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## HINDOO AND MOSLEM.

BY EDWIN LORD WEEKS.

### I.

FROM the earliest period of which any historic record has survived, when the Vedic literature first took shape, through the following ages which saw the rise and fall of Buddhism, the final triumph of the Brahminic faith, and the successive Mohammedan invasions, down to the present day, India has been the battle-ground of antagonistic creeds. The first followers of the Prophet found a country which had long enjoyed an advanced stage of civilization and culture, but which, divided into many states and harassed by internecine dissensions, was unable to oppose an effectual barrier to their progress. When the flood of Mussulman conquest, stamping out on its way the worshippers of fire, and pouring down through the passes on the north, had spread over the Punjab; a dynasty of Mohammedan kings succeeded the Hindoo monarchs of Delhi, and prepared the ground in a manner for the formation of the great Mogul Empire. From the writings and memoirs of Bernier, Sir Thomas Roe, and other early travellers, and aided by the study and inspection of the numerous existing remains and monuments of that epoch, we may form some idea of its pomp and luxury, unparalleled in modern times, and recalling in many features the splendor of the ancient monarchies of the Euphrates Valley. This last great period of Mussulman ascendancy, beginning with the reign of the Emperor Baber, the so-called founder of the Empire of the Moguls, the contemporary of Suleyman the Magnificent and François I., and extending into the following century when Shah Abbas reigned at Ispahan, and European travellers returning from Persia told marvellous tales of its sumptuous court, culminated in the

reign of Shah Jehan at Delhi and Agra. Previous to the foundation of this empire, the occasional inroads of the Moguls are stated by Elphinstone to have been "the greatest calamity that had fallen on mankind since the Deluge, as they had no religion to teach, no seeds of improvements to sow, nor did they offer an alternative of conversion or tribute." One invasion followed another from Genghis Khan to Tamerlane, until the advent of Baber, the first of the Tartar monarchs, who began his reign in 1526. He is now believed to have been "the most admirable, though not the most powerful, prince that ever reigned in Asia." With great administrative capacity, he was at the same time a soldier and an athlete, a scholar and a poet.

With Shah Jehan the Mogul power may be said to have reached its climax. After Aurungzebe the decadence began, and the invasion of the Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah, gave it a blow from which it never recovered. Then followed the rise of the Sikh confederacy, and the ascendancy of the Mahrattas.

During all this time nothing approaching a complete fusion of the two races, a blending of the Hindoo and Moslem elements, has taken place, but in many respects the ways and customs of each have been more or less modified by the intimacy and contact of daily life, so that it is not always easy to distinguish the one from the other by any outward sign. Even in the matter of religious observances the lines of demarcation have been somewhat softened, and, to quote from Mr. Baines\* and the illustrations which he gives: "In many instances where the two forms of faith exist more

\* J. A. Baines, Census Commissioner for India, 1891.

## AT THE SIGN OF THE BALSAM BOUGH.

BY HENRY VAN DYKE.

IT has been asserted on high philosophical authority that woman is a problem. She is more: she is a cause of problems to others. This is not a theoretical statement. It is a fact of experience.

Every year, when the sun passes the summer solstice, the

"Two souls with but a single thought,"

of whom I am so fortunate as to be one, are summoned by that portion of our united mind which has at once the right of putting the question and of casting the deciding vote, to answer this conundrum: How can we go abroad without crossing the ocean, and abandon an interesting family of children without getting completely beyond their reach, and escape from the frying-pan of housekeeping without falling into the fire of the summer hotel? This apparently insoluble question we usually solve by going to camp in Canada.

It is indeed a foreign air that breathes around us as we make the harmless, friendly voyage from Point Levis to Quebec. The boy on the ferry-boat who cajoles us into buying a copy of *Le Moniteur*, containing last month's news, has the address of a true though diminutive Frenchman. The landlord of the quiet little inn on the outskirts of the town welcomes us with Gallic effusion as well-known guests, and rubs his hands genially before us while he escorts us to our apartments, groping secretly in his memory to recall our names. When we walk down the steep quaint streets to revel in the purchase of moccasins and water-proof coats and camping supplies, we read on a wall the familiar but transformed legend, *L'enfant pleurs, il veut son Camphoria*, and recognize with joy the truth that no infant who weeps in French can impose any responsibility upon us in these days of our renewed honey-moon.

But the true delight of the expedition begins when the tents have been set up in the forest back of Lake St. John, and the green branches have been broken for the woodland bed, and the fire has been lit under the open sky, and, the livery of fashion being all discarded, I sit down at a log table to eat supper with my lady Greygown. Then life seems simple and

amiable and well worth living. Then the uproar and confusion of the world die away from us, and we hear only the steady murmur of the river and the low voice of the wind in the tree-tops. Then time is long, and the only art that is needful for its enjoyment is short and easy. Then we taste true comfort, while we lodge with Mother Green at the Sign of the Balsam Bough.

### I.—UNDER THE WHITE BIRCHES.

Men may say what they will in praise of their houses, and grow eloquent upon the merits of various styles of architecture, but, for our part, we are agreed that there is nothing to be compared with a tent. It is the most venerable and aristocratic form of human habitation. Abraham and Sarah lived in it, and shared its hospitality with angels. It is exempt from the base tyranny of the plumber, the paper-hanger, and the gas-man. It is not immovably bound to one dull spot of earth by the chains of a cellar and a system of iron pipes. It has a noble freedom of locomotion. It follows the wishes of its inhabitants, and goes with them, a travelling home, as the spirit moves them to explore the wilderness. At their pleasure new beds of wild flowers surround it, new plantations of trees overshadow it, and new avenues of shining water lead to its ever-open door. What the tent lacks in luxury it makes up in liberty; or rather let us say that liberty itself is the greatest luxury.

Another thing is worth remembering—a family which lives in a tent never can have a skeleton in the closet.

But it must not be supposed that every spot in the woods is suitable for a camp, or that a good tenting-ground can be chosen without knowledge and forethought. One of the requisites, indeed, is to be found everywhere in the St. John region; for all the lakes and rivers are full of clear cool water, and the traveller does not need to search for a spring. But it is always necessary to look carefully for a bit of smooth ground on the shore, far enough above the water to be dry, and slightly sloping, so that the head of the bed may be higher than the foot. Above all, it must be free from big stones



"THE LIVERY OF FASHION BEING ALL DISCARDED."

and serpentine roots of trees. A root that looks no bigger than an inch-worm in the daytime assumes the proportions of a boa-constrictor at midnight—when you find it under your hip-bone. There should also be plenty of evergreens near at hand for the beds. Spruce will answer at a pinch; it has an aromatic smell; but it is too stiff and humpy. Hemlock is smoother and more flexible; but the spring soon wears out of it. The balsam-fir, with its elastic branches and thick flat needles, is the best of all. A bed of these boughs a foot deep is softer than a mattress and as fragrant as a thousand Christmas-trees.

Two things more are needed for the ideal camp-ground—an open situation, where the breeze will drive away the flies and mosquitoes, and an abundance of dry firewood within easy reach. Yes, and a third thing must not be forgotten; for, says my lady Greygown,

"I shouldn't feel at home in camp unless I could sit in the door of the tent and look out across flowing water."

All these conditions are met in our favorite camping-place below the first fall in the Grande Décharge. A rocky point juts out into the river and makes a fine landing for the canoes. There is a dis-

mantled fishing-cabin a few rods back in the woods, from which we can borrow boards for a table and chairs. A group of cedars on the lower edge of the point opens just wide enough to receive and shelter our tent. At a good distance beyond ours the guides' tent is pitched, and the big camp-fire burns between the two dwellings. A pair of white birches lift their leafy crowns far above us, and after them we name the place *Le Camp aux Bouleaux*.

"Why not call trees people?—since, if you come to live among them year after year, you will learn to know many of them personally, and an attachment will grow up between you and them individually." So writes that *Doctor Amabilis* of woodcraft, W. C. Prime, in his book *Among the Northern Hills*, and straightway launches forth into eulogy of the white birch. And truly it is an admirable, lovable, and comfortable tree, beautiful to look upon and full of various uses. Its wood is strong to make paddles and axe-handles, and glorious to burn, blazing up at first with a flashing flame, and then holding the fire in its glowing heart all through the night. Its bark is the most serviceable of all the products of the wilderness. In Russia, they say, it is used in tanning, and gives its subtle, sacerdotal fragrance to Russia-leather. But here, in the woods, it serves more primitive ends. It can be peeled off in a huge roll from some giant tree and fashioned into a swift canoe to carry man over the waters. It can be cut into square sheets to roof his shanty in the forest. It is the paper on which he writes his woodland despatches, and the flexible material which he bends into drinking-cups of silver lined with gold. A thin strip of it wrapped around the end of a candle and fastened in a cleft stick makes a practicable chandelier. A basket for berries, a horn to call the lovelorn moose through the autumnal woods, a canvas on which to draw the outline of great and memorable fish—all these and many other indispensable luxuries are stored up for the skilful woodsman in birch bark.

Only do not rob or mar the tree unless you really need what it has to give you. Let it stand and grow in virgin majesty, ungirdled and unscarred, while the trunk becomes a firm pillar of the forest temple, and the branches spread abroad a refuge of bright green leaves for the birds

of the air. Nature never made a more excellent piece of handiwork. "And if," said my lady Greygown, "I should ever become a dryad, I would choose to be transformed into a white birch. And then, when the days of my life were numbered, and the sap had ceased to flow, and the last leaf had fallen, and the dry bark hung around me in ragged curls and streamers, some wandering hunter would come in the wintry night and touch a lighted coal to my body, and my spirit would flash up in a fiery chariot into the sky."

The chief occupation of our idle days on the Grande Décharge was fishing. Above the camp spread a noble pool, more than two miles in circumference, and diversified with smooth bays and whirling eddies, sand beaches and rocky islands. The river poured into it at the head, foaming and raging down a long chute, and swept out of it just in front of our camp in a merry, musical rapid. It was full of fish of various kinds—long-nosed pickerel, wall-eyed pike, and stupid chub. But the prince of the pool was the fighting ouananiche, the little salmon of St. John.

Here let me chant thy praise, thou noblest and most high-minded fish, the cleanest feeder, the merriest liver, the loftiest leaper, and the bravest warrior of all creatures that swim! Thy cousin, the trout, in his purple and gold with crimson spots, wears a more splendid armor than thy russet and silver mottled with black, but thine is the kinglier nature. His courage and skill compared with thine

"Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine."

The old salmon of the sea who begot thee, long ago, in these inland waters, became a backslider, descending again to the ocean, and grew gross and heavy with coarse feeding. But thou, unsalted salmon of the foaming floods, not landlocked, as men call thee, but choosing of thine own free will to dwell on a loftier level, in the pure, swift current of a living stream, hast grown in grace and risen to a better life. Thou art not to be measured by quantity, but by quality, and thy five pounds of pure vigor will outweigh a score of pounds of flesh less vitalized by spirit. Thou feedest on the flies of the air, and thy food is transformed into an aerial passion for flight, as thou springest across the

pool, vaulting towards the sky. Thine eyes have grown large and keen by peering through the foam, and the feathered hook that can deceive thee must be deftly tied and delicately cast. Thy tail and fins, by ceaseless conflict with the rapids, have broadened and strengthened, so that they can flash thy slender body like a living arrow up the fall. As Lancelot among the knights, so art thou among the fish, the plain-armored hero, the sunburnt champion of all the water-folk.

Every morning and evening Greygown and I would go out for ouananiche, and sometimes we caught plenty and sometimes few, but we never came back without a good catch of happiness. There were certain places where the fish liked to stay. For example, we always looked for one at the lower corner of a big rock, very close to it, where he could poise himself easily on the edge of the strong downward stream. Another likely place was a straight run of water, swift, but not too swift, with a sunken stone in the middle. The ouananiche does not like crooked, twisting water. An even current is far more comfortable, for then he discovers just how much effort is needed to balance against it, and keeps up the movement mechanically, as if he were half asleep. But his favorite place is under one of the floating islands of thick foam that gather in the corners below the falls. The matted flakes give a grateful shelter from the sun, I fancy, and almost all game-fish love to lie in the shade; but the chief reason why the ouananiche haunts the drifting white mass is because it is full of flies and gnats, beaten down by the spray of the cataract, and sprinkled all through the foam like plums in a cake. To this natural confection the little salmon lurking in his corner plays the part of Jack Horner all day long, and never wearies.

"See that *belle brou* down below there!" said Ferdinand, as we scrambled

over the huge rocks at the foot of the falls; "there ought to be salmon there *en masse*." Yes, there were the sharp noses picking out the unfortunate insects, and the broad tails waving lazily through the foam as the fish turned in the water. At this season of the year, when summer is nearly ended, and every ouananiche in the Grande Décharge has tasted feathers



THE LUXURY OF A FRENCH COOK.

and seen a hook, it is useless to attempt to delude them with the large gaudy flies which the fishing-tackle-maker recommends. There are only two successful methods of angling now. The first of these I tried, and by casting delicately with a tiny brown trout-fly tied on a gossamer strand of gut, captured a pair of fish weighing about three pounds each. They fought against the spring of the four-ounce rod for nearly half an hour before Ferdinand could slip the net around them. But there was another and a broader tail still waving disdainfully on the outer edge of the foam. "And now," said the gallant Ferdinand, "the turn is to madame, that she should prove her fortune. Attend but a moment, madame, while I seek the *sauterelle*."

This was the second method: The grasshopper was attached to the hook, and casting the line well out across the pool, Ferdinand put the rod into Greygown's hands. She stood poised upon a pinnacle of rock, like patience on a monument, waiting for a bite. It came. There was a slow, gentle pull at the line, answered by a quick jerk of the rod, and a noble fish flashed into the air. Four pounds and a half at least! He leaped again and again, shaking the drops from his silvery sides. He rushed up the rapids as if he had determined to return to the lake, and down again as if he had changed his plans and determined to go to the Saguenay. He sulked in the deep water and rubbed his nose against the rocks. He did his best to treat that treacherous grasshopper as the whale

served Jonah. But Greygown, through all her little screams and shouts of excitement, was steady and sage. She never gave the fish an inch of slack line; and at last he lay glittering on the rocks, with the black St. Andrew's crosses clearly marked on his plump sides, and the iridescent spots gleaming on his small, shapely head. "*Une belle!*" said Ferdinand, approvingly, as he administered the *coup de grâce* with the handle of the net, "and it is madame who has the good fortune. She understands well to take the large fish—is it not?" Greygown stepped demurely down from her pinnacle, and as we drifted down the pool in the canoe, under the mellow evening sky, her conversation betrayed not a trace of the pride that a victorious fisherman would have shown. On the contrary, she

insisted that angling was an affair of chance—which was consoling, though I knew it was not altogether true—and that the smaller fish were as pleasant to catch, and better to eat, after all. For a generous rival commend me to a woman. And if I must compete let it be with one who has the grace to dissolve the bitter of defeat in the honey of a mutual self-congratulation.

We had a garden, and our favorite path through it was the portage leading around the falls. We travelled it very frequently, making an excuse of idle errands to the steamboat-landing on the lake, and sauntering along the trail as if school were out and would never keep again. It was the season of fruits. Nature was reducing the decorations of her table to make room for the banquet. She offered us berries instead of blossoms.

There were the light coral clusters of the dwarf cornel set in whorls of pointed leaves; and the deep blue balls of the



THE CAMP ON THE ISLAND.

*Clintonia borealis* (which the White Mountain people call the bear-berry, and I hope the name will stick, for it smacks of the woods, and it is a shame to leave so free and wild a plant under the burden of a Latin name); and the gray, crimson-veined berries for which the Canada May-flower had exchanged its feathery white bloom; and the ruby drops of the twisted-stalk hanging like jewels along its bending stem. On the three-leaved table which once carried the gay flower of the wake-robin there was a scarlet lump like a red pepper escaped to the forest and run wild. The partridge-vine was full of rosy provision for the birds. The dark tiny leaves of the creeping

snowberry were all sprinkled over with delicate drops of spicy foam. There were a few belated raspberries, and, if we chose to go out into the burnt ground, we could find blueberries in plenty.

But there was still bloom enough to give that festal air without which the most abundant feast seems coarse and vulgar. The pale gold of the loosestrife had faded, but the deeper yellow of the golden-rod had begun to take its place. The blue banners of the fleur-de-lis had not quite vanished from beside the springs, and the purple of the asters was appearing. Closed gentians kept their secret inviolate, and bluebells trembled above the rocks. The quaint pinkish-white flowers of the turtle-head showed in wet places, and instead of the lilac racemes of the purple-fringed orchis, which had disappeared with midsummer, we found now the slender braided spikes of the lady's-tresses, latest and lowliest of the orchids, pale and pure as nuns of the forest, and exhaling a celestial fragrance. There is a secret pleasure in finding these delicate flowers in the rough heart of the wilderness. It is like discovering the veins of poetry in the character of a guide or a lumberman. And to be able to call the plants by name makes them a hundredfold more sweet and intimate. Nam-



SEATED ON BUNDLES OF CAMP EQUIPAGE.

ing things is one of the oldest and simplest of human pastimes. Children play at it with their dolls and toy animals. In fact, it was the first game ever played on earth, for the Creator who planted the garden eastward in Eden knew well what would please the childish heart of man when He brought all the new-made creatures to Adam "to see what he would call them."

Our rustic bouquet graced the table under the white birches, while we sat by the fire and watched our four men at the work of the camp—Joseph and Raoul chopping wood in the distance; François slicing juicy rashers from the fitch of bacon; and Ferdinand, the *chef*, heating the frying-pan in preparation for supper.

"Have you ever thought," said Greygown, in a contented tone of voice, "that this is the only period of our existence when we attain to the luxury of a French cook?"

"And one with the grand manner, too," I replied, "for he never fails to ask what it is that madame desires to eat to-day, as if the larder of Lucullus were at his disposal, though he knows well enough that the only choice lies between broiled fish and fried fish, or bacon with eggs and a rice omelet. But I like the fiction of a lordly ordering of the repast.

How much better it is than having to eat what is flung before you at a summer boarding-house by a scornful waitress!"

"Another thing that pleases me," continued my lady, "is the unbreakableness of the dishes. There are no nicks in the edges of the best plates here; and, oh! it is a happy thing to have a home without bric-à-brac. There is nothing here that needs to be dusted."

"And no engagements for to-morrow," I ejaculated. "Dishes that can't be broken, and plans that can—that's the ideal of housekeeping."

"And then," added my philosopher in skirts, "it is certainly refreshing to get away from all one's relations for a little while."

"But how do you make that out?" I asked, in mild surprise. "What are you going to do with me?"

"Oh," said she, with a fine air of independence, "I don't count you. You are not a relation, only a connection by marriage."

"Well, my dear," I answered, between the meditative puffs of my pipe, "it is good to consider the advantages of our present situation. We shall soon come into the frame of mind of the Sultan of Morocco when he camped in the Vale of Rabat. The place pleased him so well that he staid until the very pegs of his tent took root and grew up into a grove of trees around his pavilion."

## II.—KENOGAMI.

The guides were a little restless under the idle régime of our lazy camp, and urged us to set out upon some adventure. Ferdinand was like the uncouth swain in *Lycidas*. Sitting upon the bundles of camp equipage on the shore, and crying,

"To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new,"

he led us forth to seek the famous fishing-grounds on Lake Kenogami.

We skirted the eastern end of Lake St. John in our two canoes, and pushed up La Belle Rivière to Hebertville, where all the children turned out to follow our procession through the village. It was like the train that tagged after the Pied Piper in Hamelin. We embarked again, surrounded by an admiring throng, at the bridge where the main street crossed a little stream, and paddled up it, through a score of back yards and a stretch of reedy meadows, where the wild and tame

ducks fed together, tempting the sportsman to sins of ignorance. We crossed the placid Lac Vert, and after a carry of a mile along the highroad towards Chicoutimi, turned down a steep hill and pitched our tents on a crescent of silver sand, with the long, fair water of Kenogami before us.

It is amazing to see how quickly these woodsmen can make a camp. Each one knew precisely his share of the enterprise. One sprang to chop a dry spruce log into fuel for a quick fire, and fell a harder tree to keep us warm through the night. Another stript a pile of boughs from a balsam for the beds. Another cut the tent-poles from a neighboring thicket. Another unrolled the bundles and made ready the cooking utensils. As if by magic, the miracle of the camp was accomplished.

"The bed was made, the room was fit,  
By punctual eve the stars were lit"—

but Greygown always insists upon completing that quotation from Stevenson in her own voice; for this is the way it ends—

"When we put up, my ass and I,  
At God's green caravanserai."

Our permanent camp was another day's voyage down the lake, on a beach opposite the Point Ausable. There the water was contracted to a narrow strait, and in the swift current, close to the point, the great trout had fixed their spawning-bed from time immemorial. It was the first week in September, and the magnates of the lake were already assembling—the Common-Councilmen and the Mayor and the whole Committee of Seventy. There were giants in that place, rolling lazily about, and chasing each other on the surface of the water. "Look, m'sieu'!" cried François, in excitement, as we lay at anchor in the gray morning twilight; "one like a horse has just leaped behind us—I assure you, big like a horse!"

But the fish were shy and dour. Old Castonier, the guardian of the lake, lived in his hut on the shore, and flogged the water early and late every day with his home-made flies. He was anchored in his dugout close beside us, and grinned with delight as he saw his over-educated trout refuse my best casts. "They are here, m'sieu', for you can see them," he said, by way of discouragement, "but it is difficult to take them. Do you not find it so?"

In the back of my fly-book I discovered a tiny phantom minnow—a dainty affair of varnished silk, as light as a feather—and quietly attached it to the leader in place of the tail-fly. Then the fun began.

One after another the big fish dashed at that deception, and we played and netted

go home, m'sieu'—that you have beaten the old Castonnier. There are not many fishermen who can say that. But," he added, with confidential emphasis, "*c'était votre sacré p'tit poisson qui a fait cela.*"

That was a touch of human nature, my rusty old guardian, more welcome to me than all the morning's catch. Is there



BESIDE THE STREAM.

them until our score was thirteen, weighing altogether thirty-five pounds, and the largest five pounds and a half. The guardian was mystified and disgusted. He looked on for a while in silence, and then pulled up anchor and clattered ashore. He must have made some inquiries and reflections during the day, for that night he paid a visit to our camp. After telling bear stories and fish stories for an hour or two by the fire, he rose to depart, and tapping his forefinger solemnly upon my shoulder, delivered himself as follows:

"You can say a proud thing when you

not always a "confounded little minnow" responsible for our failures? Did you ever see a school-boy tumble on the ice without stooping immediately to rebuckle the strap of his skates? And would not Ignotus have painted a masterpiece if he could have found good brushes and a proper canvas? Life's shortcomings would be bitter indeed if we could not find excuses for them outside of ourselves. And as for life's successes—well, it is certainly wholesome to remember how many of them are due to a fortunate position and the proper tools.

Our tent was on the border of a coppice



A BOAT-SONG.

of young trees. It was pleasant to be awakened by a convocation of birds at sunrise, and to watch the shadows of the leaves dance out upon our translucent roof of canvas. All the birds in the bush are early, but there are so many of them that it is difficult to believe that every one can be rewarded with a worm. Here in Canada those little people of the air who appear as transient guests of spring and autumn in the Middle States are in their summer home and breeding-place. Warblers, named for the magnolia and the myrtle, chestnut-sided, bay-breasted, blue-backed, and black-throated, flutter and

creep along the branches with simple lisping music. Kinglets, ruby-crowned and golden-crowned, tiny, brilliant sparks of life, twitter among the trees, breaking occasionally into clearer, sweeter songs. Companies of redpolls and crossbills pass chirping through the thickets, busily seeking their food. The fearless familiar chickadee repeats his name merrily, while he leads his family to explore every nook and cranny of the wood. Cedar-waxwings, sociable wanderers, arrive in numerous flocks. The Canadians call them *récollets*, because they wear a brown crest of the same color as the hoods of the monks who came with the first settlers to New France. They are a songless tribe, although their quick reiterated call as they take to flight has given them the name of chatterers. The beautiful tree-sparrows and the pine-siskins are more melodious, and the slate-colored juncos flitting about the camp are as garrulous as chippy-birds. All these varied notes come and go through the tangle of morning dreams. And now the noisy blue-jay is calling "thief-thief-thief!" in the distance, and a pair of great pileated woodpeckers with crimson crests are laughing loudly in the swamp over some family joke. Listen! what is that harsh creaking note? It is the cry of the Northern shrike, the stealthy butcher of the forest, who catches little birds and impales them on sharp thorns. At the sound of his voice the concert closes suddenly and the singers vanish into thin air. The hour of music is over; the commonplace of day has begun. And there is my lady Greygown, already up and dressed, standing by the breakfast table and laughing at my belated appearance.

But the birds were not our only musi-

cians at Kenogami. French Canada is one of the ancestral homes of song. Here you can still listen to those quaint ballads which were sung centuries ago in Normandie and Provence. "*À la Claire Fontaine*," "*Dans Paris y a-t-une Brune plus Belle que le Jour*," "*Sur le Pont d'Avignon*," "*En Roulant ma Boule*," "*La Poulette Grise*," and a hundred other folk-songs linger among the peasants and voyageurs of these Northern woods. You may hear

"Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre—  
Mironton, mironton, mirontaine!"

and

"Isabeau s'y promène  
Le long de son jardin,"

chanted in the farm-house or the lumber-shanty, to the tunes which have come down from an unknown source, and never lost their echo in the hearts of the people.

Our Ferdinand was a perfect fountain of music. He had a clear tenor voice, and solaced every task and shortened every voyage with melody.

"A song, Ferdinand, a jolly song," the other men would say, as the canoes went sweeping down the quiet lake. And then the leader would strike up a well-known air, and his companions would come in with the refrain, keeping time with the stroke of their paddles. Sometimes it would be a merry ditty:

"My father had no girl but me,  
And yet he sent me off to sea.  
Leap, my little Cécilia."

Or perhaps it was:

"I've danced so much the livelong day,—  
Dance, my sweetheart, let's be gay,—  
I've fairly danced my shoes away,  
Till evening.  
Dance, my pretty, dance once more;  
Dance until we break the floor."

But more frequently the song was touched with a plaintive, pleasant melancholy. The minstrel told how he had gone into the woods and heard the nightingale, and she had confided to him that lovers are often unhappy. The story of *La Belle Française* was repeated in minor cadences—how her sweetheart sailed away to the wars, and when he came back the village church bells were ringing, and he said to himself that *Françoise* had been faithless, and the chimes were for her marriage; but when he entered the church it was her funeral that he saw, for she had died of love. It is strange how sorrow charms us when it is distant

and visionary. Even when we are happiest we enjoy making music

"Of old, unhappy, far-off things."

"What is that song which you are singing, Ferdinand?" asks the lady, as she hears him humming behind her in the canoe.

"Ah, madame, it is the *chanson* of a young man who demands of his *blonde* why she will not marry him. He says that he has waited long time, and the flowers are falling from the rose-tree, and he is very sad."

"And does she give a reason?"

"Yes, madame—that is to say a reason of a certain sort; she declares that she is not quite ready; he must wait until the rose-tree adorns itself again."

"And what is the end—do they get married at last?"

"But I do not know, madame. The *chanson* does not go so far. It ceases with the complaint of the young man. And it is a very uncertain affair—this affair of the heart—is it not?"

Then, as if he turned from such perplexing mysteries to something plain and sure and easy to understand, he breaks out into the jolliest of all Canadian songs:

"My bark canoe that flies, that flies,  
Holà! my bark canoe!"

### III.—THE ISLAND POOL.

Among the mountains there is a gorge. And in the gorge there is a river. And in the river there is a pool. And in the pool there is an island. And on the island, for four happy days, there was a camp.

It was by no means an easy matter to establish ourselves in that lonely place. The river, though not remote from civilization, is practically inaccessible for nine miles of its course by reason of the steepness of its banks, which are long shaggy precipices, and the fury of its current, in which no boat can live. We heard its voice as we approached through the forest, and could hardly tell whether it was far away or near. There is a perspective of sound as well as of sight, and one must have some idea of the size of a noise before one can judge of its distance. A mosquito's horn in a dark room may seem like a trumpet on the battlements; and the tumult of a mighty stream heard through an unknown stretch of woods may appear like the babble of a mountain brook close at hand.

But when we came out upon the bald forehead of a burnt cliff and looked down we realized the grandeur and beauty of the unseen voice that we had been following. A river of splendid strength went leaping through the chasm five hundred feet below us, and at the foot of two snow-white falls, in an oval of dark topaz water, traced with curves of floating foam, lay the solitary island.

The broken path was like a ladder. "How shall we ever get down?" sighed Greygown, as we dropped from rock to rock; and at the bottom she looked up, sighing, "I know we never can get back again." There was not a foot of ground on the shores level enough for a tent. Our canoe ferried us over, two at a time, to the island. It was about a hundred paces long, composed of round coggly stones, with just one patch of smooth sand at the lower end. There was not a tree left upon it larger than an alder-bush. The tent-poles must be cut far up on the mountain-sides, and every bough for our beds must be carried down the ladder of rocks. But the men were gay at their work, singing like mocking-birds. After all, the glow of life comes from friction with its difficulties. If we cannot find them at home we sally abroad and create them, just to warm up our mettle.

The ouananiche in the island pool were superb, astonishing, incredible. We stood on the cobble-stones at the upper end and cast our little flies across the sweeping stream, and for three days the fish came crowding in to fill the barrel of pickled salmon for our guides' winter use; and the size of the "biggest fish" steadily mounted—four pounds, four and a half, five, five and three-quarters. "Precisely almost six pounds," said Ferdinand, holding the scales; "but we may call him six, m'sieu', for if it had been to-morrow that we had caught him, he would certainly have gained the other ounce." And yet, why should I repeat the fisherman's folly of writing down the record of that marvellous catch? We always do it, but we know that it is a vain thing. Few listen to the tale, and none accept it. Does not Christopher North, reviewing the *Salmonia* of Sir Humphry Davy, mock and jeer unfeignedly at the fish stories of that most reputable writer? But, on the very next page, old Christopher himself meanders on into a perilous narrative of the day when he caught a whole cart-load of

trout in a Highland loch. Incurrible, happy inconsistency! Slow to believe others, and full of sceptical inquiry, fond man never doubts one thing—that somewhere in the world a tribe of gentle readers will be discovered to whom his fish stories will appear credible.

One of our days on the island was Sunday—a day of rest in a week of idleness. We had a few books; for there are some in existence which will stand the test of being brought into close contact with nature. Are not John Burroughs's cheerful, kindly essays full of woodland truth and companionship? Can you not carry a whole library of musical philosophy in your pocket in Matthew Arnold's volume of selections from Wordsworth? And could there be a better sermon for a Sabbath in the wilderness than Mrs. Slosson's immortal story of *Fishin' Jimmy*?

But, to be very frank about the matter, the camp is not stimulating to the studious side of my mind. Charles Lamb, as usual, has said what I feel: "I am not much a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it."

There are blueberries growing abundantly among the rocks—huge clusters of them, bloomy and luscious as the grapes of Eshcol. The blueberry is nature's compensation for the desolation of forest fires. It grows best where the woods have been burned away and the soil is too poor to raise another crop of trees. Surely it is an innocent and harmless pleasure to wander along the hill-sides gathering these wild fruits, as the disciples once walked through the fields and plucked the ears of corn, never caring what the Pharisees thought of that new way of keeping the Sabbath.

And here is a bed of moss beside a dashing rivulet, inviting us to rest and be thankful. Hark! There is a white-throated sparrow, on a little tree across the river, whistling his afternoon song,

"In linkèd sweetness long drawn out."

Down in Maine they call him the Pea-body-bird, because his notes sound to them like *Old—mān—Péabody, péabody, péabody*. In New Brunswick the Scotch settlers say that he sings *Löst—löst—Kénnedy, kénnedy, kénnedy*. But here in his Northern home I think we can understand him better. He is singing again and again, with a cadence that never wearies, "*Sweet—sweet—Canada, Cána-*

*da, Canada!*" The Canadians, when they came across the sea, remembering the nightingale of southern France, baptized this little gray minstrel their *rossignol*, and the country ballads are full of his praise. Every land has its nightingale, if we only have the heart to hear him. How distinct his voice is—how personal, how confidential, as if he had a message for us!

There is a breath of fragrance on the cool shady air beside our little stream that seems familiar. It is the first week of September. Can it be that the twin-flower of June, the delicate *Linnæa borealis*, is blooming again? Yes, here is the threadlike stem lifting its two frail pink bells above the bed of shining leaves. How dear an early flower seems when it comes back again and unfolds its beauty in a St. Martin's Summer! How delicate and suggestive is the faint, magical odor! It is like a renewal of the dreams of youth.

"And need we ever grow old?" asked my lady Greygown, as she sat that even-

ing with the twin-flower on her breast, watching the stars come out along the edge of the cliffs and tremble on the hurrying tide of the river. "Must we grow old as well as gray? Is the time coming when all life will be commonplace and practical, and governed by a dull 'of course'? Shall we not always find adventures and romances, and a few blossoms returning, even when the season grows late?"

"At least," I answered, "let us believe in the possibility, for to doubt it is to destroy it. If we can only come back to nature together every year, and consider the flowers and the birds, and confess our faults and mistakes and our unbelief under these silent stars, and hear the river murmuring our absolution, we shall die young, even though we live long: we shall have a treasure of memories which will be like the twin-flower, always a double blossom on a single stem, and carry with us into the unseen world something which will make it worth while to be immortal."

## ALONE IN CHINA.

BY JULIAN RALPH.

ALL of us in America recollect the brilliant marriage of Miss Benedict to Tieh-li-chang, of the Chinese Legation at Washington. If we were curious about the Chinese, what better could we do than follow the consequences of that brilliant union, which took one of ourselves far behind the heavy curtains that hang between us and the ancient, undisturbed usages of the Chinese?

The sensation that Mr. Tieh made was great. His stately figure, his calm face with its babylike complexion, his splendid costumes of silk and satin—even the men recall the marked impression these caused him to make. Mr. Tieh came to Washington to give us satisfaction for a massacre of missionaries in China. He was sufficiently skilful to appease Uncle Sam with a large offer of money, and to satisfy his own home officials, who cared much less for money than for the primary purpose of Chinese diplomacy, which is to get out and keep out of trouble. That mission ended, he accepted a bribe and a promise of stock and commissions for interesting himself in a grand Yankee

scheme for building railroads in China. That was a mistake. He had been in Europe before being sent here. He had staid too long away from home, and had become poisoned with what we call progress. The calculations of those who had visions of 400,000,000 of Chinamen paying half a dollar a year in railway fares unsettled his judgment. Mr. Tieh wrote to his home office about the plan, and one of the leading statesmen there replied that he could not understand the scheme, and that it would be too much to ask him to study it for nothing. Thereupon Mr. Tieh told the American promoters that \$100,000 forwarded to Peking would arouse official interest in the scheme.

Quite properly, as affairs are managed under the present dynasty, he sent \$50,000 to China, and kept the rest for his trouble. Sanguine about the railway scheme, petted by society, courted by beauty, and praised by the leaders in our official life, Tieh was a very happy man. His satisfaction shone through his blandness, and sounded through his pretty phrases and laughter at the dinners he gave.