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**NOTES**

**MADE DURING A VISIT TO THE  
UNITED STATES AND CANADA  
IN 1831.**

**BY MR FERGUSSON OF WOODHILL.**

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## NOTES, &c.

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**H**AVING had a desire to visit the United States and Canada, for the purpose of satisfying myself regarding the actual condition and prospects of Agricultural Settlers in these countries, I left Edinburgh upon the 12th of February, for Manchester, which I reached the following morning.

A heavy fall of snow which had lately blocked up the roads was fast dissolving, and the Tweed, with its tributary streams, was rolling along in mighty flood. The country wore a wintry aspect, but the numerous plantations on every hand enlivened the scene. I was amused by the remark mentioned by a fellow-passenger, as having been made by a gentleman lately returned from India, who, upon being asked if the great improvements during his absence did not fill him with delight, replied that he could, by no means, join in their admiration, as the whole country was, in his opinion, "*running to jungle.*"

Having formerly visited the manufactories of Manchester, I proceeded without delay to Liverpool, by the far-famed railway. We started with eight carriages attached to the engine with such imperceptible motion, that it was only, when I found myself unable to read a milestone, or to distinguish the features of

those who darted past in the opposite direction, that I was led to consult my watch for the rate of travelling; when I found, to my surprise, that the next five miles were done in fifteen minutes; nor was it possible, from the precautions so judiciously taken, to feel either anxiety or dread.

The project of this railway was first discussed in 1822; subsequently, Mr Sanders of Liverpool, adopted the scheme, and, by being guarantee for the expenses of the first survey, he may be considered as the father of the undertaking. It met with great opposition in Parliament, and, before the act could be obtained to proceed with the work, the cost entailed on the parties engaged in the contest was at least from L.60,000 to L.70,000.

On the 19th of June 1826, Mr G. Stephenson was appointed principal engineer to the company, by the directors, and, in the same month, the actual operation was begun on Chat Moss, near Manchester. The first shaft of the Liverpool tunnel was opened in September of the same year. During the whole of the year 1827, the formation of the tunnel was carried forward, night and day, with great spirit. It was constructed in seven or eight separate lengths, communicating with the surface by as many upright shafts; and the junction of the various cuttings was completed in June 1828, with the greatest accuracy, and in a manner highly creditable to the talents of the engineer. On the 1st January 1830, the Rocket, locomotive engine, constructed by Mr Stephenson, with a carriage and passengers, passed over Chat Moss for the first time.

The total expense of the railway, including its machinery and carriages, is estimated at L.820,000; and allowing the length of the whole line to be thirty-two miles, the expense, per mile, will be L.25,625, or at the rate of nearly 14 guineas per lineal yard.

Large as the expenditure has been, it is highly satisfactory to know that the undertaking will be a source of handsome remuneration to the company. I understand that, during the twelve months which have elapsed since the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, about 460,000 persons have passed between the two towns. The sum received for the conveyance of passengers and goods during the same period, has been upwards of L.190,000.

From the powers of the locomotive engines on the railroad, goods and passengers are conveyed from Liverpool to Manchester, a distance of thirty-two miles, in about two hours. As a contrast to this rapid transmission between the two towns, the following statement may not be out of place. A stage-coach was first established between Liverpool and Manchester in 1767. The roads were then so bad that the coach was drawn by six, and occasionally by *eight*, horses, and it required the whole of the day to perform the journey. An old gentleman, now resident in Liverpool, relates that, between fifty and sixty years ago, he occasionally visited Manchester, when the coach started early in the morning from Liverpool; the passengers breakfasted at Prescott, dined at Warrington, and arrived sometimes in time for supper at Manchester. On one occasion, at Warrington, after dinner, the coachman intimated his anxiety to proceed; when he was requested by the company to take another pint and wait a little longer, as they had not finished their wine, asking him at the same time if he was in a hurry; "Why," replied John, "I'm not partic'lar as to *an hour or so*."

Among other regulations, a watchman perambulates every half mile to detect any stone or other dangerous impediment upon the rail. As he sees the carriages approaching, if all be right, he stops and extends his arm in sufficient time to enable the engineer to stop the train, should the signal of safety not be displayed. Some accidents undoubtedly happen, but they may be traced, in almost every instance, to a want of ordinary prudence and attention in the unhappy sufferers. As we bowled along, a little circumstance, more ludicrous than dangerous, occasioned a small loss of time. The hook by which No. 2. was attached to No. 1. suddenly gave way, and the engine, with one carriage only, shot off like lightning, leaving the others to follow as they best could. The alarm was, however, quickly given, the engine reversed its movement, while our *impetus* carried us yet steadily forward, and the whole affair was speedily adjusted. The tunnelling and cutting upon some portions of the line are stupendous, and the whole stands a magnificent sample of enterprise and scientific skill.

The consternation occasioned among the coach-proprietors on

the line, by this wholesale mode of travelling, was of course great, and heavy individual losses necessarily incurred, with much jealousy and ill-will towards the intruder. A knight of the whip, who had been forced to drop his reins, mustered up resolution one morning to take a trip by the railway, and, in spite of a very reasonable stock of indignation, soon felt his asperity giving way under the excitement of such a slapping pace, and, ere he had proceeded far, exclaimed in ecstasy to the engineer, "Come now, my lad, that's it, *do boil us up a bit of a gallop.*"

Liverpool, the mighty Tyre of modern times, is a scene of wealth and bustle which must strike the most indifferent observer. Commerce reigns here with unbounded sway; and it is pleasing to observe how the extinction of one appalling branch, so long engrossing the enterprise and capital of Liverpool, has been succeeded by an overwhelming tide of prosperity and success.

The kind friends to whom I was consigned in Liverpool made me happy in every respect, save the uneasiness I felt at trespassing upon their valuable time; and, as certain arrangements required the postponement of our departure until the 24th, I resolved upon visiting the ancient city of Chester. I had a very pleasant ride, for *half-a-crown*, crossing the Mersey by an oblique ferry of seven miles, in a steamer. Chester, one of the most ancient cities in England, is finely situated upon the Dee, which divides it from Wales. It is walled round, and the ramparts afford an agreeable promenade, with fine views of the Welsh mountains and rich plains of Cheshire. The interior of the town is, however, more remarkable, the streets having been originally hollowed out in such a way as left the citizens an opportunity of assailing unwelcome visitors from covered galleries above, and which run like terraces through most parts of the town. These cloisters, known by the name of rows, form an agreeable lounge, and, being extremely well suited for assignations, suggested an explanation (perhaps rather fanciful) of the common phrase, "communicating something *under the rows,*" which, as applied to a flower, seems sufficiently absurd. There is a very fine jail, a court-house, &c.; and a magnificent stone bridge is now erected upon the Dee, the centre arch of which is probably the largest in the world, be-

ing a span of 200 feet. At a remote period, Chester was a sea-port, but the waves have long ceased to break against its walls, and a noble domain, of 7000 or 8000 acres, now belongs to the Dee Company, by charter from Lord Crewe, whose family originally acquired this valuable manor from the ocean. I lodged in Chester at the Albion, an hotel in every way comfortable, and particularly commending itself to me, from an instance of liberality in Mr Willoughby, the landlord, rarely to be met with, and not to be expected. A gentleman in the hotel, with whom I passed the evening, represented to me the wonders of the Menai Bridge, in such glowing terms, that a strong desire was excited to pay it a visit. A glance at my bill, however, in the morning quickly satisfied me that my purse, prepared only for a day in Chester, was quite unequal to an excursion into Wales. I thought it worth a chance, however, to broach the matter to mine host, who, in the handsomest terms, offered me at once any accommodation, and made me perfectly at ease, a piece of civility and confidence enhanced by the circumstance of having entered his hotel without an article of luggage beyond my great-coat. We crossed the Dee, and proceeded for Bangor, a distance of sixty-four miles. The country is beautiful, especially in the vale of Clwyd and Conway. The cultivation I should consider slovenly. Two-horse ploughs are, however, pretty general, but scarce a field of turnips is to be seen. The Tees-water cattle seem to be coming into favour, and Colonel Hughes, since raised to the peerage, who owns a beautiful place and princely estate at St George, sets a good example, in cultivating green crops, adopting improved implements, &c. A large portion of this estate is a rich alluvial deposit, yielding the heaviest wheat of the district; yet, such is the poor state of culture, that I was informed the produce never exceeded *two or three* quarters per acre. The rent is twenty-five shillings, and the tithe and poor-rate probably from three shillings to five shillings more. The river at Conway is crossed by a suspension-bridge, and has been made to harmonize in excellent taste, with the ancient towers and ramparts of the castle.

Soon after leaving Conway, we come to the frowning promontory of Penmanmawr, along the side of which the road has been hewn from the solid rock, and forms certainly an appalling

pass—the rough mountain face on one hand, and the Atlantic raging beneath the precipice on the other. The wind, charged with drifted sand, blows frequently with tremendous violence at this point; and it has happened more than once that the mail-coach has been fairly obliged to turn back to Conway. The country from this to Bangor is still indifferently farmed, and large flocks of small half-starved sheep, resembling our old Scotch tawny-faced breed, were picking a scanty living over the naked fallows; the soil good loam, yet not an acre of turnips to be seen.

Penryhn Castle, belonging to Mr Pennant, the owner of extensive slate-quarries and a fine estate, is close to Bangor. The castle is a heavy-looking pile, in a park surrounded by a fine wall, seven miles in extent, and approached by a gateway, which alone is said to have cost L. 10,000. The constant intercourse on this road with Ireland, and the dangerous uncertainty of the ferry at Bangor across the Menai Strait, suggested the expediency of erecting a suspension-bridge, which the genius and science of Telford soon carried into effect. This elegant and useful structure unites the mainland to the Isle of Anglesea, on the great line of Parliamentary road to Holyhead. It is above 1717 feet in length, and must strike all who visit it as a work of no ordinary achievement. In standing upon the bridge, suspended by massive chains, and beholding a stately vessel passing, at the depth of 100 feet below, it is impossible not to feel impressed with the magnitude and boldness of the attempt. Had it been effected at the expense of private individuals, we should have regretted the failure of pecuniary returns. The establishment of steam-vessels from Liverpool to Dublin has seriously diminished the pontage of Menai, by diverting the stream of travellers into another channel; but it was executed as a national concern, and the public exchequer bears the loss. The bridge cost L. 200,000, and the toll is at present less than L. 1000 per annum.

I regretted that it was not in my power to see more of Wales at this time. The country is beautiful; the peasantry, so far as I saw, civil and industrious. Many ancient customs are kept up by the Cambrians, none perhaps more simply interesting than the attention paid by relatives to the graves of departed

friends, of which some are carefully secured with matting of straw, and all are decorated with evergreens and flowers.

It is now, however, time to embark for the ultimate object of my journey. Upon returning to Liverpool, I found, that, by great exertions, the packet-ship York, in which we were to sail, had discharged her American cargo, and replaced it in the short space of six days, and that Captain Bursley was prepared to sail upon the 24th. We embarked accordingly that morning, and joined the ship by a steamer, which continued to tow us for some time against a head wind. The packet ships between New York and Liverpool are of the very first class, equally remarkable for comfort and safety. Accidents are extremely rare; and the unfortunate loss of the Albion upon the Irish coast, some years ago, is generally ascribed to a hazard which no captain would encounter. The regular packets had been at that period recently established, and trading vessels used every manœuvre to discredit them by superior sailing. A gale had driven the Albion close upon the Irish coast, but an offing might have been gained, had the attempt been made in time. Unfortunately the captain delayed till it was too late, trusting to make Liverpool next morning, and, when he did endeavour to escape by carrying a press of sail, his masts went by the board, and the ship drifted on the rocks of Kinsale, where almost every individual perished.

The routine of a sea-life is subject to little variation. Our cabin-party consisted only of five, this being a season of the year when a stormy passage is commonly anticipated. The weather was cold, and the wind most unpropitious. On the third day we were favoured with an unexpected addition; by the discovery of a passenger amongst the hay provided for our live stock. He had managed to secrete himself while the ship was in dock, and, having lived very much like bruin by sucking his paws, was sufficiently wo-begone when brought to light, and by no means cordially welcomed by the captain, who is bound, before getting rid of such volunteers, to grant security at New York that they shall not become burdensome as paupers.

For twenty long days we contended with heavy gales a-head, and the eccentric movements, occasioned by the rolling of the ship, were sufficiently diverting to those who could preserve an



equilibrium, or maintain their post at table. After a time, however, I was able to admire the mechanism and management of the ship, stemming the mighty waters of the Atlantic, and began to enjoy the novelty of my situation. It is difficult to describe the thrill which the landsman feels, as he contemplates a billow, many feet higher than the deck, rushing onward in its irresistible course, and threatening to overwhelm the ship, while yet he finds, in the anxious moment of collision, that far from being engulfed, he is borne aloft in delightful buoyancy, plunges into the deep valley beyond, and mounts again the rolling waves in endless succession. Still it is to him a sensation not unaccompanied with anxious thoughts, and he feels himself compelled to reflect how little there is between him and a watery grave. The prismatic colours so frequently observed by day, and the brilliant phosphorescence which flashes from the spray by night, are subjects of interest and wonder to the voyager. The latter effect produced by the motion of the vessel, or by the agitation of a storm, is singularly beautiful. It is generally ascribed by naturalists to phosphoric animalculæ. On the night of the 30th, a heavy gale blowing from the southwest, I was called on deck by Captain B., to witness this appearance, in a degree which, he said, was rare. The ship was running about nine knots an hour, and cut her way through liquid fire. The spray from her bow seemed one sheet of light, while the broken surface of the ocean, for miles around, glistened with like splendour. It was an impressive scene, the recollection of which is not to be easily effaced. Our voyage continued tedious, and uncomfortable with regard to weather, and little occurred to vary the scene. For days together the weather was such as to prevent the captain from taking an observation. One morning a vessel appeared on our weather-bow, which seemed to have suffered much from the storm, and we lay-to for some hours, until she came under our stern. She proved to be the British mail-packet *Reindeer*, bound for Halifax and Bermudas, out thirty-seven days, and had lost foremast and bowsprit, in the heavy gales which we had lately encountered. They were busied in rigging a jury-foremast, seemed to have a stout crew, and their captain declined any assistance.

On the 5th of April, our fortieth day at sea, we made the high land of Jersey and Staatens Island, and a joyful sight it was; for, as was long ago observed, a ship, in the most favourable view, is but a prison afloat, with the agreeable chance of being drowned.

The Americans keep a sharp look-out for news from Europe, and more than one newspaper has a fast-sailing cutter constantly cruising off Sandy-Hook, to intercept the packets or other vessels. We were boarded, about sixteen miles off-land, by one of these *quid nuncs*, and, having given him our journals, we had the satisfaction of finding that, tedious as our voyage had been, we had beat the New-York, a packet which had sailed four days before us, and also the Thomas Dickason, a *crack* ship, which left the Mersey along with ourselves.

The scenery of the American coast is rather tame at this point; but the Bay of New York, after passing the Forts, is magnificent, and the approach to the city very fine. We got ashore about three o'clock, and were conveyed, in a particularly clean and neat hackney-coach, to the Mansion-House Hotel in Broadway, kept by Mr Bunker.

I was struck with the superior character of the hackney horses to those of our cities, and I may add also of those in cars and waggons. They were all in excellent plight, and the latter, if not equal in size to those in English drays, infinitely surpassed them in action. The hackney-coach fares in New York are high, and are moreover annoying to strangers, from the practice of paying for each passenger, when exceeding one, and also for luggage. New York is well provided with hotels of every degree. Our accommodation at Bunker's was excellent. The house is extensive, though not so much so as the City Hotel, where two hundred beds are made up; and the style of living appears to me sufficiently convenient and agreeable. Besides occasional guests, you meet with a certain number of *permanent* boarders, sometimes whole families remaining for weeks together, with whom strangers enjoy the utmost facility of forming an acquaintance; and, as it frequently happens that some of the inmates are members of Congress or of the State Legislatures, and that most of them are men of superior information, an op-

portunity is afforded of acquiring knowledge regarding the institutions and habits of the people, highly to be prized.

The Americans appeared to me perfectly accessible, and quite ready to give counsel or assistance to all who were disposed frankly and cordially to accost them. Before I was two days in the hotel, I could reckon several very kind friends, acquired entirely in the ordinary intercourse of the day, without any formal introduction, and was not only furnished with routes for my future guidance, but received kind and pressing invitations to visit various individuals in the course of my tour.

The public rooms in the hotels consist of one or more well furnished drawing-rooms, where you receive visitors, assemble before meals, or spend the evening with music, &c. Single gentlemen, unacquainted or unconnected with any lady of the party, appeared to me hardly expected to join the drawing-room circle, although there is no exclusion, nor any difficulty, when one is so inclined, in finding admission.

The dining-room is, of course, large, commonly two apartments thrown into one, and capable of being enlarged or contracted at pleasure. In Bunker's, I admired an ingenious communication with the kitchen, by means of a stair concealed under a large sideboard, from one end of which the good-humoured shining phiz of a black waiter was ever and anon emerging with some savoury dish. The bar-room and open gallery or verandah are the only scenes of smoking to be met with in respectable hotels. A book is kept in the bar, where arrivals and departures are regularly recorded, and which frequently enables friends to trace each other with much convenience.

The hotels are well fitted up, the bed-rooms not very large, but clean and comfortable, and, in Bunker's, we found excellent warm-baths. Our board was 2 dollars, or 9s. per day, for which we had breakfast, dinner, tea and supper, with a bed-room. Our fare was ~~quite~~ excellent.\* Fish and fowl, rump steaks, sausages, omelets, &c. &c. are kept in constant requisition, and ample justice is done to them, with a dispatch somewhat startling to a stranger. At this time *shad* reigned supreme at our breakfast, as *striped bass* did at our dinner-table, both uncommonly delicate varieties of fish.

\*At breakfast

To those who have formed an estimate of American hotels from certain modern tourists, I am aware that my report may wear the aspect of partiality, yet I feel a pleasure, while I consider it a duty, with perfect indifference and candour, to state the impression made upon myself, and the results of my own experience and observation.

In treating of America, the man who would do her justice must have in constant remembrance the extraordinary advances and improvements, which even a year or two in this country produce. In the hotel where I now lived, an English gentleman informed me, that only a few years ago, not more than two or three single bed-rooms could be found, whereas it is now entirely different, and the change, in ordinary road taverns, is alike remarkable. We have been accustomed to hear a great deal of the saucy or sulky demeanour of the attendants. Not a solitary instance of the kind occurred in my experience, and I found all my personal wants quite as regularly attended to as I could possibly desire, both in New York and elsewhere; with this essential improvement, that you are relieved of those vexatious extortions which assail you, as "riders to the bill," in every British hotel. The attendants, except in the slave states, are almost always free persons of colour, and I believe the repugnance felt to the designation of *servant*, arises from some latent ill-defined dread of being mistaken for *slaves*.

The porter of the hotel receives a small remuneration, having not only to run errands, but to do some heavy work in removing the luggage, of which the superfluous portion, or what is not in immediate requisition, is carefully deposited in a room allotted to that purpose.

That matters are conducted very differently from what we are accustomed to meet with, in our own admirable houses of entertainment, I readily admit; but I cannot, upon the whole, allow that the absence of snug parlours or mahogany boxes, is attended with those very *fatal* effects to comfort and good living, which some smart writers would have us to believe. One grievance perpetually served up is, the shocking inconvenience of travellers being obliged to conform to the regular hours of a public table, a truth which amounts precisely to nothing, these hours being invariably calculated to suit the motions of

public conveyances, by which travelling, I may say, is exclusively accomplished in America, and because there is no difficulty in procuring private rooms or *extra* meals, when circumstances oblige you to call for them.

Another very pretty topic of abuse is the *wholesale ablution* system carried on in the tavern-rooms, with the accompaniments of a comb and hair-brush, suspended *pro bono publico*. The climate, in summer, renders washing at every stage extremely comfortable, during the few minutes employed in changing horses, and a basin and towel are placed at hand for the purpose. It is only in *very* humble quarters, indeed, that you cannot command these comforts in your own bed-room, where you stop for the night; and, although certainly the above articles would not present themselves unless they were in use, I scarce recollect observing a single traveller without his pocket-comb.

I shall make at present no further remarks upon American accommodations, intending to state them as they occur during the progress of my tour.

New York has been so often and so well described, that it is unnecessary to speak in detail of its public buildings and institutions. It is a fine commercial city, with a population of nearly 200,000, carrying on an immense traffic with the whole world. The celebrated Broadway somewhat disappointed me. Its length is certainly very great, and handsome public buildings, private mansions, hotels, and well furnished shops or stores, are curiously intermixed; while its whole length and breadth are alive with carriages and waggons, equestrians and pedestrians of every rank and of almost every hue. Still, it did not equal the expectations which I had been led to form.

I could say much, were it proper, of the hospitality of New York, and of the unostentatious kindness with which my letters of introduction were received. The style of living is elegant and comfortable, and the domestic circles which I had the pleasure of joining seemed truly unaffected and happy. The quiet, modest, and amiable tone of female society particularly pleased me.

I frequently visited the *seed-store* of Mr Thorburn, a character of some celebrity, and of great originality, being, as he in-

formed me at our first interview, the "very identical Lawrie Tod," and that, so far as the first volume of that entertaining work goes, Mr Galt had exactly recorded his life and adventures. Besides other sources of enjoyment, Mr Thorburn is distinguished for a lively and unfailing reliance upon a special over-ruling Providence, not a blind fatalism, but a conviction that, in all the crosses of life, a blessing will be found by those who faithfully seek it. He detailed many singular illustrations of this doctrine in his own history, and altogether gratified me much by his acquaintance. His original profession was that of a nail-maker, at Dalkeith, and by that alone he looked for a livelihood in the New World. Soon after his arrival, however, this handicraft was annihilated by the introduction of machinery, and poor Thorburn was driven to open a small grocery store for subsistence to *Phemie* and himself. It was his practice to visit the butcher-market at a late hour, that he might pick up a cheap morsel, and observing a man offering plants for sale in pots, and seemingly, like himself, rather low in the world, Thorburn accosted him. He proved to be a countryman, an industrious, but rather unsuccessful, market-gardener, of the name of Inglis, from Kirkaldy; and, from a sort of commiseration, Thorburn bought a rose-geranium, intending it to ornament his shop. At this time he scarce knew a geranium from a cabbage. Pleased with his purchase, when he got home he painted his pot a gay green, and placed it in his window. "And now," says he, when he told me this story, with his eyes twinkling, "mark the kindness of Providence. The day after my geranium appeared in its new pot, a lady happening to drive past, remarked its beauty, and not only bought it at a handsome price, but gave me such orders as enabled me to open a busy trade with poor Inglis. My shop soon became more celebrated for plants than for tea and tobacco; and many inquiries having been made for garden-seeds, I procured an assortment, and gradually extended my concern until I reached the possession of the handsome premises and flourishing trade which I now enjoy."

Some of his details, regarding the devastations occasioned by the yellow fever, were extremely interesting, and to them I may probably afterwards advert. He has a very beautiful seed-shop,

aviary, and greenhouse, &c. in the centre of the city, formerly a Quakers' meeting-house and school, where he seems to drive a thriving trade. The ladies of New York are fond of flowers, and use them much in dress. Camellias are in great request, and sometimes sell so high as three dollars a head, the ordinary price being one; and large orders are given for every party. I learned also, from a Scotchman in Mr Thorburn's employment, whose family had suffered heavily from sickness last winter, that camellias and parties by no means engross the sole attention of the ladies of New York. He assured me, that, within his own observation, it was quite wonderful what they contrived to do, in visiting, clothing, and attending to, the poor. This man left Glasgow in great destitution about a year ago. He is now in comfortable circumstances, and his family provided for; but the first fortnight which honest Saunders Lee spent in New York, a total stranger, without money or engagement, he described, with a shudder like a fit of the ague, as "*perfectly awful.*"

At seven o'clock A. M., upon the 12th of April, we embarked in the *North America*, a splendid steam-boat, of which the Americans are justly proud, to proceed up the Hudson to Albany, a distance of 145 miles. The morning was rather cold, and a strong breeze blew down the river, wind, and tide, and stream being all against us, notwithstanding of which, the irresistible power by which we were impelled landed us in Albany within fourteen hours. It is difficult for those who have never seen an American steam-boat, to conceive its elegance and comfort. They are handsomely fitted up, well furnished, and a capital table is kept, while the total absence of coal-smoke leaves every thing tidy and clean. The *North America* is a day-boat, that is, she performs her voyage between sunrise and sunset, a circumstance of which travellers ought to be aware, as they may deprive themselves of the enjoyment which the highly interesting scenery of the Hudson affords, should they chance to go unawares by an evening boat. This fine vessel is propelled by two engines of ninety horse-power each; the steersman, from an elevated platform in the fore-end, guides the vessel by ropes which communicate with the rudder; a safe and admirable contrivance, universally employed in America, enabling the person

at the helm to command an uninterrupted view of the ship's course, and to escape many dangers which might otherwise occur. The North America has a magnificent public cabin, with suitable private accommodation for ladies. Her length is about 225 feet, and her breadth 60. There are a lower and upper deck for promenading, with an awning when the sun is powerful, and, in short, every luxury and comfort which the best hotel could afford, not forgetting the *barber's shop*, where the master informed me he had frequently the honour of taking fifty gentlemen by the nose in one forenoon. This ancient craft, so greatly degenerated in our own country, seems to be here in its very zenith. Innumerable are the party-coloured poles in every town, indicating the barber's shop, and, the general practice being favourable to their calling, they are in great request. I observed, in New York, one of the sides of the shop fitted up with pigeon holes, where stood the labelled soap-boxes of Mr A, Mr B, &c., indicating steady customers. The steam-boats and large hotels have generally a barber as part of the establishment, and I found them every where maintaining the old professional character of cleanly, civil, and obliging gossips.

The fare to Albany is only 9s. 6d., and a very moderate charge for meals. Of course, it is a favourite mode of conveyance, and the company is not always remarkably select. The steward told me that he had nine hundred passengers to breakfast and dinner one day last summer, and that 500 or 600 are frequent. With such a multitude some confusion must unavoidably occur, however excellent the arrangements, and these appeared to me to be very complete. Upon this occasion I think we sat down about 200 at table; many homely enough in appearance, but nothing either rude or revolting came under my notice. I was seated at dinner between Judge S——, a very intelligent man, and of much repute as a lawyer, and a plain Massachusetts farmer. We soon got engaged in agricultural conversation, for the judge was well versed in these matters, and afforded much useful advice and information to the professional farmer and his friends. After dinner he entered into more general discussion, running over the different States, and pointing out to me what he considered their relative advantages and drawbacks. He thinks well of Ohio and some parts of Indiana for European



settlers, and strongly advised me, if I thought of a purchase, to prefer a farm already, in some measure, improved, and to be upon my guard against designing persons, who are every where on the look-out for strangers. He assured me that a good understanding with Great Britain was daily gaining ground in the States, and that the idea prevailed, that if the two nations stand by each other, they may rule the world. This gentleman enjoys a good private fortune; otherwise his case would be a hard one. A very extraordinary law, peculiar, I believe, to the State of New York, enacts that judges shall retire upon attaining the age of sixty, and thus not only *may*, but frequently *must*, return to the bar, not a dollar of pension being allowed them when thus compelled to resign. Mr S. was in this predicament, and the country sacrificed the talents of a very able man, just at a period of life when his legal experience as a judge became of peculiar value. It is a preposterous arrangement, and may even be imagined to be at variance with the purity and independence of the Bench.

I had a long chat with the Massachusetts farmers, who had been at New York with a drove of fat oxen, weighing about 75 stones (14 lb. to the stone) each, and for which they had got about L. 22 a-head. They were in high spirits, as every thing was bearing a high price. Their sheep are Saxon and Merino, and they had refused 2s. 8½d. 75 cents. per pound for their wool, while last year they considered themselves well paid with 2s. 1d. 50 cents. They raise fine crops of turnips, and rear many sheep. A ewe fetches this season 9s. while last year she brought only 4s. 6d. They pay a sheep-doctor 27s. each 100 sheep per annum for his attendance, and this man devotes himself to sheep alone, never interfering with any other stock. He came out to them from England.

Our dinner table was supplied with a profusion of good things, well cooked, and neatly served up. The captain takes the head of the table, the ladies who have no gentleman along with them being always under his special charge; and, however large the party, or however mixed the company, scrupulous deference is paid to the accommodation of the fair; and, I am confident, the most unpolished farmer would suffer any inconvenience rather than interfere with a lady's comfort.

The fare from New York to Albany, 145 miles, is, as before observed, two dollars, or 9s. 6d. and the charge for an excellent dinner 2s. 3d. or half a dollar, including brandy, whisky and Hollands, placed upon the table, at the discretion of the company, a latitude which, I may here observe, was never abused, upon this or any other occasion, throughout my tour. The scenery of the Hudson, between New York and Albany, is probably not to be surpassed in romantic beauty by any river-scenery in the world. About forty miles above New York, the river emerges from the high lands, and, for 100 miles above that, the eye is gratified by a succession of lofty mountains, and bold rocky headlands, clothed in wood,—towns, villas, farms, &c. in perpetual succession. The river itself is a noble object, covered with innumerable sloops and steamers, sometimes making abrupt turns amongst the rocks, and again stretching out like a peaceful lake. The woods were yet bare of foliage, and the day so cold and bleak, as to freeze the spray upon the deck; still, it was impossible for any admirer of nature, to view the scenery of this day's voyage, without the deepest interest and delight. It would be easy to enlarge upon many interesting objects which present themselves between New York and Albany, but the ordinary guide books have made these perfectly familiar.

Sing Sing, a new state prison, is seen upon the east bank, a few miles above New York. Silence reigns supreme within its walls, and forms the great and effective engine of punishment. The prisoners labour in gangs, but not a whisper is allowed, and, at night, each returns to his solitary cell, where his only but invaluable resource, may be found in the pages of Holy Writ.

West Point, about fifty miles above New York, is finely situated upon a lofty eminence, and is the station of an extensive Military College, educating about 250 cadets. This place must ever be associated with painful and affecting recollections, when recognised as the spot where the gallant but misjudging André, was inveigled, by the traitor Arnold, into a guilty correspondence, forfeiting his life, and, in a certain degree, tarnishing his honour; while, at the same time, the noble heart of Washington was rent with the bitterest pangs, from the pain-

ful duty imposed upon him. He saw and acknowledged the generous feelings which led poor André astray, and sighed under the stern necessity which compelled him to deny a soldier's death to this unhappy youth, doomed, by the laws of war, to an ignominious gibbet.

We reached Albany about nine, and were soon comfortably established in Cruttenden's hotel, adjoining to the State House on Capitol Hill.

Albany is an ancient city in American chronology. It is the capital of the State of New York, and the seat of the State Government, though now greatly eclipsed by *The City*, as New York is emphatically termed. A great proportion of internal commerce centres in Albany. The Grand Erie, and the Champlain, or Northern Canal, both find their outlet here, and numerous, very large steam-boats ply to New-York. The population of Albany is about 16,000. The tide runs nearly to Troy about six miles above. In contemplating the commercial enterprise, the buzz of busy men, the large warehouses and stores, the variety of equipages, waggons, stage-coaches, &c. which are met on every hand, as a stranger proceeds through the city, it is impossible not to revert to the picture so graphically drawn by an amiable and venerable authoress, and to contrast its present condition with the early days of Albany, when "this city was a kind of semirural establishment, every house had its garden, well, and a little green behind; before every door a tree was planted, rendered interesting by being coeval with some beloved member of the family; many of their trees were of prodigious size, and extraordinary beauty, but without regularity; every one planting the kind that best pleased him, or which he thought would afford the most agreeable shade to the open portico, at his door, which was surrounded by seats, and ascended by a few steps. It was in these, that each domestic group was seated in summer evenings to enjoy the balmy twilight, or the serenely clear moonlight. Each family had a cow, fed in the common pasture, at the end of the town. In the evening the herd returned altogether, of their own accord, with their tinkling bells hung at their necks, along the wide and grassy street, to their wonted sheltering trees, to be milked at their masters' doors. Nothing could be more pleas-

ing to a simple and benevolent mind, than to see thus at one view, all the inhabitants of a town, which contained not one very rich, nor one very poor, very knowing or very ignorant, very rude or very polished individual; to see all these children of nature, enjoying, in easy indolence or social intercourse,

‘The cool, the fragrant, and the dusky hour,’

clothed in the plainest habits, and with minds as undisguised and artless. These primitive beings were dispersed in porches, grouped according to similarity of years and inclinations. At one door, were young matrons; at another the elders of the people; at a third, the youths and maidens, gaily chatting or singing together, while the children played round the trees, or waited by the cows, for the chief ingredient of their frugal supper, which they generally ate, sitting on the steps in the open air\*.” It is a sketch not unworthy of Rip Van Winkle himself. The mighty tide of time is ever rolling on, and such scenes as these must now be looked for in the newly reclaimed regions of the West, or the Canadian Forest, where many an embryo city, destined to rear its edifices, and to diffuse riches and civilization around, is at this hour commencing its career, with the saw-mill, the grist-mill, and the wooden wharf.

The local situation of Albany is very fine, the town being placed upon the declivity of a hill, overhanging the river, on its western bank; and the panoramic view from the roof of the Capitol is beautiful and extensive, embracing the Catskill Mountains, nearly 4000 feet high, clothed with wood to the very summit, the noble Hudson, spreading out below, and a fine country on every side.

I spent the day following my arrival, in a most agreeable renewal of friendly intercourse with an old companion, whose acquaintance I had made many years ago, while he prosecuted his studies in Edinburgh.

His father, distinguished by the old Dutch title of Patroon of Albany, is still better known by his talents and virtues, which, during a long life, have secured to him the esteem and regard of all his fellow citizens and friends. Mr R——r possesses a princely domain around Albany, and I felt, in the sincere and

\* Letters of an American Lady.

cordial welcome of the son, that one of the purest and most heartfelt enjoyments of life, is to be found in the practical assurance of an old friendship having experienced neither diminution nor coldness, from the caustic influence of distance and of time. My friend accompanied me to all that was to be seen in the city and around Albany. Our first visit was to the House of Assembly and Senate, both of which are in handsome and convenient halls. I remained some time in the Senate, listening, with interest, to the first discussion, of a public nature, which I had heard in America. The matter in hand was of mere local interest, being the constitution of a new bank, and the speakers appeared to treat the controverted points, in a candid business-like style. There was little room for eloquence in determining the amount of capital which a country bank should be allowed to possess, and there were no unnecessary or misplaced attempts at rhetorical display. The appearance of the members conveyed the impression of sensible country gentlemen, and I left the hall, well satisfied with the mode in which business seemed to be conducted.

The constitution of the State of New York gives the right of suffrage to every male citizen of 21 years of age, who has resided six months in the State, and has paid a state or county tax within a year of the election, and also to men of colour (blacks and mulattoes) who have been citizens for three years, and possess a clear freehold of 250 dollars value, and have paid a tax thereon. The Governor and Lieutenant-governor are chosen by the people, and hold office for two years. The legislature consists of the Senate and House of Assembly. The former is composed of 32 members, freeholders, who are elected for four years, one-fourth going out annually by rotation. The Assembly consists of 128 members elected annually, in their respective counties. The electors may return any freeholder either to the Senate or Assembly, that may to them seem best; and each member of the Senate and House of Assembly receives three dollars a day, during session. The judiciary power is vested in a Court of Chancery, a Supreme Court, and District Court, with a Court of Errors, composed of the Senate, the Chancellor and Judges of the Supreme Court; the judges, as I have already noticed, becoming disqualified at the age of sixty.

After leaving the House of Assembly, we drove a few miles out of town, and visited a very fine farm of 600 acres, which my friend occupies himself. It consists chiefly of rich arable land and meadows, on the banks of the river, and it pleased me to see that so correct and spirited an example in rural economy was there displayed, by one whose influence ought to have so much weight in the district. The fences, houses, &c. were in good order, and I saw some very fine improved short-horned cattle, imported, at a great expense, from England, and well calculated to benefit the country. Mr R——r has shown a correct judgment in selecting native cows, to mix with the English blood, and has reared one bull, in particular, which I considered even superior in shape to the English sire: this animal was intended to be let out for the season.

My friend, who was always remarkable for a smart *team*, enjoys every advantage in America for indulging his taste. Scarce had I set foot on shore in New York, when my eye was attracted to the figures of the horses in the hackney-coaches and drays, and every subsequent opportunity tended more and more to delight me with the breed of horses, both in the States and Canadas. Mr R——r had about twenty in his stables, part of them, of course, employed with the oxen in farm-work; but all of them, in point of shape, figure, and action, such as would command, in Britain, the highest price given for carriage-nags. A pair of very powerful handsome brown geldings, which we met accidentally in one of his waggons, cost him 200 dollars, or L. 45, and which horses, I am confident, in London, would have readily fetched 120 guineas. Some of his saddle-horses were uncommonly neat, and a chestnut colt, intended for his own charger, as general in the militia, was one of the finest and strongest thoroughbreds I ever saw. I may remark, too, that this stud was by no means to be regarded as the expensive hobby of a rich man, for in every part of the country the same superior animals were to be met with, and, from the team of almost any ordinary farmer, horses might be selected fit to grace *the four-in-hand*. The buildings on the farm are of wood, and very commodious; the stables, floored with plank, last for a great many years, and no doubt, in a great degree, train the horses to be steady in boats and on wooden bridges. The bai-

liff, a very sensible active-like man, has about L. 45 of money wages, a capital house, cow, and some other advantages. The crops are chiefly wheat, Indian corn, pumpkins grown among the corn, oats, potatoes, and meadow-hay. Dung in Albany costs about 3d. per waggon-load.

After a very pleasant drive, about six miles up the river side, upon a real Macadamised road, which has been completed for that distance, we returned to Albany; and, to while away an hour, before going to my friends to dinner, I paid a visit to the Albany Museum. This collection occupies a suite of rooms, in a very handsome building of white marble, from a quarry in the neighbourhood, and contains a good assortment of specimens in natural history. Here it was my lot, for the first time, to come under the full fire of Yankee curiosity, although I had been already engaged in some *small affairs of outposts*. The only other visitor whom I saw in the museum was a tall thin lad, who, the moment I entered, pounced upon me, and, though with perfect civility and good breeding, according to his knowledge, opened a volley, with "How d'ye do, Sir (very nasal); I guess you're from the old country." Quite aware that no impertinence was intended, I readily answered every question, which now poured in nearly as follows: "May I ask, Sir, from what part of the old country? May I ask what port you sailed from? What ship did you sail in? What might you pay for your passage? Are you going to settle in the States? What may your profession be? What is your name?" *et multa alia*, to the like effect.

This inquisitive disposition has been a frequent theme of abuse against the Americans; and that it exists as a national trait, I think no man can honestly deny. I have met with it every where, and have endeavoured to analyze it fairly and with candour. The conclusion to which I very soon came, and to which I still adhere, acquits the Americans of the most remote intention to be at all uncivil to the stranger. They must be viewed *nationally*, in some degree, as children; it must be remembered that they live much in retired rural circles; that they are intelligent, well educated, and ever anxious to acquire information, all of which render them, when a foreigner falls into their hands, rather apt to overstep the European bounds of

propriety; and many of their questions, which to us appear trifling, bear probably upon points sufficiently important to them. Whatever umbrage too sensitive strangers may take at the freedom of Americans, it is but fair to notice the voluntary restraints which, in some respects, the latter impose upon themselves. An American, who will not feel that he is guilty of any impertinence in taking a peep at a book you may have in your hand, will at once recoil when you open a letter, or are engaged in writing, although it is sufficiently evident that a mere selfish and vulgar curiosity would derive infinitely more gratification from a peep at the latter than at the former. I enjoyed also many a laugh, in the crowded steam-boats, at the overwhelming confusion which I occasioned, by suddenly turning round, when I knew that half-a-dozen poor fellows were straining their orbs to decypher the emblems of agriculture figuring upon the buttons of an old Farming Society coat, which I wore in travelling. They evidently felt, that without a little more intimacy, the buttons were to be held *sacred*. In my adventure at the museum, *dignity* perhaps suggested the necessity of immediately turning upon my heel, from such an impertinent *Paul Pry*; but, what I trust may be called good nature or good sense, urged the expediency of meeting the poor fellow in his own spirit, and, by answering his queries, I scarce gratified him more than by extracting, in like manner from him, a stock of useful information regarding the agriculture of New England, where my friend, a shrewd, sensible sample of a Massachusetts farmer, owned a farm of 200 acres. He had come up with me the preceding day, from New York, in the North America, where he had formed one of the party, who had been selling their fat stock at New York. I might have cut the matter short at once, and enjoyed the triumph of sending off Jonathan (to use a homely phrase) with *a flea in his ear*; but undoubtedly I would myself have been the only sufferer, and he would very soon have forgot the rebuff which the saucy fellow from the *old country* had given him. Upon returning to the hotel, and mentioning my chat with the farmer, my friend Mr C——, who, from a residence of forty years in Canada, understands the American character better than most people, commended me for the line I had followed, and amused me with an anecdote on the subject



of curiosity, which has, I believe, travelled across the Atlantic, regarding a gentleman of the name of West. This traveller, besides the common ordeal, had to encounter an extra batch of inquiries, from the speculation occasioned by a wooden leg. Wearied one day with a most pertinacious host, who had extracted from him his name, his country, profession, route, &c., the traveller positively protested against another question being put. "Oh! Sir," says mine host, "I would just like to ask *one* more." "Well, well," says Mr West, "*one* more I will answer, and remember that clears all." "Certainly, sir, many thanks: Pray, *how* did you lose your leg?" "Oh! my leg; why it was *bit*:" "Bit! is it possible? Well, what *could* have bit it?" "Nay, friend, a bargain's a bargain, you know: *one* question and *no more* was our agreement;"—thus leaving Boniface in greater perplexity than ever.

Having expressed my intention of visiting a Scotch friend, who has been for some time settled upon the banks of the Hudson, about thirty miles above Albany, R——r kindly insisted upon driving me there in his phaeton.

At Albany I parted for a time with my good friends Mr and Mrs C——, who were to proceed directly home to Niagara, where it was arranged I should join them on my return from Quebec.

Upon Thursday, 15th April, R——r called for me at Crutenden's Hotel, and, in company with his relation Mr S——r, we rattled away with four spanking bays, for Easton, the morning pleasant for the season, and the road, so far as *Macadam* went, perfectly unexceptionable. At Gibbonsville, about six miles from Albany, is established a public arsenal, and the *location*, to borrow an American phrase, seems well chosen for operations in the north or east, as the two canals open a ready communication with the frontiers. At Gibbonsville we were ferried over the Hudson to Troy, in a most convenient boat, which received us without unyoking, and conveyed us cleverly across. The boat was moved by two horses and a horizontal wheel, operating on paddles, in a simple and ingenious manner, the horses performing their work like turnspits, or a party *taking exercise at a tread-mill*. Troy is a considerable town, with a great appearance of lively trade, and some handsome

public buildings, especially a new church of Gothic architecture. A few miles further up, we re-crossed the Hudson by a covered bridge of wood, leading into the town of Waterford. This bridge is 1000 paces in length, with a double road-way, and cost nearly L. 16,000. There is a pontage exacted, and a penalty upon carriages exceeding a walk, when going along the bridge.

Waterford is a sweet village, containing many gay white mansions, with green Venetians, neat gardens, &c., and the scenery around is extremely pleasing. The Hudson flows past the town, and the Mohawk falls in, a short way below, with many wooded and rocky islands in front. From Waterford our route lay nearly parallel to the river, through a well cultivated country, with many handsome farms, the soil varying in quality, and of inferior value as you recede from the river. A gentleman whom I had known in Scotland, possesses a fine property on this road, and I resolved to surprise him with a visit.

We were most heartily welcomed, and only made good our retreat by a promise, if possible, to return. He has found his purchase a very advantageous one; the land seems of excellent quality, and he has evidently made great improvements in clearing, draining, fencing, &c. The Northern Canal intersects the estate. He has a very comfortable mansion, with a well laid out garden, rather ingeniously formed in the hollow of an old quarry. The Hudson, with many wooded romantic islets, and enlivened by rafts, constantly shooting down some strong rapids, with high land, well timbered, on the opposite bank, forms the landscape from his porch, where we found the gentleman enjoying the sunshine of a delightful April day. A few miles after passing Stillwater (a small hamlet and post-office), we arrived opposite to Easton, the residence of my friend. It was now requisite to cross the river, which here expands to a very considerable breadth, and, from its placidity, gives name to the hamlet and district. A rather ill-defined track led us through a field, and we descended the bank, as I thought, with some hazard, to the water edge. Here no handy waterman waited to give us his aid, but a *catamaran-like* boat, denominated a *scow*, long enough, though of a breadth barely sufficient to receive the carriage, was at our service when cleared of the water with which she was half full. I received orders to remain in

the phaeton, under the guidance of the coachman, while my friends soon baled out a portion of the water, and handled two long poles, by which we were to be put across. The prospect, I must admit, was far from satisfactory; however, having no choice, I had only to submit, and, after a proper plunge and a rare jolt, our well trained active horses deposited us on board, and we committed ourselves to the gentle current. In due time we reached the opposite bank, and after another scramble got safely ashore, where my good friend was ready to welcome us. This was the first specimen I had met with of the docility which is almost universal in American horses, and is the natural result of kind treatment. From the moment that these four spirited animals entered the boat, until they were required to leap out, a period of half an hour, not one of them moved a hoof. My friend's property formerly belonged to a branch of the Schuyler family, and is beautifully situated on the east bank of the Hudson, consisting of rich clay land, low hills well adapted for sheep pasture, and woodland behind. The house stands not far from the river, and commands a very pleasing view. R——r and S——r left us in the evening for the residence of the latter, about ten miles farther up, at Schuylersville; and we witnessed another embarkation in the *scow*, which by no means diminished my personal satisfaction at remaining a spectator from the bank. I remained several days with my friend, looking at farms in the neighbourhood, and partaking of the kind and easy hospitality which puts a man comfortably and completely at home. The valley of the Hudson is here of considerable breadth. The Northern or Champlain Canal, connecting New York with Vermont, Lower Canada, &c., passes on the west side, at the distance, in general, of about half a mile from the river. There is a large extent of rich flat land upon the eastern bank, rising into low hills and woodlands as you recede; and some miles in the interior it is intersected by a line of turnpike from Troy, &c. to the north, with a district of settled country, inferior, however, in quality to the river side. Numerous little brooks descend from the hilly ground, affording a copious supply of water for agricultural, and sometimes for mechanical, purposes. Upon one of these, running through his property, my friend has erected

a brewery, which, in the hands of two enterprising Scotchmen, promises to flourish. Sure I am, if *superlatively good ale* can secure customers, the Easton brewery deserves to succeed. Ice is applied in a particular and scientific method, which enables the brewery to work when others are in general closed from the temperature of the summer. In returning one evening from dining with our neighbours at the brewery, I was regaled and astonished for the first time with a *frog* concert. The night was dark, and we were picking our steps by the aid of a lantern, when the chirrup at once opened on every hand from a thousand mouths. The whole valley seemed to be alive with one mass of squeaking voices, which continued through the night without intermission. The bull frog occasionally sings *bass*, but this evening he was silent. The noise breaks strangely to a stranger's ear on the quiet hour; and I could not help associating it, in some degree, with the annoying recollection of fever and ague, which will, less or more, continue to prevail until a general system of draining shall thin this orchestra.

Some varieties of the frog grow here and in Canada to a prodigious size. A plain honest Scotsman, with whom I travelled some days in Canada, amused me much with his account of them, when detailing his feats in the slaughter of wood-pigeons. "*You never saw the like o' the puddocks, sir; I brought down three dows at ae shot, and afore I could tak' them up, a muckle deevil, wi' a mouth as braid's my loof, gobbled up yin o' them, roup an' stoup.*" Mrs R——, too, assured me that, from her vicinity to the meadows at the river side, she had no chance of rearing ducks, the young brood always falling a prey to the frogs.

Upon Monday the 18th of April, after an early breakfast, I left Easton and joined the stage for Whitehall, which passed on the opposite side of the river about eight o'clock. I had hit upon the very worst period of the year for travelling in America, and I was therefore led to expect rather rough work. During the winter months, the sledge conveys you along with rapidity and ease; and, in summer, the roads being dry, and having then got their repair for the season, are tolerably smooth; but, in spring, matters are certainly bad enough. The American stage-coach, clumsy and unwieldy as it looks, is by no means

an uncomfortable vehicle, and certainly withstands shocks, the least of which would demolish the best article ever launched from Long-Acre. It is suspended upon leather springs of great strength, and carries nine inside passengers, six of whom are seated face to face, and three upon a moveable seat in the centre, with their faces forward, and backs supported by a broad strap. On account of this middle department, you enter only on one side. The pannels are open, and provided with curtains to draw close when required. The luggage is stowed away in ample reservoirs before and behind, and the only outside seat is a share of the coach-box to those who can maintain their post. For my own part, although I tried it, with a strong desire to see the country, and to chat with *coachce*, I found it absolutely beyond my skill, after divers attempts, to *hold on*. In some places it is impossible at this season to use the coach, and passengers are conveyed in long narrow four-wheeled waggons, with seats suspended, or *intended* to be suspended, across; for occasionally the board is loose, and makes most incommodious slips from under you in the heavy jolts. The harness is of leather, substantial and good, the coachmen careful and most expert, and the horses truly excellent.

But it is time to get on. When my baggage was stowed, of which the heaviest portion had been most correctly brought forward from Albany, where I left it to relieve R——r's horses, I seated myself on the box, and away we *rumbled*. Our pace was slow enough, though occasionally, when a little tolerable road presented itself, the horses exhibited satisfactory proofs that, in other circumstances, no delay would arise from them. We passed through many convenient and tolerably well cultivated farms. The wheat and grass were both looking uncommonly well. Merino sheep were to be seen everywhere: the cattle appeared similar to our old short-horns, but they have much need of improvement; neither can I commend the common breed of swine, which are too generally of the long-legged, flat-sided description, requiring, I am satisfied, as much food to raise *one* stone of bacon as would yield *two* in a more thrifty variety.

From these humble speculations, however, I was roused by the enthusiasm of our coachman, who exclaimed, upon reaching

Schuylersville, "There, sir, is the *surrender ground*;" alluding to the fate of poor Burgoyne, who was compelled at this place to surrender himself and his army of nearly 6000 men to General Gates, in the autumn of 1777. The whole route from Waterford to the frontier, including Lake Champlain, has been distinguished in American history as the scene of many battles, by land and water, from the days of the unfortunate Montcalm, who, unable to control the savage ferocity of his Indian allies, was forced to witness the cold-blooded butchery of poor Monro and his gallant little band, after they had surrendered and received assurance of protection.

When listening to the details which my friend the coachman gave me, with a fair portion of national exultation, I could not but reflect, with some degree of wonder, upon the perverse obstinacy of our statesmen, which led them, without a feeling of regret, to pour out British blood, and to squander British treasure, in a cause which no thinking man would now venture to advocate or defend.

It is perfectly wonderful, considering the state of the Provinces at the period of the revolution, how a people so thinly scattered, and, in every respect, so indifferently prepared for the mighty contest, were able to cope with, and finally withstand, the concentrated powers of Britain. A great human instrument was raised up in Washington, a man whom I shall ever revere as one of the most perfect characters which any age of our world has produced. No name stands higher than his in the annals of true fame; and when we cast into the balance the amount of human happiness which his talents, his labours, and his Christian virtues, secured to the boundless regions of the West, there is neither hero nor legislator who can dispute his claim to be recorded as the bravest and the best of his race.

Parties of labourers were, this day, every where employed, repairing the banks of the canal, which was expected to open in a few days for the season. Often did I wish that the track-boat had been started, for the roads were in many places very bad. "Dreadful roads these," I observed to the coachman, as he steered us, to my admiration, through pools of mud, and along the edge of yawning ditches. "Yes, sir," says he, "but I don't much mind the holes, *if I only knew how deep they*

were;" and truly some of them were somewhat difficult to fathom, as I frequently saw our leaders scrambling like cats, out of one clay pit, when our wheelers were descending to the croup in another.

As it respects the coach and its contents, that we *did* get through is certain, though, it may be supposed, not without some pitching and jolts. The wary, yet resolute manner, in which the coachman drove, and the uncommon action, strength, and docility of the horses, could not have been surpassed. One compact, gay, little fellow, not above 15 hands high, had been ten years on the line, and seemed yet as fresh and lively as a colt.

As we approached *Sandy Hill*, formerly Fort Edward, the country became extremely pretty. We had a fine wooded range of high ground, called Weiland's Mountain, closing the landscape to the east, and the Hudson on our left, descending a shoot of 75 feet at Baker's Falls. There was also a large dam, about 900 feet in length, a short way farther up. The soil was sometimes *clay*, sometimes *sand*, and I observed clay-slate, limestone, and black marble, as we drove along. Sandy Hill is a village of great beauty, with some excellent new buildings, public and private, in the course of being erected. The commanding prospect, and fine air it enjoys, must recommend it as a residence.

It was my intention at this place to have left the stage, and to have visited lake George, returning here next day, in time to catch the coach from Albany. I found, however, that the summer arrangements were not yet made; that the road was in a very bad state, and the landlord, whose kind and anxious exertions to accommodate me I shall not soon forget, advised me, upon the whole, to relinquish my plan, and proceed after dinner to Whitehall. Fortunately, I took his advice, as next morning was so rainy and hazy, that I would have failed in my object, and the coach-hour being later than to-day, I must have had a night-ride from Sandy Hill to Whitehall, through a road which appeared to me sufficiently hazardous even in daylight.

After an excellent and comfortable dinner, for which we paid only one-fourth of a dollar, cider, brandy, and Hollands in-

cluded, we resumed our journey; our luggage, in the mean time, having been removed, and stowed in an open waggon, as the road from this to Whitehall was not yet in a condition to receive the coach. I had formed, by this time, a very agreeable acquaintance with Mr S——, a fellow-passenger, bound, as I was myself, for Montreal, and we got seated alongside of each other in the waggon, with the shaggy skin of a buffalo for our cushion.

Immediately after leaving Sandy Hill, a venerable tree was pointed out as the spot where the unfortunate Miss Macrae fell by the rifle of her Indian guide, in a struggle with another party of Indians, who wished to obtain the reward of safe conduct promised by Captain Jones of Burgoyne's army, to whom she was betrothed. It is a melancholy tale, and, to this day, forms a subject of deep interest in this part of the country,

The soil around Sandy Hill is of a fine grazing quality, and the land sells from five to eight dollars per acre.

A great portion of last winter was unusually mild in this district. A farmer told me, that, upon a certain day of January, when the Hudson below Albany was covered with sledges, he was unable, upon the same river, to find a passage upon the ice, 50 miles further to the north. As we advanced, we became perfectly satisfied of the expediency of changing our vehicle. In many places it was with the greatest efforts that our four horses could extricate the waggon. The clay was particularly tenacious and heavy, the wheels clogged, and, from time to time, our coachman had to dismount, drag a stake from the fence, and clear out the mud, as not a spoke could be seen, each wheel being one solid mass. It will be readily conjectured that our progress was slow. The road went along the margin of Wood Creek, a rapid and considerable river, flowing northward into Lake Champlain. At some points it had quite overflowed the road, and we floundered into pools and currents. About seven we stopped at a tavern, five miles from Whitehall, to give the horses water (a refreshment, by the by, much more frequently, though moderately administered, than is usual among our coachmen), where I inquired of the landlord how long these five miles might require. "Three hours, Sir," was the reply, in which I certainly considered him to be making



merry with our distress. A tedious plunging drag, however, satisfied me that no joke was intended. The evening fortunately was fine, with clear moonlight, and, as every thing has an end, we at last found ourselves jolting over a little bit of *corduroy*, (a mode of crossing a morass, by laying round logs transversely), and which ushered us, wearied enough, into the town of Whitehall, and to most comfortable quarters, in Johnston's, at the Phœnix Hotel.

For the last two hours the aurora borealis had been flashing in great beauty, and a rainy morning was anticipated by some of the party, as commonly following that appearance in the sky.

Whitehall is a small town at the head or west end of Lake Champlain. A good deal of business is done here, especially in the lumber-trade, and the Northern Canal, connecting Champlain and Albany, commences at this point. The scenery around is highly romantic, varied with the winding of the lake, with precipitous hills and forest scenery on every side. It reminded me strongly of our own Loch Katerine, though, it must be admitted, upon a more extensive scale.

When I came down, next morning, I found a party in the bar-room, just arrived, after a night-journey through the road we had travelled. They had escaped without any accident; but considered themselves providentially preserved from having been turned over into the river.

Whitehall is said to suffer from the exhalations of some marshy shallow portions of the lake below the town. One old gentleman, who had been of the night-party, called for a glass of brandy and water, into which he shook a little white powder from a phial, remarking, at the same time, "I always take a little *quinine* when I chance to stop at Whitehall."

The morning, as had been predicted, was rainy; it cleared, however, after breakfast, and broke up to a fine day about twelve, when the steam-boat arrived from St John's.

At one o'clock we were informed the boat was ready, having replenished her deck with billets, and her larder with good things, and having settled a very moderate bill, amounting only to a dollar for two ample meals, and a comfortable bed-room to each of the party, we got on board of the Franklin, a beautiful and commodious vessel, commanded by Captain Sherman, who

seemed anxious to do all in his power to make us comfortable. The fare to St John's in Canada, a distance of 150 miles, is five dollars, or 22s. 6d., besides meals, which are very moderate.

I was agreeably surprised with the scenery, having been told that Lake Champlain had nothing to boast of in that respect. We had a succession of wooded hills, bold promontories, fine farms, picturesque cottages, log-huts, &c. and, the afternoon being delightful, I had the greatest pleasure in perambulating the deck. An opportunity was, as usual, afforded of forming acquaintances, and obtaining much local information from fellow-passengers, by which I did not fail to profit. One gentleman, who at parting gave me his card, and a most urgent invitation to visit him, was particularly well-informed and communicative; he proved to be priest of the parish of Chambly, in Lower Canada, and I regretted very much that it was not in my power to avail myself of his politeness. Another passenger, an American, who left us at Ticonderoga, pressed me to accept a letter of introduction to a brother at Philadelphia, where he would promise me, he said, any attention in his power.

I mention these matters, because I met with many instances of similar kindness, and felt, that, where strangers had been less fortunate, the fault must have too frequently lain with themselves.

We passed a range of well cultivated verdant farms, on the western bank, in Putnam Township, New York, called the Scots Settlement, containing, I was told, about 1000 inhabitants, and pursuing dairy husbandry to good purpose. Soon afterwards we approached the ruined fortress of Ticonderoga, finely placed upon a beautiful peninsula, with Mount Defiance, 800 feet high, looking down upon it.

From the summit of this mountain, in 1777, an unlooked-for salutation of artillery at sunrise, upon the 4th of July, that day since so famous in the annals of America, compelled General St Clair to abandon the fort, hitherto regarded as sufficiently strong to check the British under Burgoyne, but now totally untenable, from the successful attempt to bristle with cannon the summit of Mount Defiance.

We observed a good many trading schooners, and a ferry at

this place across the lake. An extremely picturesque church formed a fine object in the landscape, and the two lofty mountains, bearing the names of Defiance and Independence, are features alike conspicuous and striking. Lake George unites its pellucid water with the more turbid waters of Champlain, near Ticonderoga, and the gorge of the mountains from which it issues, gives an assurance of scenery well deserving a visit. Essex, which we passed this evening, is a town prettily situated, and apparently in a thriving condition.

Upon Wednesday morning, the 20th of April, after a most comfortable night, I came early on deck, sufficiently so, indeed, to witness a beautiful sunrise. The lake was perfectly still, and every tree was reflected, as on burnished copper; for it assumed that hue. We had stopped for a short time during the night at Burlington, a considerable town in Vermont. This State is famous for rearing live-stock, and a large proportion of the horses required in New York is drawn from hence. It bears a very suitable appellation, as we had been all the evening admiring the verdant and lofty range of mountains which occupy the greatest portion of its surface. I should mention, too, that we passed the fort at Roscoe's Point, built by the Americans to command the navigation of the lake, and which formed a portion of the disputed territorial line, ultimately submitted to the decision of the King of Holland. The final award of his Majesty formed at this time a very common subject of dispute. It was a matter which afforded ample room for discussion; and the only sound inferences which I felt myself warranted to draw, amounted to a shrewd suspicion that *Jonathan* had employed rather more active or able surveyors than those who were in the service of Britain, and that the Americans are, in fact, vastly well satisfied, although they deem it necessary to grumble as much as we do at the result. After all, perhaps it is not easy to say more in favour of the Royal Arbitrator, than to state the fact, that he has failed in pleasing either party.

Plattsburgh is a town of some importance, at the mouth of Saranac River. An action was fought here in 1814, both on the lake and on land, in which the British were defeated, Sir George Prevost being obliged to retreat, and the flotilla being captured and destroyed by Commodore Macdonough. A fine farm

of 200 acres, on the banks of the lake, was presented to him, as a public acknowledgment of his services.

At *Isle au Noix* we again entered the British territory, and saw the British flag displayed from the walls of a very humble fort. As we passed, a small log canoe put off for the letter-bag, one or two officers anxiously awaiting its return, with faces sufficiently expressive of the *ennui*, which must attend a residence upon this low, marshy, and uninteresting station. The Franklin terminated her voyage at the small town of St John's, upon the river Sorel. It is a place of little importance, except that it is a frontier town, with a custom-house and a collector, who is said to have a very snug birth. Some fine mountains are in sight, especially one of a conical form, called Sir John Johnston's, rising abruptly from the plain, and covered with wood to the summit. A fine bridge of wood, across the Sorel, leading into Vermont by a public road, is another object worthy of notice. The *rapids*, in the river, appeared also romantic to a stranger, who had not yet seen the St Lawrence.

Our first inquiry at the stage-house regarded the condition of the road to La Prairie, which was speedily ascertained to be sad enough. No coach could attempt it; but two waggons were appointed to convey us and the mail-bags, so soon as the important affair of breakfast was dispatched. In due time our equipages appeared, and a gentleman, his wife, and little boy, Mr S. and myself, led the way in one machine, when the mail and two or three passengers followed close in the other. The day was fine, and our horses all we could desire; the coachmen seemed both smart, civil, active fellows: and further, it would not have been easy to muster food for travelling consolation; for, although we contrived to splutter off in a kind of hand gallop, we had very soon to pull up; and Mr S. happening to ask the distance to Montreal, received for answer, "*Nine miles by water, sir, and the rest by mud;*"—a description which our woful experience proved to be too correct. The fare was one dollar and a half, which, in Canada currency, is 7s. 6d.; a very high charge, in this country, for eighteen miles.

About a mile below St John's, we turned off from the banks of the Sorel (which, by the way, bears also the names of Riche-

lieu and St John's), and proceeded across a flat and very uninteresting country, for La Prairie.

We were now among the *Habitans* of Lower Canada. The population is almost entirely French: a careful, contented race, and who ought to be supremely happy, if "ignorance is bliss." The religion is Roman Catholic, and a creditable attention is paid, at least, to the places of worship, the churches being both numerous and well built. The farms are extremely inconvenient, presenting a narrow front, with a depth sometimes two or three miles in extent. The houses, stock, and system of farming, seem very indifferent. The swine, in particular, seemed to be living examples of every bad point which it was possible to bring together. Bees, a symptom of industrious economy, were abundant, however, upon every farm. Occasionally we passed a house, comparatively of a superior description, in front of which a long spar, resembling a Maypole, indicated the occupier to hold a commission in the militia of the province. The soil is clay, and, in this part of the country, not apparently of the most fertile description.

Lime, I believe, is almost unknown, in its agricultural application. The system of cropping pursued is sufficiently simple—corn-crop after corn-crop, until the land refuses any return, and then abandoning it to nature, to recover some portion of fertility, upon which the farmer may again commence his scourging rotation.

We passed a party of road-makers at work, upon the early part of our stage; they are in government-employ, and L. 3000 had been allotted for the eighteen miles, a sum which might probably have done some good upon the *ninth* part of the way. It may be in contemplation to proceed with a like sum in future years; but, from what I saw, there is too much reason to fear, that, by such piece-meal work, the whole money will be lost, so far as the object was to obtain a good road. What is done this year will be nearly impassable before a second portion is completed, and little or no benefit will accrue, except to the contractor and his men.

When we had been dragged through some half-dozen miles of *mud*, and matters seemed rather to get worse than better, the coachman entrusted with the mail proposed to our driver, that they should leave the *improved* road, and try the old line.

To this it was objected, that the old line was now closed by authority, and that notice had been served upon them of its being shut, and that part of it was actually an enclosed field. The proposal, however, after a little more scrambling, was acceded to. We turned down a sort of by-track, and I had very soon a specimen, which, under evidence short of my own senses, would have been hard to credit, of what men and horses, in this country, will get through. A rough and swampy rivulet lay between us and the gate of the field, which had been shut by *authority*, and where we now saw two stout fellows drawn up, armed with large stakes, to prevent our ingress. The impediment of the brook detained us not a moment; down we went, plunging to the axles through the water, and up the steep and rushy banks to the gate, where we were brought to a parley. Many high words passed with the farmer, and, as he had both law and equity on his side, I was prepared for another rough job through the brook, when the guardian of the post-bags, in a most resolute tone, swore he would take the responsibility of shooting any man who stopped the *mail*, as the other road, from late rains, was absolutely impassable; and, suiting his action to his word, began to produce his pistol. This formidable hint, to our great amusement, took immediate effect; and the gate being thrown open, we entered in triumph. Our waggon still kept the van, and, crossing the ploughed field, we soon observed a new wattled fence, four feet in height, which explained (as I imagined) the roguish permission given to pass forward, and which we had attributed to the bloody threats of the coachman. Here, however, I again failed in my conjecture. We kept at a steady trot, and, as we approached the fence, and my curiosity was excited to the highest pitch, at a crack of the whip, "and *Come, Harry, boy,*" addressed to one of the leadders, they absolutely cleared the fence in true *Meltonian style*, and we at their tail, waggon and all, pitching like a boat in a heavy sea, and clinging to whatever we could lay hold of, to escape rolling over board. It was an extraordinary performance, and, although the first act threatened something like *tragedy*, the whole concluded in the most facetious manner. The coachmen were delighted with carrying their point, and the praises we lavished upon them and their

horses ; while the farmer was brought into perfect good humour by some kind words, and a little assistance to repair the fence.

Nothing further occurred on the remainder of our stage, which, although only eighteen miles, had required six long hours to get through.

When we reached La Prairie, anticipating an easy and speedy conclusion to our travels for the day, nothing remaining for us to accomplish, except the *nine miles by water*, we found our progress arrested from the non-arrival of the steam-boat, owing to a violent gale, which had sprung up, and which equally put a *veto* on our proposal to take a bateau. The St Lawrence is here of great width, but the banks are tame and flat. The city of Montreal, however, with the fine feature in the landscape, from which the island derives its name, both gratified, and, for the present, tantalized us. La Prairie being a place where no travellers stop, who can get across to Montreal, we had little reason to expect sumptuous accommodation. The family were, however, remarkably civil, and made us really very comfortable ; while the bill, which frequently bears no relation, in such cases, to the quality of the entertainment, was here sufficiently moderate, the whole charge for supper and bed-room only amounting to half-a-crown.

Next morning I was awakened early by the lowing of cattle under my window. They were for the supply of Montreal, and had come from Vermont. They were in very fair condition, seemingly about 35 stones Dutch, and were expected to fetch about L. 10 or L. 11 each. No duty is exacted upon them. The breed resembled coarse Teeswater, but rather longer in the horn. At seven we left Prairie, in the steam-boat ; the morning very cold, and shoals of ice to be seen stranded upon the opposite shore. We had a crowded deck, from the storm of the preceding day ; and, among others, a Scotch farmer, who, observing my name upon my portmanteau, introduced himself, as coming from my own neighbourhood. He proved to be a shrewd, well informed man, and appeared to be in very respectable circumstances. He rents a farm, and, from the vicinity of Montreal, finds a ready market for all his produce. A good many English farmers, with considerable sums of money, have, within these few last years, established themselves in this

quarter; but have not expended their capital in the most judicious or provident manner. We had also with us the stage proprietor, on the line from St John's, which he has managed for many years. I recounted to him our adventure the preceding day, commending the skill of his men, and the activity of his horses. No coachmen, he told me, can manage that stage, unless they have "*grown up upon it*;" he had tried them from the best lines of road in the States; but they can't get on between St John's and Prairie, it requiring a rare union of caution and courage. His horses cost him from 100 to 120 dollars, or from L. 20 to L. 30 each. He enters them at five years old, and, by gentle treatment, they speedily become tractable and handy, ready even, as we had witnessed, "*to charge an ox-fence*" when required.

About eight, we reached the wharf of Montreal, and were landed, with some inconvenience, upon shoals of ice, fully twelve feet in height. The city looks very handsome, as it is approached from Prairie; and the glistening tin-roofs of houses, nunneries, and churches, give it an appearance of splendour, rarely equalled, while the mountain, with its woods and rocks, its orchards and villas, forms a beautiful and romantic background to the picture. Porters, from the different hotels, are always in waiting, when the steam-boat arrives, to one of whom we committed our luggage, and were conducted to Goodenough's, a well-frequented and most respectable house.

The arrangements, in our hotel, were much the same as in New York; a public table, bar-room, sitting parlours, verandah, &c. The party whom I found were generally mercantile men, many of them from the States, and many of them from the Upper Province.

The business of the season was just commencing, and vessels had arrived at Quebec from Britain, a circumstance, at so early a date (April 20.), unprecedented, in the recollection of the oldest merchants of Montreal.

The steam-boat to Quebec had started, for the first time, a few days ago, and I had reason to be thankful that I had not been forward in time for that trip. The river was still full of ice, and the poor *Waterloo* getting beset, she stove and sunk.



The situation of the passengers was painful and hazardous in the extreme. They were all in bed when the alarm was given, and had to rush up instantly, as the cabin filled in a few minutes. So sudden was the event, that the engineer could not even stop the engine, and she went down, with it going in full force. A passenger told me that when he got on deck, the captain and rest of the party had scrambled upon the ice, and the vessel not appearing to settle down *very* rapidly, he ventured again below for his portmanteau, which he succeeded in securing; but had scarce set foot upon the ice, when she disappeared. They had now a dismal and perilous adventure before them, to reach the shore, a circuitous distance of nearly two miles, by scrambling from one floating mass of ice to another, in a bitterly cold night, and with no farther clothing than they chanced to have on board. No lives were lost, but considerable property was sacrificed, and severe colds caught by many of the party.

Montreal is the chief trading port of the St Lawrence, and although vessels have hitherto been obliged to clear at Quebec, it is understood that a Custom-House will ere long be granted to the merchants of Montreal. No situation, 500 miles from the sea, can be better adapted for commerce: it must always be the outlet for the largest portion of Upper Canada produce, and the most suitable depot for supplying the varied and increasing wants of that fine province.

The streets are sufficiently regular and airy, and many of the public buildings are handsome, particularly the Court-House and Jail, and the Roman Catholic Cathedral, lately erected at an expense of L. 100,000. The material employed, is a fine dark grey limestone, susceptible of a good polish, and the brilliancy of the tin roofs has long been a characteristic feature of Montreal. The shops and houses are generally provided with iron shutters, as a security, I believe, against fire. It appeared rather extraordinary that so little had been done in providing accommodation for the vessels. I found, however, that this was in course of being supplied, and the facilities of the noble river, duly appreciated, by providing suitable quays.

Where I am a stranger, I always make a point of visiting the

markets. Those of Montreal seem to be well supplied. The beef was capital, veal and pork excellent, mutton at this season, scarce and poor. The price ran from 3d. to 6d. currency per lb. The butchers were remarkably civil; the firmest and the best pork, they told me, was fed in the States, and fattened principally upon maize. In sauntering about, I stumbled upon a large hall, near the river, appropriated to the fish-market. The supply seemed most abundant, consisting chiefly of bass, pike, pickerel, eels, &c.: Billingsgate (I may add,) seemed to be here greatly shorn of its rhetorical flowers. There is of course, a very mixed population. Native Canadians in their grey surtouts, Indians wrapt up in their blankets, English, Irish, and Scotch, are seen bustling along, with priests, and bands of pretty little female choristers, arrayed in white, flitting from church to convent, and for the *first time* since I had landed in the New World, not a few beggars soliciting alms. The poor are liberally cared for at the religious houses, and it was impossible to avoid connecting this appearance of regular mendicity with those lazy habits which are sure to be engendered by gratuitous supplies. The barracks and military parade-ground, seem commodious, but are not contiguous, and the romantic river of St Helens, opposite the lower end of the town, forms an agreeable station for the artillery department. I experienced much kindness and hospitality in Montreal. Mr G., amidst all the mercantile hurry of the season, devoted some hours, to a very agreeable ride around the neighbourhood, mounting me upon one of the most active, pleasant horses I ever rode: He was bred in Upper Canada, and would have carried twelve or thirteen stone with any hounds. The merchants of Montreal, amidst the frosts of Canada, still retain a love for the chace. A small pack of fox-hounds is kept up by subscription, and sometimes affords them excellent sport. A friend of mine startled me a little, by stating, that he occasionally took the *same horse ninety miles* to cover, and after a day's hunting brought him home a like distance. "Unless you hunt by steam," I exclaimed, "it is impossible." "Why," says he, "that's the whole secret; I go with my horse on board the steamer at Quebec, and reach Trois Rivières in good time to breakfast, hunt with my father-in-law, who keeps a pack, and return to Quebec by the afternoon boat."

The views from the mountain are extensive and beautiful, and several pleasant villas adorn its sides. We passed through a large farm, belonging to, and occupied by, the priests, who possess a large seignory. The soil seems of good quality, but the agriculture is slovenly. Orchards are every where to be seen; and a country rich and fertile on every hand. The population of Montreal and the suburbs, exceeds, it is believed, 20,000 souls. I dined with Mr G. after our ride, with a very pleasant party of mercantile gentlemen. Our Ministers, I found, were in no great favour, from the recent attempt to alter the timber-duties, although from the best authority I could meet with, I must infer that the timber trade is not a prosperous one. The statements made in Parliament regarding the amount of capital vested in that branch, were sufficiently absurd, yet there can be no doubt that it is very considerable, and that any abrupt alteration to be followed by a stagnation in the export of timber, would create the most serious distress both to the merchants and colonists. Much was said of the rapid advances which the Upper Province is making, and of the rising value of property there. I was told of a case which occurred about thirty years ago, where a lieutenant in the army, being L. 50 in arrear to a Montreal merchant, insisted, along with his promissory note, on handing over a lot of land assigned to him somewhere in the *then* Western Wilderness, a security which the poor merchant regarded as much upon a par with the subaltern's note, who was just about to leave Canada with his regiment. The allotment consisted of 1250 acres, upon the Lake Ontario, of which *seven hundred* were sold last year for *Seven hundred pounds*, and *five hundred and fifty* acres of the best quality reserved. Such are the changes which time effects, without the aid of any other agent, and such cases, I was assured, are by no means rare.

It having been ascertained that the river was now tolerably clear of ice, the steamboat was fixed to start for Quebec upon the 23d of April. I was here to part with Mr S., the American gentleman with whom I had travelled from the banks of the Hudson, and I did so with sincere reluctance. His mild and amiable manners, with the rich store of information he possessed, regarding the Western Country, had been a source of daily enjoyment and information

to me, and I felt strongly the regret, to which travellers must so often submit, of shaking a friendly hand with little prospect of ever meeting again.

Mr S. is one of the two resident agents for the great fur company at Michillimackinac, and had spent most part of last winter in Washington, where he had been no idle observer of public affairs. He seems of opinion, that too many lawyers have got into Congress, and that much valuable public time is consumed in making speeches, oftener perhaps intended to gratify their constituents, than to serve the public interest. Mr S. considers General Jackson likely to be re-elected, but that a law will soon follow, to incapacitate the same individual from twice filling the President's chair, while it will probably extend the period of holding office, from *four* to *six* or *seven* years, which last would seem to be founded on sound policy, as no man can carry into effect a political system in the present short period of *four* years.

Mr S. has necessarily enjoyed many opportunities of studying the Indian character, and many of his anecdotes were extremely interesting. They are upon the whole a harmless race, unless when roused by passion or by ardent spirits, and they display noble instances of bravery and self-denial. It is easy to secure their confidence and friendship, and settlers seldom suffer from them any annoyance. There is an unhappy rivalry between the States and Great Britain to secure their friendship, and certain tribes are now looked upon as attached to each nation. A large distribution of presents annually takes place. Those of the States consist principally of provisions and absolute necessaries, while Britain gives guns, powder, flints, knives, &c., articles which, although not of equal benefit, are greatly more prized, as they can readily be bartered to the traders for whisky and rum. Most amusing scenes of cunning and deception take place on these occasions, the Indian allies of the two nations, manœuvring with infinite adroitness, to participate in the bounty of each.

Mr S. gave me an account of an interesting canoe-voyage through the Indian country by Fox River, from Michigan to St Louis on the Mississippi, a distance of about 1000 miles: it occupied him about twenty days, and during that period he saw much of the Indians. One chief, who visited his tent in hopes

of obtaining salt and whisky, displayed infinite address in his endeavours to ascertain whether Mr S. belonged to the States or to Canada, that he might square his demeanour accordingly. The scenery was frequently magnificent; and game of all kinds, bear, deer, geese, ducks, &c. was in profuse abundance; the birds were actually so fat with feeding upon the wild rice, it being then the month of September, when it becomes ripe, that they frequently burst on falling to the surface.

The rapidity with which the great rivers are descended, produces a change of climate approaching to enchantment. A gentleman, who had been frozen up in the western country when engaged in the fur trade, weary of inaction, caused his canoe to be cut out of the ice, and getting into the Mississippi, within *eight* days from leaving his winter quarters, was pulling ripe cherries.

I left Montreal upon Saturday morning, the 23d of April, in the steam-boat John Molson, named after its respectable owner, who was himself on board. The ice upon the quay had been converted into mud, and I was thankful to embrace the vociferous offer of a habitant to convey me in his little cart to the vessel, a distance of about a dozen yards, through which I must otherwise have waded knee-deep. We left Montreal at nine; the day was fine for the season, and the voyage proceeded prosperously and agreeably. The scenery of the river is, upon the whole, rather tame, and, except in some places, too expanded to be picturesque, until we approach Quebec, where the boldness of the banks counteracts in the landscape the effect of the width of the river. Neat churches and neat spires are frequent on both banks. Sorel is the first stopping-place, about forty-five miles below Montreal. The river Sorel or Richelieu here falls into the St Lawrence. There is a small town, fort, and government house, but nothing worthy of particular remark. Our cabin party was a very pleasant one, and, as we discovered most opportunely after dinner, that it was St George's day, we behaved to evince our loyalty by some extra drafts upon the steward. In the evening we stopped to take in wood at Trois Rivieres, a small town, about half-way, being ninety-six miles from Montreal and eighty-four from Quebec. The John Molson was a delightful boat, almost entirely free from that noise and

tremour which are so commonly felt on board of steamers. The motion might in fact be compared to that of the Manchester railway. Our rate was twelve miles an hour, with two barges in tow, having 13,000 bushels of wheat as their cargo. I was much pleased upon all occasions with the regular and expeditious manner in which the necessary supplies of wood were conveyed on board and piled in the places allotted to them. The consumption is of course considerable, and in some places the article has already become *comparatively* scarce. The pine is used between Montreal and Quebec, and an ordinary steam-boat consumes fifty or sixty cords, or about 7000 cubic feet each trip. Wood is furnished upon the St Lawrence for one dollar, or five shillings per cord, which is about one halfpenny per foot, while upon the Hudson it now costs three times as much. Upon the lakes where hickory, beech, maple, and other hard woods are in use, one cord is found to equal three of the pine.

The evening was delightful, and the moon rose in great beauty, shedding a soft and silvery light upon the river, and, as we had some very tolerable musicians on board, the time passed swiftly, and it was late before I prevailed upon myself to turn into my berth. The sleeping accommodations were well arranged in the main cabin; they were clean and comfortable, and a curtain with a sliding-rod, very ingeniously contrived, formed a snug little apartment for each two beds. On the following morning, when I began to look out, the scene in the cabin was rather amusing. Americans and Canadians are early risers, and by seven o'clock a general shaving and shifting was going forward in great force. By-and-by we were promenading on deck, and the cabin windows being thrown open, matters were speedily set to rights, and the stewards busily engaged in very promising preparations for breakfast. We had by this time approached the Rapids of Richelieu, which are reckoned a somewhat dangerous part of the river, and a thick fog coming on, we dropped anchor. As the day advanced the sun broke forth, and we resumed our progress, which, in a few hours, brought us in view of the bold promontory, upon which is placed the Gibraltar of the North.

Quebec is certainly a very striking object. "*Quel bec,*" ex-

claimed the French mariner, on first beholding it, and hence, with a little corruption, we derive its modern name. The scenery down the river, the eye resting upon the Isle of Orleans, and the landscape enlivened as we now beheld it, with numerous large vessels under crowded canvass, formed altogether a splendid picture. Shall I confess that in passing "Wolfe's Cove," the achievement of our hero lost somewhat of the romantic hue with which early fancy had been wont to paint it? The ascent did not exactly appear so formidable as I had expected. When I visited the spot, however, and examined it more closely, I was better enabled to appreciate the difficulties to be surmounted in mastering such a ravine with troops and cannon during the night. I feel persuaded that my first impression and slight disappointment may be traced to the wide expanse of the river, and the magnificent scale of the scenery around.

Upon reaching the quay we found still many formidable relics of winter. The ice upon which we stepped ashore was fully ten feet thick, and huge masses of it lay scattered along the beach. Whatever inducements Quebec may hold out to the stranger, comfortable hotels are assuredly not of the number. Mr J., of the house of Gates and Company at Montreal, upon whom I had a credit, was a fellow-passenger, as also Mr H. of the Upper Province, with both of whom, having formed an intimacy, I accompanied them to a boarding-house in the upper town. Our accommodations fell considerably short of what might have been reasonably expected, but our host and his lady were civil and attentive. The hotels of Montreal greatly surpass in comfort those of Quebec, from the very sufficient reason of having a great deal more to do. The large annual assemblage of company at Saratoga and Balston Springs, near Albany, has established a sort of fashionable tour by Lake Champlain to Montreal, and thence to Niagara, returning to Albany by the grand Erie canal. Along the whole of this route every exertion has been made for the accommodation of the public, and many of the hotels are extensive and particularly well kept.

Quebec is divided into two towns, called, from relative position, the Upper and Lower. The latter occupies a very limited

stripe along the river, at the foot of the lofty limestone cliff, on which is placed the upper town, crowned by Fort Diamond, so named from crystals interspersed in the rock, and rising about 350 feet above the level of the river. The population is about 20,000. In the lower town are the custom-house, numerous large stores, &c., with all the filth and confusion of a sea-port town, confined to a narrow space. The ascent to the upper portion is uncommonly steep, and it is at once singular and somewhat startling, in the busy hours, to encounter a *habitan* with his *bonnet rouge* erect in his cart, and rattling his little horse at a full trot down this rapid descent, without a thought of hazard to himself or to the unwary passenger. Many a poor cur, too, may be seen toiling in harness, and dragging a vehicle heavily enough laden up this weary hill. After passing a fortified gate, streets diverge in various directions, by one of which we entered a large and spacious square, of which one side is chiefly occupied by the chateau in which the governor resides. The streets in this part of the town are sufficiently wide, and the houses large and respectable; still the stranger is impressed with a sombre feeling, but very partially relieved by the military costume and the imposing air of a garrison. The society of Quebec is highly respectable: within its circle I found an old and valued friend, whose family made my short stay in all respects pleasant.

The state of the roads and ice upon the river St Charles rendering it inconvenient to visit the Fall of Montmorenci, more ample leisure was afforded for examining Fort Diamond, and sauntering over the Plains of Abraham. Government has expended large sums upon the fortifications of Quebec, and which, possessed as they are of the combined advantages of nature and art, must set at defiance, I should think, the utmost efforts of bravery or skill. Among many favourable circumstances, a copious supply of water within the fort is certainly not the least important. The casemates, or large bomb-proof chambers, along the ramparts, are of such dimensions as to permit the whole garrison (4000 or 5000 men) to parade within them, these halls of destruction communicating by large folding-doors like drawing-rooms *en suite*. The walls are forty feet high, and the ditch about fifty feet wide, cut out of the solid rock. The barracks, magazines, storehouses, &c. are extensive and commo-



dious, and the whole arrangements admirably adapted for defence and mutual support.

Nothing can be more magnificent than the *coup d'œil* from the Old Cavalier's Battery upon the summit. Far to the right and left stretches the noble St Lawrence ; close underneath is the city, with the wharfs and shipping ; and on the opposite or southern shore rises Point Levi, enlivened by many a gay white building, farms, &c. Ranging to the east, the eye at once rests on the Isle of Orleans, dividing the river into two nearly equal branches ; and to the north-east is the bold ravine, from whence rushes the Montmorenci, precipitating its waters over a fall 240 feet in height. The river St Charles bounds Quebec upon the north, and from its banks a rich and cultivated country extends back for several miles to the Indian village of Loretto, beyond which the landscape is closed by finely wooded hills as far as the eye can reach. The Plains of Abraham extend to the westward of the city, upon the table-land above the river. The high road to Montreal nearly intersects them ; and on the left as you leave town is the race-course. Some attention has been paid to this amusement in Canada, and I saw two steeds in training, not, however, upon the verdant turf, but trashing round and round the great square, upon pavement and roads by no means smooth. One was a powerful bay-horse, got by Filho da Puta, and had cost 400 guineas ; the other was a favourite mouse-coloured mare (Clara Fisher), bred in Virginia, and of great symmetry and beauty.

The Plains of Abraham, however, have witnessed more glorious and heart-stirring contests than those of the race-course ; and the memory of Wolfe, falling as he did in the very arms of victory, must be ever cherished and revered. The inhabitants of Quebec are of a somewhat motley description. As you pass along its streets, the lively chatter of the native French, the animated brogue of the Emerald Isle, English, Scotch, and even the dialect of the Gael, assail your ear at every turn. Law proceedings are conducted in English and French ; and in a short trial at which I was present, the jury was charged by judge and barristers, in both tongues.

I left Quebec, late at night, upon my return to Montreal, the departure of the steam-boat being dependent upon the tide.

When I came on deck the following morning, I found it quite crowded with passengers. Several vessels with emigrants had arrived, even at this early period of the season, and we had one party with us of about 150 paupers, from the county of Somerset, sent out at the expense of their parish. I had a long conversation with a very respectable-looking person who had charge of them. The plan, if it merited that term, seemed to be marvellously defective. The men had the appearance of healthy agricultural labourers, hedgers, ditchers, or husbandmen, well adapted for colonists, and who could not have failed, under a right system, to have speedily acquired a competent provision for themselves and families. The overseer informed me that his instructions were limited to a due superintendence of the people during the voyage, to securing a fair fulfilment of engagements on the part of the master of the vessel, and finally to land the paupers at Montreal, paying each man L. 4, and leaving them to shift for themselves. The inevitable consequence would be, that these poor fellows would be generally and speedily fleeced by low tavern-keepers and others of their small pitance, and then turned adrift, useless to themselves, and a mere nuisance to the province. Had some regular chain of communication been established between government and the parishes, how easily might these families have been placed upon government-lands, in a way productive of the greatest mutual advantage.

The influx of emigrants at Quebec is very great, and a large proportion landing in a state of destitution, the inhabitants are subjected to a most vexatious burden in providing some temporary supplies. Fifty thousand have been landed at Quebec this season (1831), and probably ten thousand more have passed on to Montreal, without being regularly reported.

The weather was fine, and I was again fortunate in a pleasant party. Mr Molson returned with us, having abandoned all thoughts at present of attempting to raise the unfortunate Waterloo. Another splendid steamer, I believe of 260 horsepower, also his property, was to be launched this day at Montreal, to be named the "John Bull;" and his Canada friends, who seem, by-the-by, ever ready to answer, and slow to baulk, a convivial call, considered it quite indecorous to pass over such

an event without offering an oblation to *John's* success. We stopped as before at Trois Rivières; and while the wood store was replenishing, some of the party had a short ramble through the village. It was a delightful evening, and we heard with some regret the bell which summoned us on board. One unlucky wight, who had been at first rather tardy in his motions, was compelled by a second peal so to accelerate his steps, that, in passing along the plank, whether from inadvertence or the fumes of our oblation to *John Bull*, he missed his footing, and soused over head into the river. There was fortunately assistance at hand, and he speedily appeared in dripping garments upon deck, whence he was quickly removed to his berth. The sun set this evening with uncommon splendour. In the course of the night we reached Montreal, and at an early hour I got ashore, and resumed my quarters in Goodenough's hotel.

But I find, that while I have but entered upon my tour, I have trespassed beyond all reasonable bounds upon your time. I must, therefore, stop for the present in my comfortable quarters at Montreal. Should these slight Notes, taken down at the moment, prove interesting to you or your numerous readers, I may hope to furnish you, in your following Numbers, with something that may prove useful as well as interesting to those whom necessity or choice may conduct to the fertile regions of the New World.