was now intricate and dangerous, and that no person unacquainted with the river could attempt to proceed down it without great risk; we found no difficulty, however, in hiring from amongst the watermen accustomed to ply on the river, a man that was perfectly well acquainted with it; and having exchanged our two canoes, pursuant to his advice, for one of a very large size, capable of holding us all conveniently, we renewed our voyage.

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From Lochartzburgh to Wilkesbarré, or Wyoming, situated on the south-east side of the Susquehannah, the distance is about ninety miles, and when the river is full, and the current of course strong, as is usually the case in the fall and spring of the year, you may go down the whole of this distance in one day; but owing to the lowness of the water we were no less than four days performing the voyage, though we made the utmost expedition possible. In many parts of the river, indeed, we found the current very rapid; at the Falls of Wyalusing, for instance, we were carried down three or four miles in about a quarter of an hour; but in other places, where the river was deep, scarcely any current was perceptible in it, and we were obliged to work our way with paddles. The bed of the river abounds with rock and gravel, and the water is so transparent, that in many parts, where it must have been at least twenty feet deep, the smallest pebble was distinguishable at the bottom. The width of the river varies from fifty to three hundred yards, and scarcely any stream in America has a more irregular course; in some places it runs in a direction diametrically opposite to what it does in others. The country through which this (the eastern) branch of the Susquehannah passes, is extremely uneven and rugged; indeed, from Lochartzburgh till within a short distance of Wilkesbarré, it is bounded the entire way by steep mountains either on the one side or the other. The mountains are never to be met with at both sides of the same part of the river, except it be at places where the river takes a very sudden bend; but wherever you perceive a range of mountains on one side, you are sure to find an extensive plain on the opposite one; scarcely in any part do the mountains extend for more than one mile together on the same side of the river, and in many instances, during the course of one mile, you will perceive more than a dozen different changes of the mountains from one side to the other. It may readily be imagined, from this description of the eastern branch of the Susquehannah, that the scenery along it must be very fine; and, indeed, I think there is no river in America that abounds with such a variety and number of picturesque views. At every bend the prospect varies, and there is scarcely a spot between Lochartzburg and Wilkesbarré where the painter would not find a subject

subject well worthy of his pencil. The mountains, covered with bold rocks and woods, afford the finest foreground imaginable; the plains, adorned with cultivated fields and patches of wood, and watered by the noble river, of which you catch a glimpse here and there, fill up the middle part of the landscape; and the blue hills, peeping up at a distance, terminate the view in the most pleasing manner.

The country bordering upon the Susquehannah abounds with deer, and as we passed down we met with numberless parties of the country people engaged in driving these animals. The deer, on being pursued in the neighbouring country, immediately make for the river, where men being concealed in bushes placed on the strand, at the part to which it is expected they will come down, take the opportunity of shooting them as soon as they enter the water. Should the deer not happen to come near these ambushes, the hunters then follow them in canoes: it seldom happens that they escape after having once taken to the water.

Very fine fish are found in every part of the Susquehannah, and the river is much frequented by wild fowl, particularly by the canvas back duck.

The whole way between Lochartzburg and Wilkesbarré are settlements on each side of the river, at no great distance from each other; there are also several small towns on the banks of the river. The principal one is French Town, situated within a short distance of the Falls of Wyalusing, on the western side of the river. This town was laid out at the expence of several philanthropic persons in Pennsylvania, who entered into a subscription for the purpose, as a place of retreat for the unfortunate French emigrants who fled to America. The town contains about fifty log houses; and for the use of the inhabitants a considerable track of land has been purchased adjoining to it, which has been divided into farms. The French settled here seem, however, to have no great inclination or ability to cultivate the earth, and the greater part of them have let their lands at a small yearly rent to Americans, and amuse themselves with driving deer, fishing, and fowling; they live entirely to themselves; they hate the Americans, and
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the Americans in the neighbourhood hate and accuse them of being an idle dissipated set. The manners of the two people are so very different that it is impossible they should ever agree.

Wilkesbarré, formerly Wyoming, is the chief town of Luzerne county. It is situated on a plain, bounded on one side by the Susquehannah, and on the other by a range of mountains, and contains about one hundred and fifty wooden dwelling houses, a church, court house, and gaol. It was here that the dreadful massacre was committed, during the American war, by the Indians under the command of colonel Butler, which is recorded in most of the histories of the war, and which will for ever remain a blot on the English annals. Several of the houses in which the unfortunate victims retired to defend themselves, on being refused all quarter, are still standing, perforated in every part with balls; the remains of others that were set on fire are also still to be seen, and the inhabitants will on no account suffer them to be repaired. The Americans are equally tenacious of the ruins in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia.

It was our intention at first to have proceeded down the river from hence as far as Sunburg, or Harrisburgh; but the weather being now so cold as to render a water conveyance, especially a canoe, where you are always obliged to sit very still, extremely disagreeable, we determined to cross the Blue Mountains to Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, situated about sixty-five miles to the south-east of Wilkesbarré; we accordingly hired horses, as we had done on a former occasion, to carry our baggage, and proceeded ourselves on foot. We set out in the afternoon, the day after that on which we terminated our voyage, and before evening crossed the ridge of mountains which bounds the plain of Wilkesbarré. These mountains, which are extremely rugged and stony, abound with iron ore and coal; for the manufacture of the former several forges have been established, but no use is made of the coal, there being plenty of wood as yet in the country, which is esteemed much more agreeable fuel. From the top of them you have a very grand view of the plain below, on which stands the town of Wilkesbarré, and of the river Susquehannah,

quehannah, which may be traced above the town, winding amidst the hills for a great number of miles.

The country beyond the mountains is extremely rough, and but very thinly settled, of course still much wooded. The people, at the few houses scattered through it, appeared to live much better than the inhabitants of any other part of the States which I before passed through. At every house where we stopped we found abundance of good bread, butter, tea, coffee, chocolate, and venison; and indeed we fared sumptuously here, in comparison to what we had done for many weeks preceding.

The woods in many parts of this country consisted almost wholly of hemlock trees, which are of the pine species, and grow only on poor ground. Many of them were of an unusually large size, and their tops so closely matted together, that after having entered into the depth of the woods you could see the sky in but very few places. The brushwood under these trees, different from what I ever saw elsewhere, consisted for the most part of the oleander and of the kalmia laurel, whose deep green served to render the gloom of the woods still more solemn; indeed they seemed completely to answer the description given by the poets of the sacred groves; and it were impossible to enter them without being struck with awe.

About twenty miles before you come to Bethlehem, in going thither from Wilkesbarré, you cross the ridge of Blue Mountains at what is called the Wind Gap; how it received that name I never could learn. This gap is nearly a mile wide, and it exhibits a tremendously wild and rugged scene. The road does not run at the bottom of the gap, but along the edge of the south mountain, about two thirds of the way up. Above you on the right, nothing is to be seen but broken rocks and trees, and on the left you look down a steep precipice. The rocks at the bottom of the precipice have every appearance, it is said (for we did not descend into it) of having been washed by water for ages; and from hence it has been conjectured that this must have been the original channel of the River Delaware, which now passes through the ridge, at a place about fifteen miles to the north west. Whether this were the case

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or not it is impossible to determine at this day; but it is certain, from the appearance of the country on each side of the Delaware, that a great change has taken place in this quarter, in consequence of some vast inundation.

On the Atlantic side of the mountains the country is much less rugged than on the opposite one, and it is more cleared and much more thickly settled: the inhabitants are for the most part of German extraction.

Bethlehem is the principal settlement, in North America, of the Moravians, or United Brethren. It is most agreeably situated on a rising ground, bounded on one side by the river Lehigh, which falls into the Delaware, and on the other by a creek, which has a very rapid current, and affords excellent seats for a great number of mills. The town is regularly laid out, and contains about eighty strong built stone dwelling houses and a large church. Three of the dwelling houses are very spacious buildings, and are appropriated respectively to the accommodation of the unmarried young men of the society, of the unmarried females, and of the widows. In these houses different manufactures are carried on, and the inmates of each are subject to a discipline approaching somewhat to that of a monastic institution. They eat together in a refectory; they sleep in dormitories; they attend morning and evening prayers in the chapel of the house; they work for a certain number of hours in the day; and they have stated intervals allotted to them for recreation. They are not subjected, by the rules of the society, to perpetual confinement; but they seldom, notwithstanding, go beyond the bounds of their walks and gardens, except it be occasionally to visit their friends in the town.

The Moravians, though they do not enjoin celibacy, yet think it highly meritorious, and the young persons of different sexes have but very little intercourse with each other; they never enter each other's houses, and at church they are obliged to sit separate; it is only in consequence of his having seen her at a distance, perhaps, that a bachelor is induced to propose for a young woman in marriage, and he is not permitted to offer his proposals in person to the object of his choice, but merely through the medium of the superintendant of the female house. If from the re-

port of the elders and wardens of the society it appears to the superintendant that he is able to maintain a wife, she then acquaints her protégée with the offer, and should she consent, they are married immediately, but if she do not, the superintendant selects another female from the house, whom she imagines would be suitable to the young man, and on his approval of her they are as quickly married. Hasty as these marriages are, they are never known to be attended with unhappiness; for being taught from their earliest infancy to keep those passions under controul, which occasion so much mischief amongst the mass of mankind; being inured to regular habits of industry, and to a quiet sober life; and being in their peaceable and retired settlements out of the reach of those temptations which persons are exposed to who launch forth into the busy world, and who mingle with the multitude, the parties meet with nought through life to interrupt their domestic repose.

Attached to the young men's and to the young women's houses there are boarding schools for boys and girls, under the direction of proper teachers, which are also inspected by the elders and wardens of the society. These schools are in great repute, and not only the children of Moravians are sent to them, but also those of many genteel persons of a different persuasion, resident in Philadelphia, New York, and other towns in the neighbouring States. The boys are instructed in the Latin, German, French, and English languages; arithmetic, music, drawing, &c.: the girls are likewise instructed in these different languages and sciences, and, in short, in every thing that is usually taught at a female boarding school, except dancing. When of a sufficient age to provide for themselves, the young women of the society are admitted into the house destined for their accommodation, where embroidery, fine needle-work, carding, spinning, knitting, &c. &c. and other works suitable to females, are carried on. A separate room is allotted for every different business, and a female, somewhat older than the rest, presides in it, to inspect the work, and preserve regularity. Persons are appointed to dispose of the several articles manufactured in the house, and the money which they produce is distributed amongst the individuals engaged in

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manufacturing them, who, after paying a certain sum towards the maintenance of the house, and a certain sum besides into the public fund of the society, are allowed to keep the remainder for themselves.

After the boys have finished their school education, they are apprenticed to the business which accords most with their inclination. Should this be a business or trade that is carried on in the young men's house, they at once go there to learn it, but if at the house of an individual in the town, they only board and lodge at the young men's house. If they are inclined to agricultural pursuits, they are then put under the care of one of the farmers of the society. The young men subscribe to the support of their house, and to the public fund, just as the young women do; the widows do the same; and every individual in the town likewise contributes a small sum weekly to the general fund of the society.

Situated upon the creek, which skirts the town, there is a flour mill, a saw mill, an oil mill, a fulling mill, a mill for grinding bark and dye stuff, a tan yard, a currier's yard; and on the Leleigh River an extensive brewery, at which very good malt liquor is manufactured. These mills, &c. belong to the society at large, and the profits arising from them, the persons severally employed in conducting them being first handsomely rewarded for their services, are paid into the public fund. The lands for some miles round the town, which are highly improved, likewise belong to the society, as does also the tavern, and the profits arising from them are disposed of in the same manner as those arising from the mills, the persons employed in managing the farms, and attending to the tavern, being nothing more than stewards or agents of the society. The fund thus raised is employed in relieving the distressed brethren of the society in other parts of the world, in forming new settlements, and in defraying the expence of the missions for the purpose of propagating the gospel amongst the heathens.

The tavern at Bethlehem is very commodious, and it is the neatest and best conducted one, without exception, that I ever met with in any part of America. Having communicated to the landlord, on arriving at it, our wish to see the town and public buildings, he immediately dispatched a messenger for one of the elders, and in less than a quarter of an hour,
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brother Thomas, a lively fresh coloured little man, of about fifty years of age, entered the room: he was dressed in a plain blue coat and waistcoat, brown corduroy breeches, and a large round hat; there was goodness and innocence in his looks, and his manners were so open and unconstrained, that it was impossible not to become familiar with him at once. When we were ready to fall forth, he placed himself between two of us, and leaning on our arms, and chatting without ceremony, he conducted us first to the young women's house. Here we were shewn into a neat parlour, whilst brother Thomas went to ask permission for us to see the house. In a few minutes the superintendant herself came; brother Thomas introduced her to us, and accompanied by them both we visited the different apartments.

The house is extensive, and the passages and stair-cases are commodious and airy, but the work rooms are small, and to such a pitch were they heated by stoves, that on entering into them at first we could scarcely breathe. The stoves, which they use, are built in the German style. The fire is inclosed in a large box or case formed of glazed tiles, and the warm air is thence conducted, through flues, into similar large cases placed in different parts of the room, by which means every part is rendered equally warm. About a dozen females or more, nearly of the same age, were seated at work in each apartment. The entrance of strangers did not interrupt them in the least; they went on with their work, and except the inspectresses, who never failed politely to rise and speak to us, they did not even seem to take any notice of our being in the room.

The dress of the sisterhood, though not quite uniform, is very nearly so. They wear plain calico, linen, or stuff gowns, with aprons, and close tight linen caps, made with a peak in front, and tied under the chin with a piece of riband. Pink ribands are said to be worn as a badge by those who are inclined to marry; however, I observed that all the unmarried women wore them, not excepting those whose age and features seemed to have excluded them from every chance of becoming the votaries of Hymen.

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The dormitory of the female house is a very spacious apartment in the upper story, which is aired by a large ventilator in the ceiling. It contains about fifty boarded beds without testers, each calculated to hold one person. They sleep here during winter time in the German style, between two feather beds, to which the sheets and blankets are stitched fast; in summer time the heat is too great here to admit even of a single blanket.

After having gone through the different apartments of the female house, we were conducted by the superintendant into a sort of shop, where different little articles of fancy work, manufactured by the sisterhood, are laid out to the best advantage. It is always expected that strangers visiting the house will lay out some trifling sum here; and this is the only reward which any member of the society expects for the trouble of conducting a stranger throughout every part of the town.

The house of the sisterhood exhibits a picture of the utmost neatness and regularity, as do likewise the young men's and the widows houses; and indeed the same may be said of every private house throughout the town. The mills, brewery, &c. which are built on the most approved plans, are also kept in the very neatest order.

Brother Thomas, after having shewn us the different public buildings and works, next introduced us into the houses of several of the married men, that were most distinguished for their ingenuity, and in some of them, particularly at the house of a cabinet maker, we were entertained with very curious pieces of workmanship. This cabinet maker brought us a book of Indian ink and tinted drawings, his own performances, which would have been a credit to a person in his situation in any part of the world.

The manufactures in general carried on at Bethlehem consist of woollen and linen cloths, hats, cotton and worsted caps and stockings, gloves, shoes, carpenters, cabinet makers, and turners work, clocks, and a few other articles of hardware, &c. &c.

The church is a plain building of stone, adorned with pictures from sacred history. It is furnished with a tolerable organ, as likewise are the chapels of the young men's and young women's houses; they accom-
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pany their hymns, besides, with violoncellos, violins, flutes, &c. The whole society attends the church on a Sunday, and when any one of the society dies, all the remaining members attend his funeral, which is conducted with great solemnity, though with little pomp: they never go into mourning for their departed friends.

Every house in the town is supplied with an abundance of excellent water from a spring, which is forced through pipes by means of an hydraulic machine worked by water, and which is situated on the banks of the creek. Some of the houses are supplied with water in every room. The machine is very simple, and would easily raise the water of the spring, if necessary, several hundred feet.

The spring from whence the houses are supplied with water stands nearly in the center of the town, and over it, a large stone house with very thick walls, is erected. Houses like this are very common in America; they are called spring houses and are built for the purpose of preserving meat, milk, butter, &c. during the heats of summer. This spring house in Bethlehem is common to the whole town; a shelf or board in it is allotted to each family, and though there is no watch placed over it, and the door be only secured by a latch, yet every person is certain of finding, when he comes for it, his plate of butter or bowl of milk, &c. exactly in the same state as when he put it in.

The Moravians study to render their conduct strictly conformable to the principles of the Christian religion; but very different notions, notwithstanding, are, and, no doubt, will be entertained respecting some of their tenets. Every unprejudiced person, however, that has visited their settlements must acknowledge, that their moral conduct is truly excellent, and is such as would, if generally adopted, make men happy in the extreme. They live together like members of one large family; the most perfect harmony subsists between them, and they seem to have but one wish at heart, the propagation of the gospel, and the good of mankind. They are in general of a grave turn of mind; but nothing of that stiffness, or of that affected singularity, or pride, as I will call it, prevalent amongst the Quakers, is observable in their manners. Wherever their society has extended itself in America, the most happy consequences

consequences have resulted from it; good order and regularity have become conspicuous in the behaviour of the people of the neighbourhood, and arts and manufactures have been introduced into the country.

As the whole of the plot of ground, on which Bethlehem stands, belongs to the society, as well as the lands for a considerable way round the town, the Moravians here are not liable to be troubled by intruders; but any person that will conform to their line of conduct will be received into their society with readiness and cordiality. They appeared to take the greatest delight in shewing us their town, and every thing belonging to it, and at parting lamented much that we could not stay longer with them, to see still more of the manners and habits of the society.

They do not seem desirous of adding to the number of houses in Bethlehem; but whenever there is an increase of people, they send them off to another part of the country, there to form a new settlement. Since Bethlehem was founded, they have established two other towns in Pennsylvania, Nazareth and Letitz. The former of these stands at the distance of about ten miles from Bethlehem, and in coming down from the Blue Mountains you pass through it; it is about half the size of Bethlehem, and built much on the same plan. Letitz is situated at a distance of about ten miles from Lancaster.

The country for many miles round Bethlehem is most pleasingly diversified with rising grounds; the soil is rich, and better cultivated than any part of America I before saw. Until within a few years past this neighbourhood has been distinguished for the salubrity of its climate, but fevers, chiefly bilious and intermittent, have increased to a very great degree of late, and, indeed, not only here, but in many other parts of Pennsylvania, which have been long settled. During the last autumn, more people suffered from sickness in the well cultivated parts of the country than had ever been remembered. Various reasons have been assigned for this increase of fevers in Pennsylvania, but it appears most probably to be owing to the unequal quantities of rain that have fallen of late years, and to the unprecedented mildness of the winters.

Bethlehem is visited during summer time by great numbers of people from the neighbouring large towns, who are led thither by curiosity or pleasure; and regularly, twice a week throughout the year, a public stage waggon runs between it and Philadelphia. We engaged this carriage to ourselves, and early on the second day from that on which we quitted Bethlehem, reached the capital, after an absence of, somewhat more than, five months.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

Leave Philadelphia.—Arrive at New York.—Visit Long Island.—Dreadful havoc by the Yellow Fever.—Dutch Inhabitants suspicious of Strangers.—Excellent Farmers.—Number of Inhabitants.—Culture of Corn.—Immense Quantities of Grouse and Deer.—Laws to protect them.—Increase of the same.—Decrease of Beavers.—New York agreeable to Strangers.—Conclusion.

MY DEAR SIR,

New York, January 1797.

AFTER having remained a few days at Philadelphia, in order to arrange some matters preparatory to my taking a final leave of that city, I set out once more for New York. The month of December had now arrived; considerable quantities of snow had fallen; and the keen winds from the north-west had already spread a thick crust of ice over the Delaware, whose majestic stream is always the last in this part of the country to feel the chilly touch of the hand of winter. The ice however, was not yet strong enough to sustain the weight of a stage carriage, neither was it very readily to be broken; so that when we reached the falls of the river, where it is usual to cross in going from Philadelphia to New York, we had to remain for upwards of two hours, shivering before the bitter blasts, until a passage was opened for the boat, which was to convey us and our vehicle to the opposite side. The crossing of the Delaware at this place with a wheel carriage, even when the river is frozen over and the ice sufficiently thick to bear, is generally a matter of considerable inconvenience and trouble to travellers, owing to the large irregular masses of ice formed there, when the frost first sets in, by the impetuosity of the current, which breaking away the slender flakes of ice from the edges of the banks, gradually drifts them up in layers over each other; it is only at this rugged part, that a wheel carriage can safely pass down the banks of the river.

When the ground is covered with snow, a sleigh or sledge is by far the most commodious sort of carriage to travel in, as neither it nor the

passengers it contains are liable to receive any injury whatsoever from an overturn, and as, added to this, you may proceed much faster and easier in it than in a carriage on wheels; having said then that there was snow on the ground, it will perhaps be a subject of wonder to you, that we had not one of these safe and agreeable carriages to take us to New York; if so, I must inform you, that no experienced traveller in the middle states sets out on a long journey in a sleigh at the commencement of winter, as unexpected thaws at this period now take place very commonly, and so rapid are they, that in the course of one morning the snow sometimes entirely disappears; a serious object of consideration in this country, where, if you happen to be left in the lurch with your sleigh, other carriages are not to be had at a moment's warning. In the present instance, notwithstanding the intense severity of the cold, and the appearances there were of its long continuance, yet I had not been eight and forty hours at New York when every vestige of frost was gone, and the air became as mild as in the month of September.

This sudden change in the weather afforded me an opportunity of seeing, to much greater advantage than might have been expected at this season of the year, parts of New York and Long Islands, which the shortness of my stay in this neighbourhood had not permitted me to visit in the summer. After leaving the immediate vicinage of the city, which stands at the southern extremity of the former of these two islands, but little is to be met with that deserves attention; the soil, indeed, is fertile, and the face of the country is not unpleasingly diversified with rising grounds; but there is nothing grand in any of the views which it affords, nor did I observe one of the numerous seats, with which it is overspread, that was distinguished either for its elegant neatness or the delightfulness of its situation; none of them will bear any comparison with the charming little villas which adorn the banks of the Schuylkill near Philadelphia.

On Long Island much more will be found, in a picturesque point of view, to interest the traveller. On the western side, in particular, bordering upon the Narrows, or that contracted channel between the islands,

islands, through which vessels pass in sailing to New York from the Atlantic, the country is really romantic. The ground here is very much broken, and numberless large masses of wood still remain standing, through the vistas in which you occasionally catch the most delightful prospects of the distant hills on Staten Island and the New Jersey shore, and of the water, which is constantly enlivened by vessels sailing to and fro.

To an inhabitant of one of the large towns on the coast of America, a country house is not merely desirable as a place of retirement from noise and bustle, where the owner may indulge his fancy in the contemplation of rural scenes, at a season when nature is attired in her most pleasing garb, but also as a safe retreat from the dreadful maladies which of late years have never failed to rage with more or less virulence in these places during certain months. When at Philadelphia the yellow fever committed such dreadful havoc, sparing neither the rich nor the poor, the young nor the aged, who had the confidence to remain in the city, or were unable to quit it, scarcely a single instance occurred of any one of those falling a victim to its baneful influence, who lived but one mile removed from town, where was a free circulation of air, and who at the same time studiously avoided all communication with the sick, or with those who had visited them; every person therefore at Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, &c. who is sufficiently wealthy to afford it, has his country habitation in the neighbourhood of these respective places, to which he may retire in the hot unhealthy season of the year; but this delightful part of Long Island, of which I have been speaking, though it affords such a number of charming situations for little villas, is unfortunately too far removed from New York to be a convenient place of retreat to men so deeply engaged in commercial pursuits as are the greater number of the inhabitants of that city, and it remains almost destitute of houses; whilst another part of the island, more conveniently situated, is crowded with them, although the face of the country is here flat and sandy, devoid of trees, and wholly uninteresting.

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The permanent residents on Long Island are chiefly of Dutch extraction, and they seem to have inherited all the coldness, reserve, and covetousness of their ancestors. It is a common saying in New York, that a Long Island man will conceal himself in his house on the approach of a stranger; and really the numberless instances of shyness I met with in the inhabitants seemed to argue, that there was some truth in the remark. If you do but ask any simple question relative to the neighbouring country, they will eye you with suspicion, and evidently strive to disengage themselves from you; widely different from the Anglo-Americans, whose inquisitiveness in similar circumstances would lead them to a thousand impertinent and troublesome enquiries, in order to discover what your business was in that place, and how they could possibly take any advantage of it. These Dutchmen are in general very excellent farmers; and several of them have very extensive tracks of land under cultivation, for the produce of which there is a convenient and ready market at New York. Amongst them are to be found many very wealthy men; but except a few individuals, they live in a mean, penurious, and most uncomfortable manner. The population of the island is estimated at about thirty-seven thousand souls, of which number near five thousand are slaves. It is the western part of the island which is the best inhabited; a circumstance to be ascribed, not so much to the fertility of the soil as its contiguity to the city of New York. Here are several considerable towns, as, Flatbush, Jamaica, Brooklynn, Flushing, Utrecht; the three first-mentioned of which contain each upwards of one hundred houses. Brooklynn, the largest of them, is situated just opposite to New York, on the bank of the East River, and forms an agreeable object from the city.

The soil of Long Island is well adapted to the culture of small grain and Indian corn; and the northern part, which is hilly, is said to be peculiarly favourable to the production of fruit. The celebrated Newtown pippin, though now to be met with in almost every part of the state of New York, and good in its kind, is yet supposed by many persons to attain a higher flavour here than in any other part of America.

Of the peculiar soil of the plains that are situated towards the center of this island, I have before had occasion to speak, when describing those in the western parts of the state of New York. One plain here, somewhat different from the rest, is profusely covered with stunted oaks and pines; but no grain will grow upon it, though it has been cleared, and experiments have been made for that purpose in many different places. This one goes under the appellation of Brushy Plain. Immense quantities of grouse and deer are found amidst the brushwood, with which it is covered, and which is so well calculated to afford shelter to these animals. Laws have been passed, not long since, to prevent the wanton destruction of the deer; in consequence of which they are beginning to increase most rapidly, notwithstanding such great numbers are annually killed, as well for the New York market, as for the support of the inhabitants of the island; indeed it is found that they are now increasing in most of the settled parts of the states of New York, where there is sufficient wood to harbour them; whereas in the Indian territories, the deer, as well as most other wild animals, are becoming scarcer every year, notwithstanding that the number of Indian hunters is also decreasing; but these people pursue the same destructive system of hunting, formerly practised on Long Island, killing every animal they meet, whether young or full grown. Notwithstanding the strong injunctions laid upon them by the Canadian traders, to spare some few beavers at each dam, in order to perpetuate the breed, they still continue to kill these animals wherever they find them, so that they are now entirely banished from places which used to abound with, and which are still in a state to harbour them, being far removed from the cultivated parts of the country. An annual deficiency of fifteen thousand has been observed in the number of beaver skins brought down to Montreal, for the last few years.

From Long Island I returned to this city; which the hospitality and friendly civilities I have experienced, in common with other strangers, from its inhabitants, induce me to rank as the most agreeable place I have visited in the United States: nor am I singular in this opinion, there being scarcely any traveller I have conversed with, but what gives
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it; the same preference. Whilst I continue in America it shall be my place of residence: but my thoughts are solely bent upon returning to my native land, now dearer to me than ever; and provided that the ice, which threatens at present to block up the harbour, does not cut off our communication with the Atlantic, I shall speedily take my departure from this continent, well pleased at having seen as much of it as I have done; but I shall leave it without a sigh, and without entertaining the slightest wish to revisit it.

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