VARIOUS

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE OF POPULAR LITERATURE AND SCIENCE, VOLUME 26, SEPTEMBER, 1880

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EKONIAH SCRUB: AMONG FLORIDA LAKES

"And if you do get lost after that, it's no great matter," said the county clerk, folding up his map, "for then all you've got to do is to find William Townsend and inquire."

He had been giving us the itinerary for our "cross-country" journey, by way of the Lakes, to Ekoniah Scrub. How many of all the Florida tourists know where that is? I wonder. Or even *what* it is—the strange amphibious land which goes on from year to year "developing"—the solid ground into marshy "parrairas," the prairies into lakes, bright, sparkling sapphires which Nature

is threading, one by one, year by year, upon her emerald chaplet of forest borderland? How many of them all have guessed that close at hand, hidden away amid the shadows of the scrub-oaks, lies her laboratory, where any day they may steal in upon her at her work and catch a world a-making?

There are three individuals who know a little more about it now than they did a few weeks since—three, or shall we not rather say four? For who shall say that Barney gained less from the excursion than the Artist, the Scribe and the Small Boy who were his fellow-travellers? That Barney became a party to the expedition in the character, so to speak, of a lay-brother, expected to perform the servile labor of the establishment while his superiors were worshipping at Nature's shrines, in nowise detracted from his improvement of the bright spring holiday. It was, indeed, upon the Small Boy who beat the mule, rather than upon the mule that drew the wagon, that the fatigues of the expedition fell. "He just glimpses around at me with his old eyeball," says the Small Boy, exasperate, throwing away his broken cudgel, "and that's all the good it does."

We knew nothing more of Ekoniah when we set out upon our journey than that it was the old home of an Indian tribe in the long-ago days before primeval forest had given place to the second growth of "scrub," and that it was a region unknown to the Northern tourist. It lies to the south-west of Magnolia, our point of departure on the St. John's River, but at first our route lay westerly, that it might include the lake-country of the Ridge.

"It's a pretty kentry," said a friendly "Cracker," of whom, despite the county clerk's itinerary, we were fain to ask the way within two hours after starting—"a right pretty kentry, but it's all alike. You'll be tired of it afore you're done gone halfway."

Is he blind, our friend the Cracker? Already, in the very outset of our journey, we have beheld such varied beauties as have steeped our souls in joy. After weeks of rainless weather the morning had been showery, and on our setting forth at noon we had found the world new washed and decked for our coming. Birds were singing, rainbows glancing, in quivering, water-laden trees; flowers were shimmering in the sunshine; the young growth was springing up glorious from the blackness of desolating winter fires. Such tender tones of pink and gray! such fiery-hearted reds and browns and olive-greens! such misty vagueness in the shadows! such brilliance in the sunlight that melted through the openings of the woods! "All alike," indeed! No "accidents" of rock or hill are here, but oh the grandeur of those far-sweeping curves of undulating surface! the mystery of those endless aisles of solemn-whispering pines! the glory of color, intense and fiery, which breathes into every object a throbbing, living soul!

For hours we journeyed through the forest, always in the centre of a vast circle of scattered pines, upon the outer edge of which the trees grew dense and dark, stretching away into infinity. Our road wandered in and out among the prostrate victims of many a summer tempest: now we were winding around

dark "bays" of sweet-gum and magnolia; now skirting circular ponds of delicate young cypress; now crossing narrow "branches" sunk deep in impenetrable "hummocks" of close-crowded oak and ash and maple, thick-matted with vines and undergrowth; now pausing to gather orchis and pitcher-plants and sun-kisses and andromeda; now fording the broad bend of Peter's Creek where it flows, sapphire in the sunshine, out from the moss-draped live-oaks between high banks of red and yellow clays and soft gray sand, to lose itself in a tangle of flowering shrubs; now losing and finding our way among the intricate cross-roads that lead by Bradley's Creek and Darbin Savage's tramway and the "new-blazed road" of the county clerk's itinerary. Suddenly the sky grew dark: thunder began to roll, and—were we in the right road? It seemed suspiciously well travelled, for now we called to mind that Middleburg was nigh at hand, and thither we had been warned *not* to go.

There was a house in the distance, the second we had seen since leaving the "settle_ments_" near the river. And there we learned that we were right and wrong: it *was* the Middleburg road. After receiving sundry lucid directions respecting a "blind road" and an "old field," we turned away. How dark it was growing! how weirdly soughed the wind among the pine tops! how bodingly the thunder growled afar! There came a great slow drop: another, and suddenly, with swiftly-rushing sound, the rain was upon us, drenching us all at once before waterproofs and umbrellas could be made available.

It was then that Barney showed the greatness of his soul. In the confusion of the moment we had run afoul of a stout young oak, which obstinately menaced the integrity of our axle. It was only possible to back out of the predicament, but Barney scorned the thought of retreat. Not all the blandishments of the Small Boy, whether brought to bear in the form of entreaties, remonstrances, jerks or threats, availed: Barney stood unmoved, and the hatchet was our only resource. How that mule's eye twinkled as from time to time he cast a backward glance upon the Small Boy wrestling with a dull hatchet and a sturdy young scrub-oak under the pelting rain, amid lightning-flash and thunder-peal, needs a more graphic pen than mine to describe. A better-drenched biped than climbed into the wagon at the close of this episode, or a more thoroughly-satisfied quadruped than jogged along before him, it would be difficult to find.

As suddenly as they had come up the clouds rolled away, and sunlight flamed out from the west—so suddenly that it caught the rain halfway and filled the air with tremulous rainbow hues. Then burst out afresh the songs of birds, sweet scents thrilled up from flower and shrub, the very earth was fragrant, and fresh, resinous odors exhaled from every tree. The sun sank down in gold and purple glory and night swept over the dark woods. Myriad fireflies flitted round, insects chirped in every hollow, the whippoorwill called from the distant thicket, the night-hawk circled in the open glade. A cheerful sound of cow-bells broke the noisy stillness, the forest opened upon a row of dark buildings

and darker orange trees, and barking of dogs and kindly voices told us that rest was at hand.

No words can do justice to the hospitality of Floridians, whether native or foreign. We were now to begin an experience which was to last us through our entire journey. Here we were, a wandering company of who-knows-what, arriving hungry, drenched and unexpected long after the supper-hour, and our mere appearance was the "open sesame" to all the treasures of house and barn. Not knowing what our hap might be, we had gone provided with blankets and food, but both proved to be superfluous wherever we could find a house. Bad might be the best it afforded, but the best was at our service. At K–'s Ferry it was decidedly *not* bad. Abundance reigned there, though in a quaint old fashion, and very soon after our arrival we were warming and drying ourselves before a cheerful fire, while from the kitchen came most heartening sounds and smells, as of fizzling ham and bubbling coffee.

Never was seen a prettier place than this as we beheld it by the morrow's light. The house stands on a high bluff, worthy the name of hill, which slopes steeply but greenly down to the South Prong of Black Creek, better deserving the name of river than many a stream which boasts the designation. We crossed it upon a boom, pausing midway in sudden astonishment at the lovely view. A long reach of exquisitely pure water, bordered by the dense overhanging foliage of its high banks, stretched away to where, a mile below us, a sudden bend hid its lower course

from view, and on the high green bluff which closed the vista were seen the white house and venerable overarching trees of some old estate. The morning air was crisp and pure; every leaf and twig stood out with clean-cut distinctness, to be mirrored with startling clearness in the stream; the sky was cloudless: no greater contrast could be imagined from the tender sweetness of yesterday. The birds, exhilarated by the sparkle in the air, sang with a rollicking abandonment quite contagious: the very kids and goats on the crags above the road caught the infection and frisked about, tinkling their bells and joining most unmelodiously in the song; while Barney, crossing the creek upon a flatboat, lifted up a tuneful voice in the chorus.

We turned aside from our route to visit Whitesville, the beautiful old home of Judge B–. It is a noble great mansion, with broad double doors opening from every side of a wide hall, and standing in the midst of a wild garden luxuriant with flowers and shrubs and vines, and with a magnificent ivy climbing to the top of a tall blasted tree at the gate. "I came to this place from New Haven in '29," its owner told us—"sailed from New York to Darien, Georgia, in a sloop, and from there in a sail-boat to this very spot. I prospected all about: bought a little pony, and rode him—well, five thousand miles after I began to keep count. Finally, I came back and settled here."

"Were you never troubled by Indians?" we asked.

"Well, they put a fort here in the Indian war, the government did—right here, where you see the china trees." It was a beautiful

green slope beside the house, with five great pride-of-Indias in a row and a glimpse of the creek through the thickets at the foot. "There never was any engagement here, though. The Indians had a camp over there at K–'s, where you came from, but they all went away to the Nation after a while."

"Did you stay here through the civil war?"

"Oh yes. I never took any part in the troubles, but the folks all suspected and watched me. They knew I was a Union man. One day a Federal regiment came along and wanted to buy corn and fodder. The men drew up on the green, and the colonel rode up to the door. 'Colonel,' says I, 'I can't *sell* you anything, but I believe the keys are in the corn-barn and stable doors: I can't hinder your taking anything by force.' He understood, and took pretty well what he wanted. Afterward he came and urged me to take a voucher, but I wouldn't do that. By and by the Confederates came around and accused me of selling to the Federals, but they couldn't prove anything against me."

"There used to be Confederate head-quarters up there at K–'s?" we asked.

"Oh yes, and the Federals had it too. General Birney was there for a while. One day, just after he came, a lot of 'em came over here. One of my boys was lying very sick in that front chamber just then—the one you know, the county clerk. Well, an orderly rode up to the door and called out, 'Here, you damned old rebel, the general wants you.'—'I don't answer to that name,' said I. —'You don't?'—'No, I don't.'—'What! ain't you a rebel?'—' I

don't answer to that name,' said I.—'Well, consider yourself my prisoner,' says he; so I walked up there with him. Judge Price was at head-quarters just then, and he knew me well. It seems that the general had heard that I kept a regular rebel commissariat, sending stores to them secretly. Well, when the judge had told him who I was, the general wrote me a pass at once, and then asked, 'Is there anything I can do for you?'—'General,' said I, 'my son lies very sick. I should like to see the last of him, and beg to be permitted to retire.'—'Is that so?' said the general. 'Would you like me to send you a doctor?' I accepted, and he sent me two. He came up afterward, and found that his men had torn down the fences, broken open the store and dragged out goods, set the oil and molasses running, and done great damage—about four thousand dollars' worth, we estimated. You see, they thought it was a rebel commissariat. When he came into the house he asked my wife if she could give him supper. 'General,' said she, 'you have taken away my cooks: if you will send for your own, I shall be very happy to get supper for you.' He did so, and spent the night here, sleeping in one of the chambers while his officers lay all over the piazzas. Next day they all rode away, quite satisfied, I guess. There were several skirmishes about here afterward, and we have some pieces of bombs in the house now that fell in the yard."

The judge pressed us to stay and dine, but we had arranged for a gypsy dinner in the woods and were anxious to push on. Push on! How Barney would smile could he hear the word! He never

did anything half so energetic as to push: he did not even pull.

So we bade farewell to our genial host and started westwardly again. We were now upon the high land of the Ridge, the backbone of the State, and though, perhaps, hardly ninety feet above the sea, the air had all the exhilarating freshness of great altitudes. All through the week which followed we felt its tonic inspiration and seemed to drink in intoxicating draughts of health and spirits, and never more than during the fifteen-mile drive between Black Creek and Kingsley's Pond.

Kingsley's Pond, the highest body of water in the State, is the first of a long succession of lakes which, lying between the St. John's and the railway, have only lately been, as it were, discovered by the Northerner. It is perfectly circular in form, being precisely two miles across in every direction. Like all the lakes of Florida, it is of immense depth, and its waters are so transparent that the white sand at the bottom may be seen glistening like stars. In common with the other waters of this region, it is surrounded by a hard beach of white sand, rising gradually up to a beautifully-wooded slope, being quite free from the marshes which too often render the lakes of Florida unapproachable.

One of the Northern colonies which within the last two years have discovered this delightful region has settled on the shores of Kingsley's Pond. Although an infant of only twenty months, the village has made excellent growth and gives promise of a bright future. Farming is not largely followed, the principal industry of

these and the other Northern colonists being orange-culture—a business to which the climate is wonderfully propitious, the dry, pure air of this district being alike free from excessive summer heats and from the frosts which are occasionally disastrous to groves situated on lower ground in the same latitude.

Though there are few native Floridians in this part of the country, the neighborhood of the lake rejoices in the possession of a Cracker doctress of wondrous powers. Who but her knows that chapter in the book of Daniel the reading of which stays the flowing of blood, or that other chapter potent to extinguish forest-fires? One does not need a long residence in the State to learn to appreciate the good-fortune of the Lakers in this particular.

Not far from the village, on the western shore of the pond, lives the one "old settler." He met us with the hearty welcome which we had learned almost to look for as a right, and sitting on his front piazza in the shade of his orange trees, gladdening our eyes with the view of his vine-embowered pigpen, we listened to the legend of the pond:

"Yes, I've lived yere four-and-twenty year, but I done kim to Floridy nigh on forty year ago: walked yere from Georgy to jine the Injun war. I done found this place a-scoutin' about, and when I got married I kim yere to settle. The Yankee folks wants to change the name o' the pond to Summit Lake and one thing or 'nother, but I allays votes square agin it every time, and allays will. You see, hit don't ought to be changed. I don't mind the *pond*

part: they mought call it lake ef they think it sounds better, but Kingsley's it *has* to be. K-i-n-g-l-e-s-l-e-y: that, I take it, is the prompt way to spell the name of the man as named it, and that's the name it has to have. You see hit was this a-way: Kingsley were a mail-rider—leastways, express—in the *old* Injun wartime, I dunno how long ago. They was a fort on the pond them days, over on the south side. Wal, Kingsley were a-comin' down toward the fort from the no'th when he thort he see an Injun. He looked behind, and, sure enough, there they was, a-closin' in on him. He looked ahead agin. Shore's you're bo'hn there was a double row on 'em—better'n a hunderd—on all two sides of the trail. He hadn't a minit to study, and jist one thing to do, and he done hit. He jist clapped spurs to his critter and made for the pond. He knowed what they wanted of him"—confidentially and solemnly: "it were their intention to ketch him and scalp him alive, you know. Wal, they follered him to the pond, a-whoopin' and a-yellin' all the way, makin' shore on him. When he got to the pond he rid right in, the Injuns a'ter him, but his critter soon began to gin out. When he see that he jist gethered up his kit and jumped into the water, and swum for dear life. Two mile good that feller swum, and saved his kit and musket. The Injuns got his critter, but you never see nothin' so mad as they was to see him git off that a-way. The soldiers at the fort was a-watchin' all the time. They run down to meet him: they see he looked kinder foolish as he swum in, and as soon as he struck the shore he jist flung himself on the sand, and laid for half an hour athout openin' his

eyes or speakin'. Then he done riz right up and toted his kit to the commander, and axed to hev the pond named a'ter him. The commander said it mought be so, and so hit was; and so it *has* to be, I says, and allays will."

It would be impossible to detail the exquisite and varied beauty of the way between Kingsley's Pond and Ekoniah Scrub. Through the fair primeval forest we wandered, following the old Alachua Trail, the very name of which enhanced the charm of the present scene by calling up thrilling fancies of the past; for this is the famous Indian war-path from the hunting-grounds of the interior to the settlements on the frontier, and may well be the oldest and the most adventure-fraught thoroughfare in the United States. We could hardly persuade ourselves that we were not passing through some magnificent old estate—of late, perhaps, somewhat fallen into neglect—so perfect was the lawn-like smoothness of the grassy uplands, so rhythmical were the undulations of the slopes, so majestic the natural avenues of enormous oaks, so admirable the diversity of hill and dell, knoll and glade, shrubbery and lawn, forest and park, interspersed with frequent sheets of water —Blue Pond, rivalling the sky in color; Sandhill Pond, deep set among high wooded slopes, with picturesque log mill and house; Magnolia Lake, with its flawless mirror; Crystal, of more than crystal clearness, with gorgeous sunset memories and sweet recollections of kindly hospitalities in the two homes which crown its twin heights; Bedford and Brooklyn Lakes, with log cottages beneath clustering trees; Minnie Lake, and its great

alligator sleeping on a log; starry Lily-Pad; and Osceola's Punch-bowl, deep enough, and none too large, to hold the potations of a Worthy; Twin Lakes, scarce divided by the island in their midst; Double Pond, low sunk in the green forest slope, a perfect circle bisected by a wooded ridge; Geneva Lake, dotted with islands and beautiful with shining orange-groves;—always among the lawns and glades, the forest-slopes and aisles of pines, with sough of wind and song of bird, and fragrant wild perfumes. Always with bright "bits" of life between the long, grand silences—a group of men faring on foot across the pine level; a rosy, bareheaded girl—the only girl in the place—searching for calves in the dingle, who gave us flowers and told us the road with the sweet, lingering cadence of the South in her velvet voice; two men riding by turns the mule that bore their sacks of corn to mill; two boys carrying a great cross-cut saw along a sloping lakeside, a noble Newfoundland dog frisking beside them; the fleet bay horse and erect military figure of our host at Crystal Lake guiding us among the intricacies of the Lake Colony. Always with sunny memories of happy hours—gypsy dinners beside golden-watered "branch" or sapphire lake; the cheery half hour in the log house on the hill above the little grist-mill, with the bright young Philadelphians who have here cast in their lot; the abundant feast in the farm-house under the orange trees, and the "old-time" stories of the after-dinner hour; the pleasant days at Crystal Lake, where our first day's drenching resulted so happily in a slight illness that detained us in that lovely spot, and showed us,

in the new colony lately settled on this and the adjacent lakes, how refinement and cultivation, lending elegance to rude toil and harsh privation, may realize even Utopian dreams.

The great farm on Geneva Lake was the first old plantation which we had seen since leaving Kingsley's, and this lies on the outskirts of Ekoniah Scrub, which has long been settled by native Floridians or Georgians. "Hit ain't a farmin' kentry, above there on the sandhills," said our host of the thrifty old farm on Lake Geneva. "It's fine for oranges an' bananas, but the Scrub's better for plantin'. Talk about oranges! Look a' that tree afore you! A sour tree hit were—right smart big, too—but four year ago I sawed it off near the ground and stuck in five buds. That tree is done borne three craps a'ready—fifteen oranges the second year from the bud, a hundred and fifty the third, and last year we picked eight hundred off her. Seedlin's? Anybody mought hev fruit seven year from the seed, but they must take care o' the trees to do it. Look a' them trees by the fence: eight year old, them is. Some of 'em bore the sixth year: every one on 'em is sot full now —full enough for young trees.

"Yes, that's right smart good orange-land up there in the sandhills. Forty year ago, when I kim yere, they was nothin' but wild critters in that lake kentry, as the Yankee folks calls it: all kind o' varmints they was—bears, tigers, panthers, cats and all kinds. Right smart huntin' they was, and 'tain't so bad now. They's rabbits and 'coons and 'possums, sure enough, and deer too; and —Cats? Why, cats is plenty, but they ain't no 'count.

"I niver hunted much myself, but I've heerd an old man tell—Higgins by name. Ef you could find him and could get him *right*, he'd tell you right smart o' stories about varmints, and Injuns too. I've heerd him tell how he went out with some puppies one time to larn 'em to hunt bear. He heerd one o' the puppies a-screechin', and kase he didn't want to lose him he run up. The screechin' come from a sort o' scrub, and he got clost up afore he see it was a she-bear and two cubs. The bear had the puppy, but when she see Higgins she dropped hit and made for him. Now, you know, a bear ain't like no varmint nor cow-beast; hit don't go 'round under the trees, but jest makes a road for itself over the scrub. Higgins hadn't no time to take aim, and ef he'd 'a missed he was gone, sure 'nough; so he jest drawred his knife, and when she riz up to clutch him he stuck her plum in the heart. Killed her, dead.

"No, I never had no trouble with Injuns. They was all gone to the Nation when I settled yere, but I see Billy Bow-legs onct, and Jumper, too. I was ago-in' through the woods, and I met a keert with three men in it. Two on 'em was kinder dark-lookin', but I never thort much of that till the man that was drivin' stopped and axed me ef I knowed who he had in behind. It was them two chiefs, sure 'nough: right good-lookin' fellers they was, too."

We had left the sandhills of the Ridge, and had reached the borders of the Scrub, but there was yet another of the new Northern settlements to visit. It lay a few miles beyond Geneva Lake, in the flat woods to the south of Santa Fé Lake, the largest and best known of the group.

Who does not know the dreary flat-woods villages of the South, with their decaying log cabins and hopelessly unfinished frame houses—with their white roads, ankle-deep in sand, wandering disconsolately among fallen trees and palmetto scrub and blackened stumps? Melrose is like them all, but with a difference. The decaying cabins, new two years ago, are deserted in favor of the great frame houses, which, unfinished indeed, have yet a determined air, as if they meant to be finished some day. The sandy roads are alive with long trains of heavy log-trucks or lighter freight-wagons; there are men actually buying things in the three stores; there is a school, with live children playing before the door; there are saw- and grist-mills buzzing noisily; there is a post-office, which connects us with the outer world as we receive our waiting letters; there is a stir of enterprise in the air which speaks quite plainly of Chicago and the Northern States, whence have come the colonists; there is talk of a railroad to the St. John's on the east, and of a canal which shall connect the lakes with one another and with the railway on the west; there is a really good hotel, where we spend the night in unanticipated luxury upon a breezy eminence overlooking the silver sheet of Santa Fé Lake, which stretches away for miles to the north and eastward.

The morrow was almost spent while we lingered in the neighborhood of the lake. The road makes a wide circuit to avoid its far-reaching arms and bays: only here and there are glimpses of the water seen through the trees and cart-tracks leading off to

exquisite points of view upon its banks. We are in the flat woods again—palmetto-clumps under the pine trees, pitcher-plants and orchis in the low spots, violets and pinguicula beside the ditches, vetches and lupines and pawpaw and the trailing mimosa in the sand. The park-like character of the woods is gone. Still, there are here and there gentle undulations upon which the long lines of western sunlight slope away; the lake gleams silvery through the trees; the air is pure and sparkling as in high altitudes.

It was evening before we could leave the lakeside and plunge into the dense new growth which adds to the ancient name of Ekoniah the modern appellation of "Scrub." Amid its close-crowding thickets night came upon us speedily. How hospitably we were received in the bare new "homestead" of Parson H–; how generously our hosts relinquished their one "barred" bed and passed a night of horror exposed to the fury of myriad mosquitos, whose songs of triumph we heard from our own protected pillows; how basely Barney requited all this kindness by breaking into the corn-crib and "stuffing himself as full as a sausage," as the Small Boy reported,—may not here be dwelt upon.

The early morning was exquisite. Soft mists veiled all the glorious colors; great spider-webs, strung thick with diamonds, stretched from tree to tree; a little "pot-hole" pond of lilies exhaled sweet odors; the lark's ecstatic song thrilled down from upper air. There was a gentle hill before us, and halfway up a view to the right of a broad lake, with the log huts of

a "settle_ment_" on the high bank. The sun has drunk up all the mists, and shines bright upon the soft gray satin of the girdled pine trees in the clearing; flowers are crowding everywhere—orange milkweed, purple phlox, creamy pawpaw, azure bluebells, spotted foxgloves, rose-tinted daisies, brown-eyed coreopsias and unknown flowers of palest blue. Butterflies flit noiselessly among them, and mocking-birds sing loud in the leafy screens above. A red-headed woodpecker taps upon a resounding tree and screams in exultation as he seizes his prey.

We skirted Viola Lake, cresting the high hill, and descending to a shaded valley where the lapping waters plashed upon the roadside: then mounted another hill, among thick clustering oaks and giant pines, to where three lakes are seen spreading broadly out upon a grassy plain between high wooded slopes. And these are Ekoniah! Twenty years ago a tiny rivulet, wandering through broad prairies; eight years later a wider stream, already beginning to encroach upon the grassy borderland; now a chain of ever-broadening lakes, already drawing near to the hills which frame in the widespread plain. Famous grazing-lands these were once, the favored haunts of cattle-drovers, more famous hunting-grounds in older days, before firm prairie had given place to watery savanna. There were Indian villages upon the heights above and bloody battles in the plains below. But who shall tell the story of those days? The Indians are gone; the cattle-drovers have followed them to the far South; the new settler of twenty years ago cared nothing for antiquities or for the legends of an

older time. The dead past is buried: even the sonorous old Indian name has been softened down to Etonia: be it the happy lot of this chronicler to rescue it from oblivion!

The lakes of the lately-traversed "Lake Region," frequent as they had been, were as nothing to those of Ekoniah Scrub. The road rose and fell over a succession of low hills, each ascent gained discovering a new sheet of water to right, to left or before us, deep sunk among thick-clustering trees. At rare intervals the forest would fall away on either hand, opening up a wide view of cultivated fields, sweeping grandly down in long stripes of tender green to the billowy verdure of the broad savanna, where silvery-sparkling lakes lay imbedded and great round "hummocks" of dark trees uprose like islands in the grassy sea. In the distance would be barren slopes of rich dark red and silvery gray, swelling upward to the far dim mystery of pine woods and the blue arch above.

We ate our dinner beside Lake Rosa, a circular basin of clearest water rippling and dimpling under the soft breeze. Toward evening we found the ford, which a paralytic old woman sitting in a sunny corner of a farm-house piazza had indicated to us as "right pretty." Pretty it was, indeed, as we came down to it through the most luxuriant of hummocks of transparent-foliaged sweet-gums and shining-leaved magnolias with one great creamy flower. "Right pretty" it was, too, in the old woman's meaning of the word, for Barney drew us through in safety, scarce up to his knees in the transparent water which reflected so perfectly every

flower and leaf of the dense water-growth. The road beyond was cut through an arch of close-meeting trees, and farther on it skirted a broad lake, which already, in its slow, sure, upward progress, had covered the roadway and was reaching even to the fence which bounds the field above. In this field is a large mound, never investigated, although the farmer who owns the property says he has no doubt that it is the site of an Indian village, for the plough turns up in the fields around not only arrow-heads, but fragments of pottery and household utensils. It was not our good-fortune to obtain any of those relics, as they have not been preserved, and this was the only mound of any extent which we saw. Such mounds are said, however, to be not infrequent in this district, and Indian relics are found everywhere.

As we drove along the hillside we began to notice frequent basin-like depressions of greater or less size, always perfectly circular, always with the same saucer-shaped dip, always without crack or fissure, yet appearing to have been formed by a gradual receding of the substructure, reminding one of the depression in the sand of an hour-glass or of the grain in a hopper. Many of these concaves were dry; others had a little water in the bottom; all of them had trees growing here and there, quite undisturbed, whether in the water or not; and there was no one who had cared to note how long a time had elapsed since they had begun their "decline and fall." There is little doubt, however, that the future traveller will find them developed into lakes, as, indeed, we found one here and there upon the hilltops.

How many times we got lost among the lakes and "pot-holes," the fallen trees and thickets of Ekoniah Scrub, it would be tedious to relate. How many times we came down to the prairie-level, and, fearful to trust ourselves upon the treacherous, billowy green, were forced to "try back" for a new road along the hillside, it would be difficult to say. The county clerk's itinerary had ended here, and William Townsend proved to be less ubiquitous than we had been led to expect. Thus it was that night came down upon us one evening before we had reached a place of shelter—suddenly, in the thick scrub, not lingeringly, as in the long forest glades of the lake country. For an hour we pushed on, trusting now to Barney's sagacity, now to the pioneering abilities of Artist and Scribe, who marched in the van. Fireflies flitted about, their unusual brilliancy often cheating us into the fond hope that shelter was at hand. The ignes-fatui in the valley below often added to the deception, and after many disappointments we were about to spread our blankets upon the earth and prepare for a night's rest *al fresco* when we heard a distant cow-call. Clear and melodious as the far-off "Ranz des Vaches" it broke upon the stillness, gladdening all our hearts. How we answered it, how we hastened over logs and through thickets in the direction of answering voices and glancing lights —no ignes-fatui now—how we were met halfway by an entire family whom we had aroused, and with what astonishment we heard ourselves addressed by name,—can better be imagined than described. By the happiest of chances we had come upon

the home of some people whom we had casually met upon the St. John's River only a few weeks before, and our dearest and oldest friends could not have welcomed us more cordially or have been more gladly met by us.

In the early morning we heard again, between sleeping and waking, the musical cow-call. It echoed among the hills and over the lakes: there were the tinkling of bells, the pattering of hoofs, the eager, impatient sounds of a herd of cattle glad of morning freedom. It was like a dream of Switzerland. And, hastening out, we found the dream but vivified by the intense purity of the air surcharged with ozone, the exquisite clearness of the outlines of the hills, the sparkling brightness of the lakes in the valley, the freshness of glory and beauty which overspread all like a world new made.

One of the great events of that day was a desperate fight between two chameleons in a low oak-scrub on the hilltop. The little creatures attacked each other with such fury, with such rapid changes of color from gray to green and from green to brown, with such unexpected mutations of shape from long and slender to short and squat, with such sudden dartings out and angry flamings of the transparent membrane beneath the throat, with such swift springs and flights and glancings to and fro, as were wonderful to see. It seemed as though both must succumb to the fierce scratchings and clawings; and when at last one got the entire head of his adversary in his mouth and proceeded deliberately to chew it up, we thought that the last act in the

tragedy was at hand. The Small Boy made a stealthy step forward with a view to a capture, when, presto! change! two chameleons with heads intact were calmly gazing down upon us with that placid look of their kind which seemed to assure us that fighting was the last act of which they were capable.

That day, too, is memorable for the charming scenes it brought us, impossible for the pencil to reproduce with all their sweet accessories. We have found the ford at last, where the blue ribbon of the stream lies across the white sand of our road. The prairie stretches out broad and green with many circular islets of tree-mounds in the ocean-like expanse. The winding road beyond the ford leads, between cultivated fields on one side and the tree-bordered prairie on the other, up to the low horizon, where soft white thunderheads are heaped in the hazy blue. The tinkling of cow-bells comes sweetly over the sea of grass; slow wavelets sob softly in the sedges of the stream; fish glance through the water; a duck flies up on swiftly-whirring wing. A great moss-draped live-oak leans over the stream, and the perfume of the tender grapes which crown it floats toward us on the air.

Again, after we have climbed the hill to Swan Lake, and have dined beside Half-moon Pond, and have "laid our course," as the sailors say, by our map and the sun, straight through the Scrub to visit Lake Ella, we come out upon the heights above Lake Hutchinson. The dark greens of the foreground soften into deep-blue shadows in the middle distance. Lake Hutchinson sparkles, a vivid sapphire, against the distant silvery-gray of Lake Geneva,

while far away the low blue hills melt, range behind range, into the pale-blue sky.

Our faces were turned homeward, but there were yet many miles of the Ekoniah country running to northward on the east of the Ridge, and lakes and lakes and lakes among the scrub-clothed hills. A new feature had become apparent in many of them: a low reef of marsh entirely encircling the inner waters and separating them from a still outer lagoon, reminding us, with a difference, of coral-reefs encircling lakes in mid-ocean. The shores of these lakes were not marshy, but firm and hard, like the lakes of the hilltops, with the same smooth forest-slope surrounding. Is a reverse process going on here, we wondered, from that we have seen in the prairies, and are these sheets of water to change slowly into marsh, and so to firm land again? There are a number of such lakes as these, and on the heights above one of the largest, which they have called Bethel, a family of Canadian emigrants have recently "taken up a homestead."

There was still another chain of prairie-lakes, the "Old Field Ponds," stretching north and south on our right, and as we wound around them, plashing now and again through the slowly-encroaching water, we had 'Gator-bone Pond upon our right. The loneliness of the scene was indescribable: for hours we had been winding in and out among the still lagoons or climbing and descending the ever-steeper, darker hills. Night was drawing on; stealthy mists came creeping grayly up from the endless Old Field Ponds; fireflies and glow-worms and will-

o'-the-wisps danced and glowered amid the intense blackness; frogs croaked, mosquitos shrilled, owls hooted; Barney's usual deliberate progress became a snail's pace, which hinted plainly at blankets and the oat-sack,—when, all at once, a bonfire flamed up from a distant height, and the sagacious quadruped quickened his pace along the steep hill-road.

A very pandemonium of sounds saluted our ears as we emerged from the forest—lowings and roarings and shriekings of fighting cattle, wild hoots from hoarse masculine throats, the shrill tones of a woman's angry voice, the discordant notes of an accordion, the shuffle of heavy dancing feet. We had but happened upon a band of cow-hunters returning homeward with their spoils, and the fightings of their imprisoned cattle were only less frightful than their own wild orgies. If we had often before been reminded of Italian skies and of the freshness and brightness of Swiss mountain-air, now thoughts of the Black Forest, with all of weird or horrible that we had ever read of that storied country, rushed to our minds—robber-haunted mills, murderous inns, treacherous hosts, "terribly-strange beds." Not that we apprehended real danger, but to our unfranchised and infant minds the chills and fevers which mayhap lurked in the mist-clothed forest, or even a wandering "cat," seemed less to be dreaded than the wild bacchanals who surrounded us. We would fain have returned, but it was too late. Barney was already in the power of unseen hands, which had seized upon him in the darkness; an old virago had ordered us into the house; and when

we had declined to partake of the relics of a feast which strewed the table, we were ignominiously consigned to a den of a lean-to opening upon the piazza. A "terribly-strange bed" indeed was the old four-poster, which swayed and shrieked at the slightest touch, and myriad the enemies which there lay in wait for our blood. We were not murdered, however, nor did our unseen foes—as had once been predicted by a Cracker friend—*quite* "eat us plum up, bodaciously alive." In the early morning we fled, though not until we had seen how beautiful a home the old plantation once had been. These were not Crackers among whom we had passed the night, but the "native and best." Not a fair specimen of this class, surely, but such as here and there, in the remoter corners of the South, are breeding such troubles as may well become a grave problem to the statesman—the legitimate outgrowth of the old régime. War-orphaned, untutored, unrestrained, contemning legitimate authority, spending the intervals of jail-life in wild revels and wilder crimes,—such were the men in whose ruined home we had passed the night.

There was yet one more morning among the gorgeous-foliaged "scrub-hills," one more gypsy meal by a lakeside, one more genial welcome to a hospitable Cracker board, and we were at home again in the wide sea of pines which stretches to the St. John's. In the ten days of our journey we had seen, within a tract of land some thirty miles long by forty in breadth, more than fifty isolated lakes and three prairie-chains; had visited four enterprising Northern colonies and numerous thrifty

Southern farms; had found an air clear and invigorating as that of Switzerland, soft and balmy as in the tropics, while the gorgeous colorings of tree and flower, of water and sky, were like a dream of the Orient.

"But there!" said the Small Boy, stopping suddenly with a half-unbuckled strap of Barney's harness in his hand: "we forgot one thing, after all: never found William Townsend!"—LOUISE SEYMOUR HOUGHTON.

CANOEING ON THE HIGH MISSISSIPPI

CONCLUDING PAPER

Itasca Lake was first seen of white men by William Morrison, an old trader, in 1804. Several expeditions attempted to find the source of the Great River, but the region was not explored till 1832—by Schoolcraft, who regarded himself as the discoverer of Itasca. Much interesting matter concerning the lake and its vicinity has been written by Schoolcraft, Beltrami and Nicollet, but the exceeding difficulty of reaching it, and the absence of any other inducements thither than a spirit of adventure and curiosity, make visitors to its solitudes few and far between. Itasca is fed in all by six small streams, each too insignificant to be called the river's source. It has three arms—one to the south-east, about three and a half miles long, fed by a small brook of clear and lively water; one to the south-west, about two miles and a half long, fed by the five small streams already described; and one reaching northward to the outlet, about two and a half miles. These unite in a central portion about one mile square. The arms are from one-fourth of a mile to one mile wide, and the lake's extreme length is about seven miles. Its water is clear and warm.

July thirteenth, when the temperature of the air was 76°, the water in the largest arm of the lake varied between 74° and 80°. We saw no springs nor evidences of them, and the water's temperature indicates that it receives nothing from below. Still, it is sweet and pure to the taste and bright and sparkling to the eye. Careful soundings gave a depth varying between fourteen and a half and twenty-six feet. The only island is that named by Schoolcraft after himself in 1832. It is in the central body of the lake, and commands a partial view of each arm. It is about one hundred and fifty feet wide by three hundred feet long, varying in height from its water-line to twenty-five feet, and is thickly timbered with maple, elm, oak and a thicket of bushes.

On Tuesday morning, July 14, at six o'clock, we paddled away from the island to the foot of the lake. The outlet is entirely obscured by reeds and wild rice, through which the water converges in almost imperceptible current toward the river's first definite banks. This screen penetrated, I stopped the Kleiner Fritz in mid-stream and accurately measured width, depth and current. I found the width twenty feet, the depth on either side of my canoe as she pointed down the stream thirty-one inches, and the speed of the current two and one-tenth miles to the hour. The first four miles of the infant's course is swift and crooked, over a bed of red sand and gravel, thickly interspersed with mussel and other small shells, and bordered with reeds. Through these, at two points, we beat our way on foot, dragging the canoes through unmade channels. Indeed, nearly all of these first four

miles demanded frequent leaps from the boats to direct their swift and crooked course, until we came to a stretch of savanna country, through which the river washes its way in serpentine windings for nine miles with a gentle current from thirty to sixty feet wide, bordered by high grass, bearing the appearance and having the even depth of a canal. An easy, monotonous paddle through these broad meadows brought us to the head of the first rapids, the scene of our two days' upward struggle. These rapids extend about twelve miles as the river runs, alternating between rattling, rocky plunges and swift, smooth water, for the most part through a densely-wooded ravine cleft through low but abrupt hills, and as lonely and cheerless as the heart of Africa. The solitude is of that sort which takes hold upon the very soul and weaves about it hues of the sombrest cast. From our parting with the Indians on first reaching the river we had neither seen nor heard a human being, nor were there save here and there remote traces of man's hand. No men dwell there: nothing invites men there. A few birds and fewer animals hold absolute dominion. Wandering there, one's senses become intensely alert. But for the hoot of the owl, the caw of the crow, the scream of the eagle, the infrequent twitter of small birds, the mighty but subdued roar of insects, the rush of water over the rocks and the sigh and sough of the wind among the pines, the lonely wanderer has no sign of aught but the rank and dank vegetation and a gloomy, oppressive plodding on and on, without an instant's relief in the sights and sounds of human life. We entered upon the descent of the rapids

in no very cheerful mood.

The downward way was easier, and we had cleared away, in the upward struggle, such obstructions as were within our control. Still, we travelled slowly and wearily, and came out of our first day's homeward work wet and worn into a camp in the high grass a good twenty miles from the start of the morning. We drew the canoes from the water, made our beds of blankets inside, lashed our paddles to the masts for ridge-poles, thatched our little cabins with our rubber blankets, hung our mosquito-bars beneath, then cooked and ate under the flare of our camp-fire, and sought our canoe-beds for that sweet sleep which comes of weariness of body, but not of mind, under the bright stars and broad-faced moon shining with unwonted clearness in that clear air.

The night proved very cool. Our outer garments, wet from so much leaping in and out of the canoes, and rolled up for storage on the decks over night, were found in the early morning frozen stiff, and had to be thawed before we could unroll them. The thermometer registered 33° after six o'clock, and frost lay upon all our surroundings.

For two and a half days our course was down a stream winding gracefully through a broad region of savanna country, occasionally varied by the crossing of low sandy ridges beautifully graved by lofty yellow pines. In the savannas the shores are made of black soil drifted in, and forming, with the dense mass of grass-roots, a tough compound in which the earthy and vegetable parts are about equal, while the tall grass, growing

perpendicularly from the shore, makes a stretch of walls on either side, the monotony of which becomes at last so tiresome that a twenty-feet hill, a boulder as large as a bushel basket or a tree of unusual size or kind becomes specially interesting. Standing on tiptoe in the canoes, we could see nothing before or around us but a boundless meadow, with here and there a clump of pines, and before and behind the serpent-like creepings of the river. The only physical life to be seen was in the countless ducks, chiefly of the teal and mallard varieties, a few small birds and the fish—lake-trout, grass-bass, pickerel and sturgeon—constantly darting under and around us or poised motionless in water so clear that every fin and scale was seen at depths of six and eight feet. The ducks were exceedingly wild—something not easily accounted for in that untroubled and uninhabited country; but we were readily able to reinforce our staple supplies with juicy birds and flaky fish broiled over a lively fire or baked under the glowing coals.

By noon of Friday, the 18th, we had come to an average width in the river of eighty feet and a sluggish flow of six feet in depth. We halted for our lunch at the mouth of the South (or Plantagenian) Fork of the Mississippi, up which Schoolcraft's party pursued its way to Itasca Lake. Thence a short run brought us suddenly upon Lake Marquette, a lovely sheet of water with clearly-defined and solid shores, about one mile by two in extent, exactly across the centre of which the river has entrance and exit. Beyond this, a short mile brought us to the sandy beaches

of Bemidji Lake, the first considerable body of water in our downward travel, and about one hundred and twenty-five miles, as the river winds, from Itasca. The real name of the lake, as used by the Indians and whites adjacent, is Benidjigemah, meaning "across the lake," and Bemidji is frequently known as Traverse Lake. It is a lovely, unbroken expanse, about seven miles long and four miles wide. Its shores are of beautiful white sand, gravel and boulders, reaching back to open pine-groved bluffs. Our shore-searchers found agate, topaz, carnelian, etc. Our approach to Bemidji had been invested with special interest as the first unmistakable landmark in our lonely wanderings, and as the home of one man—a half-breed—the only human being who has a home above Cass Lake. We found his hut, but not himself, at the river's outlet. The lodge is neatly built of bark. It was surrounded by good patches of corn, potatoes, wheat, beans and wild raspberries. There is a stable for a horse and a cow, and all about were the conventional traps of a civilized biped who lives upon a blending of wit, woodcraft and industry. We greatly wished to see this hermit, whose nearest neighbors are thirty miles away. His dog welcomed us with all the passion of canine hunger and days of isolation, but the master was gone to Leech Lake, as we afterward found from his Cass Lake neighbors. The wind favored a sail across the lake—a welcome variation from our hitherto entirely muscular propulsion—so we rigged our spars and canvas, drifted smoothly out into the trough of the lively but not angry waves, and swept swiftly across the clear,

bright little sea. The white caps dashed over our decks and a few sharp puffs half careened our little ships, but the crossing was safely and quickly made. It was yet only mid-afternoon, but we had paddled steadily and made good progress nearly four days; so we went into early camp on a bluff overlooking the entire lake, did our first washing of travel-stained garments, brought up epistolary arrearages, caught two fine lake-trout for our next breakfast and went to sound sleep in the nine-and-a-half-o'clock twilight.

We had been advised that we should need guides in finding our exits from the lakes, which were obscured by reeds and wild rice. But no guide was to be had, and we easily found our own way. The river at the outlet of Bemidji Lake is about one hundred and fifty feet wide, very shallow, and runs swiftly over a bed of large gravel and boulders thickly grown with aquatic grass and weeds. We had gone but a little way when a rattling ahead told of near proximity to swift and rough water, down which we danced at a speed perilous to the boats, but not to our personal safety. The river was unusually low, so that the many bouldery rapids which otherwise would have been welcome were now only the vexatious hints of what might have been. The shallow foam dashed down each rocky ledge without channel or choice, and whichever way we went we soon wished we had gone another. The rocks were too many for evasion, and the swift current caught our keels upon their half-sunken heads, which held us fast in imminent peril of a swamp or a capsize, our only safety lying in open eyes, quick and

skilful use of the paddle or a sudden leap overboard at a critical instant. Added to these difficulties, a gusty head wind and lively showers obscured the boulders and the few open channels. So we went on all the forenoon, hampered by our ponchos, poling, drifting, paddling and peering our way, blinded by wind and rain, till we came to the last of these labyrinths, liveliest and most treacherous of all. We were soaked, and only dreaded an upset for our provisions and equipments. The rapid was long, rough, swift, crooked. The Kleiner Fritz led the way into the swirl, and was caught, a hundred feet down, hard and fast by her bow-keel, swung around against another boulder at her stern, and was pinned fast in no sort of danger, the water boiling under and around her, while her captain sat at his leisure as under the inevitable, with a don't-care-a-dash-ative procrastination of the not-to-be-avoided jump overboard and wade for deeper water. The Betsy D., following closely, passed the Fritz with a rush which narrowly escaped the impalement of the one by the other's sharp nose, struck, hung for a moment, while the water dashed over her decks and around her manhole, then washed loose and went onward safely to still water. The Fritz, solid as the Pyramids, beckoned the Hattie to come on without awaiting the questionable time of the latter's release; so the namesake of the hazel-eyed and brown-haired Indiana girl came into the boil and bubble, sailed gayly by the troubles of the others, was gliding on toward quiet seas under her skipper's gleeful whoops, when, bang! went her bow upon a rock, from which a moment's work

freed her: tz-z-z-z-z-zip crunched her copper nails over another just under water, whence she went bumping and crunching, her captain's prudent and energetic guidance knocking his flag one way and his wooden hatch the other, till finally his troubles were behind him. Then the Fritz began to stir. Her commander went overboard and released her, then leaped astride her deck and paddled cautiously down the rift and slowly down the quieter water below, howling through the pelting rain,

> "Then let the world wag along as it will:
> We'll be gay and happy still,"

until he came upon his comrades—one stumbling about over the blackened roots of grass and underbrush from a recent fire in search of wood for our needed noon-day blaze; the other with wet matches and birch bark, and imprecations for which there was ample justification, vainly seeking that without which hot coffee and broiled bacon cannot be. The Kleiner Fritz's haversack supplied dry matches, fire began to snap, coffee boiled, bacon sputtered on the ends of willow rods, hard tack was set out for each man, and we sat upon our heels for lunch under the weeping skies and willows, comparing notes and experiences.

Thence, three hours through monotonous savanna and steady rain brought us to the uppermost bay of Cass Lake, and unexpectedly upon a straggling Indian village. We bore down upon it with yells, and there came tumbling out from birch lodges

and bark cabins the first human beings we had seen for more than ten days, in all the ages, sizes, tints, costumes and shades of filth known to the Chippewas of the interior wilderness. At first they were a little shy of us, but we got into a stumbling conversation with the only man of the whole lot who wore breeches or could compass a little English, and soon the dirty, laughing, wondering, chattering gang came down to inspect us and our, to them, marvellous craft, and to fully enjoy what was perhaps the most interesting event in many a long month of their uneventful lives. Then we paddled across the bay, or upper lake, out into the broader swells of Cass Lake itself, pulled four miles across to the northernmost point of Colcaspi, or Grand Island, and made our second Saturday night's camp upon its white sands at or very near the spot where Schoolcraft and his party had encamped in July, forty-seven years before. The landward side of the beautiful beach is skirted by an almost impenetrable jungle. We had frequently seen traces, old and new, of deer, moose, bears and smaller animals, but had seen none of the animals themselves save one fine deer, and our sleep had been wholly undisturbed by prowlers; so we sank to rest on Grand Island with no fears of invasion. At midnight the occupant of the Kleiner Fritz was aroused by a scratching upon the side of the canoe and low, whining howls. He partially arose, confused and half asleep, in doubt as to the character of his disturber, which went forward, climbed upon the deck and confronted him through the narrow gable of his rubber roof with a pair of fiery eyes, which

to his startled imagination seemed like the blazing of a comet in duplicate. The owner of the eyes was at arm's length, with nothing but a mosquito-bar intervening. Then the eyes suddenly disappeared, and the scratching and howling were renewed in a determined and partially successful effort to get between the overlapping rubber blankets to the captain of the Fritz. This movement was defeated by a quick grasp of the edges of the blankets, and while the animal was snarling and pawing at the shielded fist of his intended victim lusty shouts went out for the camp to arouse and see what the enemy might be, as the Fritz was unwilling to uncover to his unknown assailant. The Hattie's skipper, hard by, saw that something unusual was on hand, peered out, and so increased the uproar as to draw the adversary's attack. Then the Betsy bore down upon us all just as the hungry and persistent beast was crouching for a leap at the Hattie's jugular, the loud bang of a Parker rifle rang out upon the stillness, and a fine, muscular lynx lay dead at the Cincinnati Nimrod's feet. The animal's trail showed that he had prowled around our bacon and hard tack in contempt, had inspected the Betsy's commander as he lay on the sand in his blanket and under a huge yellow mosquito-bar, but had evidently concluded that any man who could snore as that man usually did was not a good subject for attack, and so came on down the beach in search of blood less formidably defended. We renewed our fire, examined our dead disturber, and turned in again to sound sleep under the assuring suggestion of the Cincinnati man that, whatever else the

jungle might hide, two cannon-balls rarely enter the same hole.

Our heavy and late slumber was broken by the laugh and chatter of two Indian women and a child, who in a bark canoe a little way from shore were regarding our camp in noisy curiosity. My blanket suddenly thrown aside and a good-morning in English took them by surprise, and they paddled away vigorously toward a group of lodges some four miles across the lake. In the glorious sunset of a restful Sunday we crossed the glassy lake to its outlet, taking two fine lake-trout of four pounds as we went, and glided out of as beautiful a lake as sun and moon shine upon into the swift, steady, deep current of what for the first time in its long way Gulfward bears the full dignity of a river. Its green banks are some two hundred feet apart. The water has a regular depth of from five to six feet, and all the way to Lake Winnibegoshish affords an unbroken channel for a medium-sized Western steamer. The shores, alternating between low, firm, grass-grown earth and benches of luxuriant green twenty feet high, grown over with open groves of fine yellow pines, were so beautiful and regular that we could hardly persuade ourselves that we should not see, as we rounded the graceful curves, some fine old mansion of which these turfed knolls and charming groves seemed the elegant lawns and parks. Our fleet unanimously voted the river between Cass and Winnibegoshish Lakes the most beautiful of all its upper course.

We began our second week upon the Mississippi with a breakfast of baked lake-trout, slapjacks, maple syrup and coffee,

which embodied the culinary skill of the entire fleet: then started for Winnibegoshish in the height of good spirits and physical vigor. In one of our easy, five-miles-an-hour swings around the graceful curves we were met by a duck flying close over our heads with noisy quacks. A little farther we came upon the cause of the bird's lively flight in an Indian boy, not above nine years old, paddling a large birch canoe, over the gunwale of which peeped the muzzle of a sanguinary-looking old shot-gun. The diminutive sportsman was for a moment dashed by our sudden and novel appearance, but, from the way he urged his canoe and from the determined set of his dirty face, we had small room to doubt the ultimate fate of the flying mallard. Another curve brought us in sight of the home of the little savage, where a dozen Indians, in all stages of nudity, were encamped upon a high bluff. A concerted whoop from our fleet brought all of them from their smoky lodges, and we swept by under their wondering eyes and exclamations. Then the high land was left behind, and half an hour between low meadows brought us out upon the yellow sands and heaving swells of Lake Winnibegoshish, the largest in the Mississippi chain, the dimensions of which, including its lovely north-eastern bay, are about eleven by thirteen miles. The name signifies "miserable dirty water lake," but save a faint tinge of brown its waters are as pure and sparkling as those of any of the upper lakes. Our entrance upon Winnibegoshish was under a driving storm of wind and mist, against which we paddled three miles to Duck Point, a slender finger of wooded sand and

boulder reaching half a mile out, at whose junction with the main land is a miserable village of most villainous-looking Indians. One man alone could speak a little English, and through him we negotiated for replenishing our provisions. Meantime, the storm freshened and embargoed an eight-mile journey across an open and boiling sea; so we paddled to the outermost joint upon the jutting finger for a bivouac under the trees, waiting the hoped-for lull of wind and wave at sunset. The smoke of our fire invited to our camp the hungry natives, who dogged us at every turn all the long afternoon, in squads of all numbers under twenty, and of all ages between two and seventy. One club-footed and club-handed fellow of forbidding visage protested with hand and head that he neither spoke nor understood our vernacular. Later, he sidled up to the Hattie's skipper and said in an earnest *sotto voce*, "Gib me dime." Denied the dime, he intimated to the Betsy that he doted on bacon, of which we were each broiling a slice. The Betsy's captain was bent upon securing an Indian fish-spear, and he pantomimed to the twinkling eyes of the copper-skin that he would invest a generous chunk of bacon in barbed iron. The Indian strode back to his village, and soon returned with the spear, which he transferred to the Betsy's stores.

The conventional Indian maiden besieged the bachelor two-thirds of our expedition with all the wiles that could be embodied in a comely and clean-calicoed charmer up in the twenties, who finally bore away from the Betsy's private stores a fan of stunning colors and other odds and ends of a St. Paul notion-store; while

the guileless commander of the Hattie, whose cumulative years should have taught him better, and whose thinly-clad brain-shelter and disreputable attempt at sailor costume should have blunted all feminine javelins, surrendered to the ugliest old septuagenarian in the village, and sent her heart away rejoicing in the ownership of a policeman's whistle courted by her leering eyes and already smirched by her dirty lips, together with a stock of tea, crackers and bacon for which her expanded corporosity evinced no imminent need. At last rid of our importunate acquaintances, we turned in for a sleep, which we resolved should be broken at the first moment, dark or light, when we might cross the lake. Before daylight the Betsy's resonant call awoke us, and in the earliest gray we paddled out upon a heavy but not foaming sea, and after two and a half hours of monotonous splashing in the trough of the waves landed for breakfast on the eastern shore, whence we crossed a lovely bay and passed out once more upon the river.

A mile on our way we came to the prettiest of the many Indian burying-grounds which we saw now and then. Formerly, the Indians deposited their dead upon rude scaffolds well up in the air. Now they seek high ground and place the bodies of the departed in shallow graves, over which they build little wooden houses a foot or two high with gabled roofs, and mark each with a white flag raised upon a pole a few feet above the sleeper's head. In this neighborhood we inquired of a stalwart brave concerning our proximity to a portage by means of which a short walk over

to a small lake near the head of Ball Club Lake and a pull of six miles down the latter would bring us out again into the river, and save a tedious voyage of twenty-five to thirty miles through a broad savanna. The Indian in his old birch canoe joined our fleet, and led us to the beginning of the portage near the foot of Little Winnipeg Lake. We had carried two canoes and all the baggage over to the water on the other side of a sandy ridge, leaving only the Kleiner Fritz to be brought, when our guide and packer, with a preliminary grunt, said "Money?" inquiring how much we intended to pay him. He had worked hard for four hours, for which we tried to tell him that we should pay him one dollar when he should bring over the remaining canoe; but we could not make him understand what a dollar was. We then laid down, one after another, four silver quarter-dollars and two bars of tobacco; whereupon he gave a satisfied grunt and an affirmative nod, disappeared in the forest, and in less than an hour returned with the Fritz upon his steaming shoulders, having covered more than three miles in the round trip.

As we pulled out upon Ball Club Lake a gentle stern wind bade us hoist our canvas for an easy and pleasant sail of six or seven miles down to the open river. We glided out gayly before a gentle breeze, and sailed restfully over the little rippling waves, our speed increasing, though we hardly noted the signs of a gale driving after us over the hills behind. The Hattie was leading well over to the port shore, the Fritz bearing straight down the middle, with the Betsy on the starboard quarter, when the storm

struck us with a vigor that increased with each gust. The black clouds swished over our heads, seemingly almost within reach of our paddles. The sails tugged at the sheets with tiresome strength. The canoes now plunged into a wave at the bows and were now swept by others astern, as they rushed forward like mettlesome colts or hung poised upon or within a rolling swell, until, with the increasing gale, the roaring waves dashed entirely over decks and men. The Hattie bore away to leeward and rode the gale finely, but at last prudence bade the furling of her sail. Expecting no such blow the Fritz had not taken the precaution to arrange her rubber apron for keeping out the waves from her manhole, and now, between holding the sheet, steering and watching the gusty wind, neither hand nor eye could be spared for defensive preparations; so her skipper struck sail and paddled for the westward shore, with the Betsy lunging and plunging close behind. We on the windward side sought the smoother water within the reeds, and drove along rapidly under bare poles, out of sight of the Hattie, separated at nightfall by miles of raging sea. We rode before the wind to the foot of the lake, where we were confronted by the alternative of a toilsome and unsafe paddle around the coast against the storm's full force, or camping in mutual anxiety as to the fate of the unseen party—a by no means pleasant sedative for a night's rest upon wild and uninhabited shores. We decided upon the pull, and labored on, now upon the easy swells within the reeds, and then tossing upon the crests in open places, until at last a whirling column of smoke a mile

ahead gave us assurance of the Hattie's safety. The reunited fleet paddled down into the Mississippi, enlivening the darkness until we could find camping-ground beyond the marshes by a comparison of storm-experiences and congratulations that we had escaped the bottom of the lake.

Late in the afternoon of the next day, after a monotonous pull through the interminable windings of Eagle Nest Savanna, we swept around a curve of high tillable land upon the uppermost farm cultivated by whites, eighteen miles above Pekagema Falls, and one hundred and seventy miles by river beyond the Northern Pacific Railroad. Thomas Smith and his partner, farming, herding and lumbering at the mouth of Vermilion River, were the first white men we had seen since July 6, seventeen days, and with them we enjoyed a chat in straight English. Nine miles below we camped at River Camp, the second farm downward, where we were kindly supplied with vegetables and with fresh milk, which seemed to us then like the nectar of the gods. Thursday, 24th, we reached Pekagema Falls, a wild pitch of some twenty feet, with rapids above and below, down which the strong volume of the river plunges with terrible force in picturesque beauty. A carry around the falls and three miles of paddling brought us to Grand Rapids, and we rushed like the wind into the whirl and boil of its upper ledge, down the steep and crooked incline for two hundred yards, out of which we shot up to the bank under a little group of houses where Warren Potter and Knox & Wakefield conduct the uppermost post-office and stores upon the

river. We speedily closed our partly-completed letters and posted them for a pack-mail upon an Indian's back sixty-five miles to Aitkin, while we should follow the tortuous river thither for one hundred and fifty miles. We had hoped for a rest and lift hence to Aitkin upon the good steamboat City of Aitkin, which makes a few lonely trips each spring and fall, but the low water had prevented her return from her last voyage, made ten days before our arrival. Our stores replenished, after two hours of rest we started again in a driving rain, and under the hearty *bon voyage* of a dozen frontiersmen and Indians shot the two lively lower ledges of Grand Rapids, and came out on smooth water, whose sluggish flow, broken by a very few rifts, bore us thence one hundred and fifty miles to the next white settlement at Aitkin. The entire distance lies through low bottom-lands heavily timbered, and our course was drearily monotonous. We left Grand Rapids at mid-afternoon of Thursday, July 24, and camped on Friday night four miles below Swan River. Late on Saturday we passed Sandy Lake River—where formerly were a large Indian population and an important trading-post, founded and for many years conducted by Mr. Aitkin, who was prominently identified with the early history of that region, and is now commemorated in the town and county bearing his name, but where now remain only one or two deserted cabins and a few Indian graves, over which white flags were flapping in the sultry breeze—and camped two miles below. Monday's afternoon brought us to Aitkin, so that we had covered one hundred and fifty miles of sluggish

channel, at low summer tide, in three working days. We had been four weeks beyond possibility of home-tidings, and we swooped down upon the disciple of Morse in that far-away village with work that kept him clicking for an hour. We were handsomely taken in by Warren Potter, a pioneer and an active and intelligent factor in the business of that region, in whose tasteful home we for the first time in a month sat down and ate in Christian fashion under a civilized roof. Having lost a week in the farther wilderness, we decided to take the rail to Minneapolis, that we might enjoy the beautiful river thence to Lake Pepin, yet reach our homes within the appointed time. Half a day was enjoyed at Brainerd, the junction of the Northern Pacific main line with the St. Paul branch, and the most important town between Lake Superior and the Missouri. It is beautifully built and picturesquely scattered among the pines upon the Mississippi's eastern bank, not far above Crow Wing River. Thence we were carried over the splendid railway, passing the now abandoned Fort Ripley, winding along or near to the river and across the wheat-fields, through the busy and beautiful city of mills, below St. Anthony's roar and down the dancing rapids to a pleasant island-camp between the green-and-gray bluffs that bind Minneapolis to Minnehaha—the first really fine scenery this side of Itasca's solitude. A delightful paddle under a bright morning sun and over swift, clear water carried us to the little brook whose laughter, three-quarters of a mile up a deep ravine, has been sent by Longfellow rippling outward to all the world.

We rounded the great white-faced sand-rock that marks the outlet, paddled as far as we might up the quiet stream, beached the canoes under the shade of the willows, walked a little way up the brook, past a deserted mill, under cool shadows of rock and wood, and enjoyed for half an hour the simple, seductive charms of the "Laughing Water." Then we tramped back to our boats, floated down under the old walls of Fort Snelling and between the chalk-white cliffs which line the broadening river, until we came in sight of St. Paul's roofs and spires, and soon were enjoying the thoughtful care and generous hospitality of the Minnesota Boat Club. Another day's close brought us to Red Wing, backgrounded by the green bluffs and reddened cliffs of its bold hills. One more pull down the now broad and islanded stream carried us to Lake Pepin, one of the loveliest mirrors that reflects the sun, and to Frontenac's white beach. The keels of the Fritz, the Betsy and the Hattie crunched the sands at the end of their long journey, the boats were shunted back upon the railway, and their weary owners were soon dozing in restful forgetfulness upon the couches of the unsurpassed Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul line.

Beyond reasonable doubt, our party is the only one that ever pushed its way by boat up the entire course of the farthermost Mississippi. Beyond any question, our canoes were the first wooden boats that ever traversed those waters. Schoolcraft, in 1832, came all the way down the upper river without portages, but he had very high water and many helpers, in spite of which

one of his birch canoes was wrecked. The correspondent of a New York newspaper claimed the complete trip in his canoe some five years ago, but his own guide and others told us that his Dolly Varden never was above Brainerd, and that his portages above were frequent. So we may well feel an honest pride in our Rushton-built Rob Roys and our hard knocks, and may remember with pardonable gratification that upon our own feet and keels we have penetrated the solitudes lying around the source of the world's most remarkable river, where no men live and where, probably, not more than two-score white men have ever been.—A.H. SIEGFRIED.

ADAM AND EVE

CHAPTER XXVI

By the time Reuben May entered the little town of Looe he had come to a decision about his movements and how he should carry out his plan of getting back to London. Not by going with Captain Triggs, for the monotonous inaction of a sailing voyage would now be insupportable to him, but by walking as far as he could, and now and then, whenever it was possible, endeavoring to get a cheap lift on the road. His first step must therefore be to inform Triggs of his decision, and to do this he must get back to Plymouth, a distance from Looe of some fifteen or sixteen miles.

In going through Looe that morning he had stopped for a few minutes at a small inn which stood not far from the beach; and having now crossed the river which divides West from East Looe, he began looking about for this house, intending to get some refreshments, to rest for an hour or so, and then proceed on his journey.

Already the town-clock was striking six, and Reuben calculated that if he started between nine and ten he should have time to take another good rest on the road—which he had already once that day traversed—and reach Plymouth Barbican, where the Mary Jane lay, by daybreak.

The inn found, he ordered his meal and informed the landlady of his intention.

"Why, do 'ee stop here till mornin', then," exclaimed the large-hearted Cornish woman. "If 'tis the matter o' the money," she added, eying him critically, "that's hinderin' 'ee from it, it needn't to, for I'll see us don't have no quarrel 'bout the price o' the bed."

Reuben assured her that choice, not necessity, impelled his onward footsteps; and, thus satisfied, she bade him "Take and lie down on the settle there inside the bar-parlor; for," she added, "'less 'tis the sergeant over fra Liskeard 'tain't likely you'll be disturbed no ways; and I shall be in and out to see you'm all right."

Reuben stretched himself out, and, overcome by the excitement and fatigue of the day, was soon asleep and dreaming of those happier times when he and Eve had walked as friends together. Suddenly some one seemed to speak her name, and though the name at once wove itself into the movement of the dream, the external sound had aroused the sleeper, and he opened his eyes to see three men sitting near talking over their grog.

With just enough consciousness to allow of his noticing that one was a soldier and the other two were sailors, Reuben looked for a minute, then closed his eyes, and was again sinking back into sleep when the name of Eve was repeated, and this time with such effect that all Reuben's senses seemed to quicken into life, and, cautiously opening his eyes, so as to look without being observed, he saw that it was the soldier who was speaking.

"Young chap, thinks I," he was saying, "you little fancy there's

one so near who's got your sweetheart's seal dangling to his fob;" and with an air of self-satisfied vanity he held out for inspection a curious little seal which Reuben at once recognized as the same which he himself had given to Eve.

The unexpected sight came upon him with such surprise that, had not the height of the little table served as a screen to shelter him from view, his sudden movement must have betrayed his wakefulness.

"He's a nice one for any woman to be tied to, he is!" replied the younger of the two sailors. "Why, the only time as I ever had what you may call a fair look at un was one night in to the King o' Proosia's, and there he was dealing out his soft sawder to little Nancy Lagassick as if he couldn't live a minute out o' her sight."

"That's about it," laughed the soldier. "He's one of your own sort there: you Jacks are all alike, with a wife in every port. However," he added—and as he spoke he gave a complacent stroke to his good-looking face—"he may thank his stars that a matter of seven miles or so lays between his pretty Eve and Captain Van Courtland's troop, or there'd have been a cutting-out expedition that, saving the presence of those I speak before"—and he gave a most exasperating wink—"might have proved a trifle more successful than such things have of late."

"Here, I say," said the sailor, flaming up at this ill-timed jocularity, "p'ra'ps you'll tell me what 'tis you're drivin' at; for I've got to hear of it if you, or any o' your cloth either, ever made a find yet. You're mighty 'cute 'bout other folks, though when

the spirits was under yer very noses, and you searched the houses through 'twas knowed to be stowed in, you couldn't lay hold on a single cask. 'Tis true we mayn't have nabbed the men, but by jingo if 't has come to us bein' made fools of by the women!"

"There, now, stash it there!" said his older comrade, who had no wish to see a quarrel ensue. "So far as I can see, there's no cause for bounce 'twixt either o' us; though only you give us a chance of getting near to them, sergeant," he said, turning to the soldier, "and I'll promise you shall make it all square with this pretty lass you fancy while her lover's cutting capers under Tyburn tree."

"'A chance?'" repeated his companion, despondingly: "where's it to come from, and the only one we'd got cut away from under us by those Hart chaps?"

"How so? where's the Hart off to, then?" asked the sergeant.

"Off to Port Mellint," said the man addressed. "Nothing but a hoax, I fancy, but still she was bound to go;" and so saying he tossed off the remainder of his grog and began making a movement, saying, as he did so, to his somewhat quarrelsomely-disposed shipmate, "Here, I say, Bill, come 'long down to the rendezvoos with me, and if there's nothin' up for to-night what d'ye say to stepping round to Paddy Burke's? He's asked us to come ever so many times, you know."

"Paddy Burke?" said the sergeant. "What! do you know him? Why, if you're going there, I'll step so far with you."

"Well, we're bound for the rendezvoos first," said the sailor.

"All right! I can find plenty to do while you're in there."

"Then come along;" and, only stopping to exchange a few words in passing with the landlady, out they all went, and Reuben was left alone, a prey to the thoughts which now came crowding into his mind.

For a few minutes he sat with his arms resting on the table as if communing with himself: then, starting up as if filled with a sudden resolve, he went out and asked the landlady a few commonplace questions, and finally inquired whereabouts and in what direction did the rendezvous lie.

"Close down by the bridge, the first house after you pass the second turning. Why?" she said: "be 'ee wanting to see anybody there?"

"No," said Reuben: "I only heard the fellows that came in there talking about the rendezvous, and I wondered whether I'd passed it."

"Why, iss, o' course you did, comin' in. 'Tis the house with the flag stream-in' over the doorways."

Reuben waited for no further information. He said something about not knowing it was so late, bade the landlady a rather abrupt farewell, and went his way.

Down the narrow street he hurried, turned a corner, and found himself in front of the house indicated, outside which all was dark. Nobody near, and, with the exception of himself, not a soul to be seen. Inside, he could hear voices, and the more plainly from the top sash of the window being a little way open. By the

help of the iron stanchion driven in to support the flagstaff he managed to get up, steady himself on the window-sill and take a survey of the room. Several men were in it, and among them the two he had already seen, one of whom was speaking to a person whom, from his uniform, Reuben took to be an officer.

The sight apparently decided what he had before hesitated about, and getting; down he took from his pocket a slip of paper —one he had provided in case he should want to leave a message for Eve—and rapidly wrote on it these words: "The Lottery is expected at Polperro tonight. They will land at Down End as soon as the tide will let them get near."

Folding this, he once more mounted the window-sill, tossed the paper into the room, lingered for but an instant to see that it was picked up, then jumped down, ran with all speed, and was soon lost amid the darkness which surrounded him.

As he hurried from the house an echo seemed to carry to his ears the shout which greeted this surprise—a surprise which set every one talking at once, each one speaking and no one listening. Some were for going, some for staying away, some for treating it as a serious matter, others for taking it as a joke.

At length the officer called "Silence!" and after a pause, addressing the men present in a few words, he said that however it might turn out he considered that he should only be doing his duty by ordering the boats to proceed to the place named and see what amount of truth there was in this somewhat mysterious manoeuvre. If it was nothing but a hoax they must bear to have

the laugh once more turned against them; but should it turn out the truth! The buzz which greeted this bare supposition showed how favorably his decision was regarded, and the absent men were ordered to be summoned without delay. Everything was got ready as quickly as possible, and in a little over an hour two boats started, fully equipped and manned, to lie in ambush near the coast midway between Looe and Polperro.

While Fate, in the shape of Reuben May, had been hastening events toward a disastrous climax, the course of circumstances in Polperro had not gone altogether smoothly. To Eve's vexation, because of the impossibility of speaking of her late encounter with Reuben May, she found on her return home that during her absence Mrs. Tucker had arrived, with the rare and unappreciated announcement that she had come to stop and have her tea with them. The example set by Mrs. Tucker was followed by an invitation to two or three other elderly friends, so that between her hospitality and her excitement Joan had no opportunity of noticing any undue change in Eve's manner or appearance. Two or three remarks were made on her pale face and abstracted air, but this more by the way of teasing than anything else; while Joan, remembering the suppressed anxiety she was most probably trying to subdue, endeavored to come to her aid and assist in turning away this over-scrutiny of her tell-tale appearance.

The opportunity thus afforded by silence gave time for reflection, and Eve, who had never been quite straightforward

or very explicit about herself and Reuben May, now began to hesitate. Perhaps, after all, it would be better to say nothing, for Joan was certain to ask questions which, without betraying the annoyance she had undergone, Eve hardly saw her way to answering. Again, it was not impossible but that Reuben's anger might relent, and if so he would most probably seek another interview, in which to beg her pardon.

In her heart Eve hoped and believed this would be the case; for, indignantly as she had defied Reuben's scorn and flung back his reproaches, they had been each a separate sting to her, and she longed for the chance to be afforded Reuben of seeing how immeasurably above the general run of men was the one she had chosen.

"Here, I say, Eve!" exclaimed Joan, as she came in-doors from bidding good-bye to the last departure: "come bear a hand and let's set the place all straight: I can't abide the men's coming home to find us all in a muddle."

Eve turned to with a good will, and the girls soon had the satisfaction of seeing the room look as bright and cheery as they desired.

"Let's see—ten minutes past 'leben," said Joan, looking at the clock. "I don't see how 'tis possible for 'em to venture in 'fore wan, 'less 'tis to Yallow Rock, and they'd hardly try that. What do 'ee say, Eve? Shall we run up out to cliff, top o' Talland lane, and see if us can see any signs of 'em?"

"Oh do, Joan!"

And, throwing their cloaks over them, off they set.

"Here, give me your hand," said Joan as they reached the gate and entered upon the path which Eve had last trod with Adam by her side. "I knaw the path better than you, and 'tis a bit narrow for a pitch-dark night like this. Take care: we'm come to the watter. That's right. Now up we goes till we get atop, and then we'll have a good look round us."

Thus instructed, Eve managed to get on, and, stumbling up by Joan's side, they quickly reached the narrow line of level which seemed to overhang the depths below.

"We couldn't see them if they were there," said Eve, turning to Joan, who was still peering into the darkness.

"No, 'tis blacker than I thought," said Joan cheerily: "that's ever so much help to 'em, and—Hooray! the fires is out! Do 'ee see, Eve? There ain't a spark o' nothin' nowheres. Ole Jonathan's hoaxed 'em fine this time: the gawpuses have sooked it all in, and, I'll be bound, raced off so fast as wind and tide 'ud carry 'em."

"Then they're sure to come now?" said Eve excitedly.

"Certain," said Joan. "They've seed the fires put out, and knaw it means the bait's swallowed and the cruiser is off. I shouldn't wonder a bit if they'm close in shore, only waitin' for the tide to give 'em a proper draw o' water, so that they may send the kegs over."

"Should we go on a bit farther," said Eve, "and get down the hill by the Warren stile? We might meet some of 'em, perhaps."

"Better not," said Joan. "To tell 'ee the truth, 'tis best to make

our way home so quick as can, for I wudn't say us 'ull have 'em back quicker than I thought."

"Then let's make haste," exclaimed Eve, giving her hand to Joan, while she turned her head to take a farewell glance in the direction where it was probable the vessel was now waiting. "Oh, Joan! what's that?" For a fiery arrow had seemed to shoot along the darkness, and in quick succession came another and another.

Joan did not answer, but she seemed to catch her breath, and, clutching hold of Eve, she made a spring up on to the wall over which they had before been looking. And now a succession of sharp cracks were heard, then the tongues of fire darted through the air, and again all was gloom.

"O Lord!" groaned Joan, "I hope 'tain't nothin's gone wrong with 'em."

In an instant Eve had scrambled up by her side: "What can it be? what could go wrong, Joan?"

But Joan's whole attention seemed now centred on the opposite cliff, from where, a little below Hard Head, after a few minutes' watching, Eve saw a blue light burning: this was answered by another lower down, then a rocket was sent up, at sight of which Joan clasped her hands and cried, "Awn, 'tis they! 'tis they! Lord save 'em! Lord help 'em! They cursed hounds have surely played 'em false."

"What! not taken them, Joan?"

"They won't be taken," she said fiercely. "Do you think, unless 'twas over their dead bodies, they'd ever let king's men stand

masters on the Lottery's deck?"

Eve's heart died within her, and with one rush every detail of the lawless life seemed to come before her.

"There they go again!" cried Joan; and this time, by the sound, she knew their position was altered to the westward and somewhat nearer to land. "Lord send they mayn't knaw their course!" she continued: "'tis but a point or two on, and they'll surely touch the Steeple Reef.—Awh, you blidthirsty cowards! I wish I'd the pitchin' of every man of 'ee overboards: 'tis precious little mercy you'd get from me. And the blessed sawls to be caught in yer snarin' traps close into home, anighst their very doors, too!—Eve, I must go and see what they means to do for 'em. They'll never suffer to see 'em butchered whilst there's a man in Polperro to go out and help 'em."

Forgetting in her terror all the difficulties she had before seen in the path, Eve managed to keep up with Joan, whose flying footsteps never stayed until she found herself in front of a long building close under shelter of the Peak which had been named as a sort of assembling-place in case of danger.

"'Tis they?" Joan called out in breathless agony, pushing her way through the crowd of men now hastening up from all directions toward the captain of the Cleopatra.

"I'm feared so;" and his grave face bespoke how fraught with anxiety his fears were.

"What can it be, d'ee think?"

"Can't tell noways. They who brought us word saw the Hart

sail, and steady watch has been kept up, so that us knaws her ain't back."

"You manes to do somethin' for 'em?" said Joan.

"Never fear but us'll do what us can, though that's mighty little, I can tell 'ee, Joan."

Joan gave an impatient groan. Her thorough comprehension of their danger and its possible consequences lent activity to her distress, while Eve, with nothing more tangible than the knowledge that a terrible danger was near, seemed the prey to indefinite horrors which took away from her every sense but the sense of suffering.

By this time the whole place was astir, people running to this point and that, asking questions, listening to rumors, hazarding a hundred conjectures, each more wild than the other. A couple of boats had been manned, ready to row round by the cliff. One party had gone toward the Warren, another to Yellow Rock. All were filled with the keenest desire not only to aid their comrades, but to be revenged on those who had snared them into this cunningly-devised pitfall. But amid all this zeal arose the question, What could they do?

Absolutely nothing, for by this time the firing had ceased, the contest was apparently over, and around them impenetrable darkness again reigned supreme. To show any lights by which some point of land should be discovered might only serve as a beacon to the enemy. To send out a boat might be to run it into their very jaws, for surely, were assistance needed, those on

board the Lottery would know that by this time trusty friends were anxiously watching, waiting for but the slightest signal to be given to risk life and limb in their service.

The wisest thing to be done was to put everything in order for a sudden call, and then sit down and patiently abide the result. This decision being put into effect, the excited crowd began to thin, and before long, with the exception of those who could render assistance, very few lookers-on remained. Joan had lingered till the last, and then, urged by the possibility that many of her house-comforts might be needed, she hurried home to join Eve, who had gone before her.

With their minds running upon all the varied accidents of a fight, the girls, without exchanging a word of their separate fears, got ready what each fancied might prove the best remedy, until, nothing more being left to do, they sat down, one on each side of the fire, and counted the minutes by which time dragged out this weary watching into hours.

"Couldn't 'ee say a few hymns or somethin', Eve?" Joan said at length, with a hope of breaking this dreadful monotony.

Eve shook her head.

"No?" said Joan disappointedly. "I thought you might ha' knowed o' some." Then, after another pause, struck by a happier suggestion, she said, "S'pose us was to get down the big Bible and read a bit, eh? What do 'ee say?"

But Eve only shook her head again. "No," she said, in a hard, dry voice: "I couldn't read the Bible now."

"Couldn't 'ee?" sighed Joan. "Then, after all, it don't seem that religion and that's much of a comfort. By what I'd heard," she added, "I thought 'twas made o' purpose for folks to lay hold on in times o' trouble."

CHAPTER XXVII

It was close upon three o'clock: Joan had fallen into an uneasy doze and Eve was beginning to nod, when a rattle of the latch made them both start up.

"It can't be! Iss, it is, though!" screamed Joan, rushing forward to meet Adam, who caught both the girls in a close embrace.

"Uncle? uncle?" Joan cried.

"All safe," said Adam, releasing her while he strained Eve closer to his heart. "We're all back safe and sound, and, saving Tom Braddon and Israel Rickard, without a scratch 'pon any of us."

"Thank God!" sighed Eve, while Joan, verily jumping for joy, cried, "But where be they to, eh, Adam? I must rin, wherever 'tis, and see 'em, and make sure of it with my awn eyes."

"I left them down to quay with the rest: they're all together there," said Adam, unwilling to lose the opportunity of securing a few minutes alone with Eve, and yet unable to command his voice so that it should sound in its ordinary tone.

The jar in it caught Joan's quick ear, and, turning, she said, "Why, whatever have 'ee bin about, then? What's the manin' of it all? Did they play 'ee false, or how?"

Adam gave a puzzled shake of the head. "You know quite as much about it as I do," he said. "We started, and got on fair and right enough so far as Down End, and I was for at once dropping

out the kegs, as had been agreed upon to do, at Sandy Bottom—"

"Well?" said Joan.

"Yes, 'twould ha' been well if we'd done it. Instead of which, no sooner was the fires seen to be out—meaning, as all thought, that the Hart was safe off—than nothing would do but we must go on to Yellow Rock, which meant waiting for over an hour till the tide served for it."

"But you never gived in to 'em, Adam?"

"Gived in?" he repeated bitterly. "After Jerrem had once put the thought into their heads you might so well have tried to turn stone walls as get either one to lay a finger on anything. They wanted to know what was the good o' taking the trouble to sink the kegs overboard when by just waitin' we could store all safe in the caves along there, under cliff."

"Most half drunk, I s'pose?" said Joan.

"By Jove! then they'd pretty soon something to make 'em sober," replied Adam grimly; "for in little more than half an hour we spied the two boats comin' up behind us, and 'fore they was well caught sight of they'd opened out fire."

"And had 'ee got to return it?" asked Joan.

"Not till they were close up we didn't, and then I b'lieve the sight of us would have been enough; only, as usual, Mr. Jerrem must be on the contrary, and let fly a shot that knocked down the bow-oar of the foremost boat like a nine-pin. That got up their blood a bit, and then at it our chaps went, tooth and nail—such a scrimmage as hasn't been seen hereabouts since the Happy-go-

Lucky was took and Welland shot in her."

"Lord save us! However did 'ee manage to get off so well?" said Joan.

"Get off?" he said. "Why, we could have made a clean sweep of the whole lot, and all the cry against me now is that I kept 'em from doing it. The fools! not to see that our best chance is to do nothing more than defend ourselves, and not run our necks into a noose by taking life while there's any help for it!"

"Was the man shot dead that Jerrem fired at?" asked Eve.

"No, I hope not; or, if so, we haven't heard the last of it, for, depend on it, this new officer, Buller, he's an ugly customer to deal with, and won't take things quite so easy as old Ravens used to do."

"You'll be faintin' for somethin' to eat," said Joan, moving toward the kitchen.

"No, I ain't," said Adam, laying a detaining hand upon her. "I couldn't touch a thing: I want to be a bit quiet, that's all. My head seems all of a miz-maze like."

"Then I'll just run down and see uncle," said Joan, "and try and persuade un to come home alongs, shall I?"

Adam gave an expressive movement of his face. "You can try," he said, "but you haven't got much chance o' bringin' him, poor old chap! He thinks, like the rest of 'em, that they've done a fine night's work, and they must keep it up by drinking to blood and glory. I only hope it may end there, but if it doesn't, whatever comes, Jerrem's the one who's got to answer for it all."

While he was saying these words Adam was pulling off his jacket, and now went to the kitchen to find some water with which to remove the black and dirt from his begrimed face and hands.

Eve hastened to assist him, but not before Joan had managed, by laying her finger on her lip, to attract her attention. "For goodness gracious' sake," she whispered, "don't 'ee brathe no word 'bout the letter to un: there'd be worse than murder 'twixt 'em now."

Eve nodded an assurance of silence, and, opening the door, Joan went out into the street, already alive with people, most of them bent on the same errand as herself, anxious to hear the incidents of the fight confirmed by the testimony of the principal actors.

The gathering-point was the sail-house behind the Peak, and thither, in company with several friends, Joan made her way, and soon found herself hailed with delight by Uncle Zebedee and Jerrem, both of whom were by this time primed up to giving the most extraordinary and vivid accounts of the fight, every detail of which was entirely corroborated by those who had been present and those who had been absent; for the constant demand made on the keg of spirits which, in honor of the *victory*, old Zebedee had insisted on having broached there, was beginning to take effect, so that the greater portion of the listeners were now turned into talkers, and thus it was impossible to tell those who had seen from those who had heard; and the wrangling, laughter, disputes

and congratulations made such a hubbub of confusion that the room seemed for the time turned into a very pandemonium.

Only one thing all gave hearty assent to: that was that Jerrem was the hero on whom the merit of triumph rested, for if he hadn't fired that first shot ten to one but they should have listened to somebody whom, in deference to Zebedee, they refrained from naming, and indicated by a nod in his direction, and let the white-livered scoundrels sneak off with the boast that the Polperro men were afraid to give fight to them. Afraid! Why, they were afraid of nothing, not they! They'd give chase to the Hart, board the Looe cutter, swamp the boats, and utterly rout and destroy the whole excise department: the more bloodthirsty the resolution proposed, the louder was it greeted.

The spirit of lawless riot seemed suddenly let loose among them, and men who were usually kind-hearted and—after their rough fashion—tenderly-disposed seemed turned into devils whose delight was in violence and whose pleasure was excess.

While this revelry was growing more fast and furious below Adam was still sitting quietly at home, with Eve by his side using her every art to dispel the gloom by which her lover's spirits were clouded—not so much on account of the recent fight, for Adam apprehended no such great score of danger on that head. It was true that of late such frays had been of rare occurrence, yet many had taken place before, and with disastrous results, and yet the chief actors in them still lived to tell the tale; so that it was not altogether that which disturbed him, although it greatly added

to his former moodiness, which had originally sprung out of the growing distaste to the life he led.

The inaction of the time spent in dodging about, with nothing to occupy him, nothing to interest him, had turned Adam's thoughts inward, and made him determine to have done with these ventures, in which, except as far as the gain went, he really had nothing in common with the companions who took part in them. But, as he very well knew, it was far easier to take this resolution in thought than it was to put it into action. Once let the idea of his leaving them get abroad, and difficulties would confront him whichever way he turned: obstacles would block his path and suspicion dodge his footsteps.

His comrades, though not very far-seeing men, were quite sharp enough to estimate the danger of losing sight of one who was in possession of all their secrets, and who could at any moment lay his finger upon every hiding-place in their district.

Adam himself had often listened to—and, in company with others, silently commended—a story told of years gone by, when a brother of the owner of the Stamp and Go, one Herkles Johns, had been pressed into the king's service, and had there acquitted himself so gallantly that on his return a commission had been offered to him, which he, longing to take, accepted under condition of getting leave to see his native place again. With the foreboding that the change of circumstances would not be well received, he seized the opportunity occasioned by the joy of his return to speak of the commission as a reward offered to

him, and asked the advice of those around as to whether he had not best accept it. Opposition met him on every side. "What!" they said, "of his own free will put himself in a place where some day he might be forced to seize his father's vessel or swear away the lives of those he had been born among?" The bare idea was inadmissible; and when, from asking advice, he grew into giving his opinion, and finally into announcing his decision, an ominous silence fell on those who heard him; and, though he was unmolested during his stay, and permitted to leave his former home, he was never known to reach his ship, aboard which his mysterious disappearance was much talked of, and inquiries set afloat to find out the reason of his absence; but among those whose name he bore, and whose confidence he had shared, he seemed to be utterly forgotten. His name was never mentioned nor his fate inquired into; and Adam, remembering that he had seen the justice of this treatment, felt the full force of its reasoning now applied to his own case, and his heart sank before the difficulties in which he found himself entangled.

Even to Eve he could not open out his mind clearly, for, unless to one born and bred among them, the dangers and interests of the free-traders were matters quite beyond comprehension; so that now, when Eve was pleading, with all her powers of persuasion, that for her sake Adam would give up this life of reckless daring, the seemingly deaf ear he turned to her entreaties was dulled through perplexity, and not, as she believed, from obstinacy.

Eve, in her turn, could not be thoroughly explicit. There was a skeleton cupboard, the key of which she was hiding from Adam's sight; for it was not entirely "for her sake" she desired him to abandon his present occupation: it was because, in the anxiety she had recently undergone, in the terror which had been forced upon her, the glaze of security had been roughly dispelled, and the life in all its lawlessness and violence had stood forth before her. The warnings and denunciations which only a few hours before, when Reuben May had uttered them, she had laughed to scorn as idle words, now rang in her ears like a fatal knell: the rope he had said would hang them all was then a sieve of unsown hemp, since sprung up, and now the fatal cord which dangled dangerously near.

The secret thoughts of each fell like a shadow between them: an invisible hand seemed to thrust them asunder, and, in spite of the love they both felt, both were equally conscious of a want of that entire sympathy which is the keystone to perfect union.

"You *were* very glad to see me come back to you, Eve?" Adam asked, as, tired of waiting for Joan, Eve at length decided to sit up no longer.

"Glad, Adam? Why do you ask?"

"I can't tell," he said, "I s'pose it's this confounded upset of everything that makes me feel as I do feel—as if," he added, passing his hand over his forehead, "I hadn't a bit of trust or hope or comfort in anything in the world."

"I know exactly," said Eve. "That's just as I felt when we were

waiting for you to come back. Joan asked if we should read the Bible, but I said no, I couldn't: I felt too wicked for that."

"Wicked?" said Adam. "Why, what should make you feel wicked?"

Eve hesitated. Should she unburden her heart and confess to him all the fears and scruples which made it feel so heavy and ill at ease? A moment's indecision, and the opportunity lost, she said in a dejected tone, "Oh, I cannot tell; only that I suppose such thoughts come to all of us sometimes."

Adam looked at her, but Eve's eyes were averted; and, seeing how pale and troubled was the expression on her face, he said, "You are over-tired: all this turmoil has been too much for you. Go off now and try to get some sleep. Yes, don't stay up longer," he added, seeing that she hesitated. "I shall be glad of some rest myself, and to-morrow we shall find things looking better than they seem to do now."

Once alone, Adam reseated himself and sat gazing abstractedly into the fire: then with an effort he seemed to try and shake his senses together, to step out of himself and put his mind into a working order of thought, so that he might weigh and sift the occurrences of these recent events.

The first question which had flashed into everybody's mind was, What had led to this sudden attack? Had they been betrayed? and if so, Who had betrayed them? Could it be Jonathan? Though the thought was at once negatived, no other outsider knew of their intended movements. Of course the matter

had been discussed—as all matters were discussed and voted for or against—among the crew; but to doubt either of them was to doubt one's self, and any fear of betrayal among themselves was unknown. The amount of baseness such a suspicion would imply was too great to be incurred even in thought. What, then, could have led to this surprise? Had their movements been watched, and this decoy of the cutter only swallowed with the view of throwing them off their guard?

Adam was lost in speculation, from which he was aroused by the door being softly opened and Joan coming in. "Why, Adam, I thought to find 'ee in bed," she said. "Come, now, you must be dreadful tired." Then, sitting down to loosen her hood, she added with a sigh, "I stayed down there so long as I could, till I saw 'twasn't no good, so I comed away home and left 'em. 'Tis best way, I b'lieve."

"I knew 'twas no good your going," said Adam hopelessly. "I saw before I left 'em what they'd made up their minds to."

"Well, perhaps there's a little excuse this time," said Joan, not willing to blame those who were so dear to her; "but, Adam," she broke out, while her face bespoke her keen appreciation of his superiority, "why can't th' others be like you, awh, my dear? How different things 'ud be if they only was!"

Adam shook his head. "Oh, don't wish 'em like me," he said. "I often wish I could take my pleasure in the same things and in the same way that they do: I should be much happier, I b'lieve."

"No, now, don't 'ee say that."

"Why, what good has it done that I'm otherwise?"

"Why, ever so much—more than you'll ever know, by a good bit. I needn't go no further than my awnself to tell 'ee that. P'r'aps you mayn't think it, but I've bin kep' fra doin' ever so many things by the thought o' 'What'll Adam say?' and with the glass in my hand I've set it down untasted, thinkin' to myself, 'Now you'm actin' agen Adam's wish, you knaw.'"

Adam smiled as he gave her a little shake of the hand.

"That's how 'tis, you see," she continued: "you'm doin' good without knawin' of it." Then, turning her dark eyes wistfully upon him, she asked, "Do 'ee ever think a bit 'pon poor Joan while you'm away, Adam? Come, now, you mustn't shove off from me altogether, you knaw: you must leave me a dinkey little corner to squeeze into by."

Adam clasped her hand tighter. "Oh, Joan," he said, "I'd give the whole world to see my way clearer than I do now: I often wish that I could take you all off to some place far away and begin life over again."

"Awh!" said Joan in a tone of sympathy to which her heart did not very cordially respond, "that 'ud be a capital job, that would; but you ain't manin' away from Polperro?"

"Yes, far away. I've bin thinkin' about it for a good bit: don't you remember I said something o' the sort to father a little time back?"

"Iss, but I didn't knaw there was any more sense to your words than to threaten un, like. Awh, my dear!" she said with a decided

shake of the head, "that 'ud never do: don't 'ee get hold o' such a thought as that. Turn your back upon the place? Why, whatever 'ud they be about to let 'ee do it?"

Joan's words only echoed Adam's own thoughts: still, he tried to combat them by saying, "I don't see why any one should try to interfere with what I might choose to do: what odds could it make to them?"

"Odds?" repeated Joan. "Why, you'd hold all their lives in your wan hand. Only ax yourself the question, Where's either one of 'em you'd like to see take hisself off nobody knows why or where?"

Adam could find no satisfactory reply to this argument: he therefore changed the subject by saying, "I wish I could fathom this last business. 'Tis a good deal out o' the course o' plain sailing. So far as I know by, there wasn't a living soul but Jonathan who could have said what was up for to-night."

"Jonathan's right enough," said Joan decidedly. "I should feel a good deal more mistrust 'bout some of 'em lettin' their tongues rin too fast."

"There was nobody to let them run fast to," said Adam.

"Then there's the writin'," said Joan, trying to discover if Adam knew anything about Jerrem's letter.

Adam shook his head. "'Tisn't nothing o' that sort," he said. "I don't know that, beyond Jerrem and me, either o' the others know how to write; and I said particular that I should send no word by speech or letter, and the rest must do the same; and Jonathan

would ha' told me if they'd broke through in any way, for I put the question to him 'fore he shoved off."

"Oh, did 'ee?" said Joan, turning her eyes away, while into her heart there crept a suspicion of Jonathan's perfect honesty. Was it possible that his love of money might have led him to betray his old friends? Joan's fears were aroused. "'Tis a poor job of it," she said, anxiously. "I wish to goodness 't had happened to any o' the rest, so long as you and uncle was out of it."

"And not Jerrem?" said Adam, with a feeble attempt at his old teasing.

"Awh, Jerrem's sure to fall 'pon his feet, throw un which way you will," said Joan. "Besides, if he didn't"—and she turned a look of reproach on Adam—"Jerrem ain't you, Adam, nor uncle neither. I don't deny that I don't love Jerrem dearly, 'cos I do"—and for an instant her voice seemed to wrestle with the rush of tears which streamed from her eyes as she sobbed—"but for you or uncle, why, I'd shed my heart's blood like watter—iss that I would, and not think 'twas any such great thing, neither."

"There's no need to tell me that," said Adam, whose heart, softened by his love for Eve, had grown very tender toward Joan. "Nobody knows you better than I do. There isn't another woman in the whole world I'd trust with the things I'd trust you with, Joan."

"There's a dear!" said Joan, recovering herself. "It does me good to hear 'ee spake like that. 'Tis such a time since I had a word with 'ee that I began to feel I don't know how-wise."

"Well, yes," said Adam, smiling, "'tis a bravish spell since you and me were together by our own two selves. But I declare your talk's done me more good than anything I've had to-day. I feel ever so much better now than I did before."

Joan was about to answer, when a sound made them both start and stand for a moment listening.

"'Tis gone, whatever it was," said Adam, taking a step forward. "I don't hear nothing now, do you?"

Joan pushed back the door leading to the stairs. "No," she said: "I reckon 'twas nothin' but the boards. Howiver, 'tis time I went, or I shall be wakin' up Eve. Her's a poor sleeper in general, but, what with wan thing and 'nother, I 'spects her's reg'lar wornout, poor sawl! to-night."

CHAPTER XXVIII

Wornout and tired as she felt when she went up stairs, Eve's mind was so excited by the day's adventures that she found it impossible to lull her sharpened senses into anything like repose, and after hearing Joan come in she lay tossing and restless, wondering why it was she did not come up, and what could possibly be the cause of her stopping so long below.

As time went on her impatience grew into anxiety, which in its turn became suspicion, until, unable longer to restrain herself, she got up, and, after listening with some evident surprise at the stair-head, cautiously stole down the stairs and peeped, through the chink left by the ill-fitting hinge of the door, into the room.

"There isn't another woman in the whole world I'd trust with the things I'd trust you with, Joan," Adam was saying. Eve bent a trifle farther forward. "You've done me more good than anything I've had to-day. I feel ever so much better now than I did before."

An involuntary movement, giving a different balance to her position, made the stairs creak, and to avoid detection Eve had to make a hasty retreat and hurry back, so that when Joan came up stairs it was to find her apparently in such a profound sleep that there was little reason to fear any sound she might make would arouse her; but long after Joan had sunk to rest, and even Adam had forgotten his troubles and anxieties, Eve nourished and fed the canker of jealousy which had crept into her heart—a jealousy

not directed toward Joan, but turned upon Adam for recalling to her mind that old grievance of not giving her his full trust.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.