

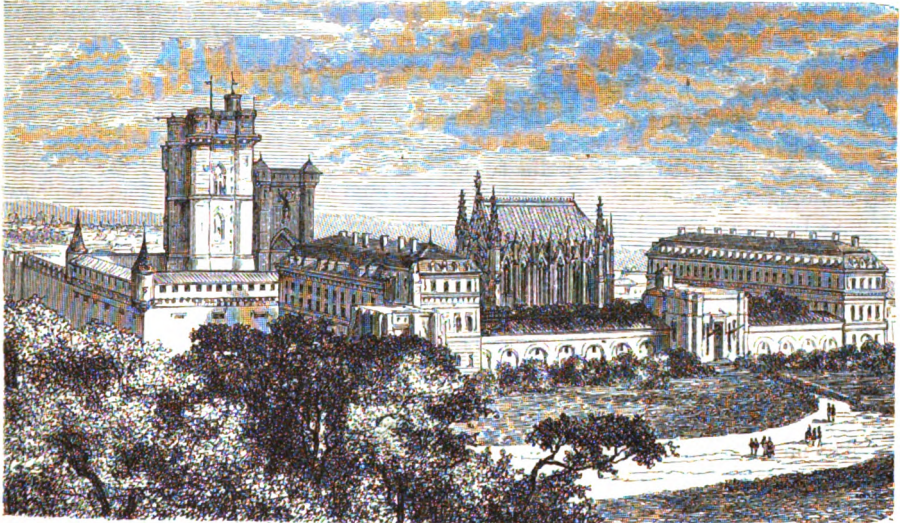
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IN AND ABOUT PARIS.



GENERAL VIEW OF VINCENNES, FROM THE WOOD.

You had best sit quietly down here while the glittering lines of carriages, crowded with the poor puppets of this Parisian Vanity Fair, toil along the heated and dusty way. Much, indeed, they know of the shade and grateful refuge of this antique forest of Rouveray. They do not even condescend to pass the cascade at a moderate pace, but, after they have cast a glance at the green expanse of Longchamps, they whip up their beasts and whirl away as swiftly as the poor horses' swollen joints will permit. Give me a quiet ramble in the wood near the grand cascade, and I will forego your promenades amid the glitter.

Parbleu! I was indeed dreaming, for the good Bois de Boulogne is no longer as of yore. Where once stately trees waved their boughs one only sees fresh stumps; where the pale moonlight in the odorous evening once made a promenade by the lake and lakelets so delicious, the hand of war has been at work and ravaged rudely. Ah, my Lutetia! was it worth the while to wear the gaud and pay the heavy price?

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Yet am I glad to see that even the Prussians revered the cascade. They could hardly dare to trample roughly on ground where Art had taught Nature some of its profoundest secrets. See how the sparkling water leaps down over the rocks—the miniature cliffs beneath which are caves into which the curious may penetrate and gaze through the spray-veil! Here is the ruggedness and grandeur of a mountain torrent; yet it is only a few steps from the noise and crowding of the city.

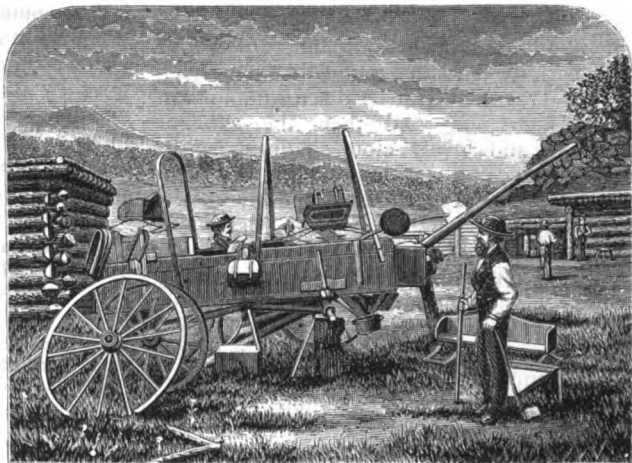
Some good Paris burghers, toward the beginning of the twelfth century, made a pilgrimage to Boulogne by the sea. Returning, they received permission from King Philip to build a church like the one they had seen at Boulogne in a little village near the then forest of Rouveray. Our Lady of Boulogne on the Seine soon gave her name to the adjacent wood: hence the Bois de Boulogne of to-day.

No one knows when the old wood was first named, or what monarch first made it his pleasure resort. A great forest spread its

As the moon sinks down, the black shadow creeps rapidly up the mountain, overtakes us, and soon all but the very tip of the Peak is shrouded in darkness. Once more in night, we toil upward over the loose stones, fairly pulling ourselves along from one projection to another. The second night, however, is of short duration; before we reach the end of our toilsome ascent, streaks of gray have begun to light up the ebon sky, and the birds of the valley have given the signal of awaking nature,—timid at first, melancholy almost, but growing stronger and cheerier as the darkness fades, until the clear air rings with their sunrise song.

Sinking to the ground at almost every step, prostrated by fatigue in spite of our frequent rests, we climb on till we reach the summit.

As shown in the engraving (from a photograph taken 14,000 feet above the sea) this mountain is double-headed. The peak on the left is Gray's, the opposing rocky summit being known as Evan's Peak. Even the topmost summits of these peaks are bare of snow, or only spotted with it here and there in deep gorges, sheltered from the sun. At no period of our ascent have we felt the slightest inconvenience from cold, though clad no more warmly than customary in Georgetown. Here on the summit the thermometer (in August) indicates a temperature of 45° Fah. At an equal elevation in the Alps the rocks are buried hundreds of feet under everlasting snow. The brac-



A BREAK-DOWN IN THE MOUNTAINS.

ing air restores our sunken energies with wonderful rapidity, while the sense of victory, and an exciting prospect, make us forget our weariness—everything indeed save the brightening east. There is no twilight in these elevated regions, no dense and vaporous atmosphere to refract the light, no clouds to reflect the descending sea of radiance. The day does not dawn; it *breaks*, the sun cleaving the horizon as by a single stroke. Standing on the stony ridge of the summit, ten feet wide by perhaps thirty long, we overlook a sea of mountains whose barren crests are lighted up one by one as morning descends. By degrees the shadows are driven from the valleys, and the broad mountain-parks, thousands of acres in extent, appear in the distance like tiny patches of bright green moss. Toward the east, the outstretched plains lie in calm repose like the quiet waters of a great sea.

A VISIT TO THE BIRTHPLACE OF WHITTIER.

EARLY this morning,—a veritable midsummer morning,—we started on a pilgrimage to the home of Whittier's childhood,—the spot where the scene of "Snow-Bound" is laid. Already the heat was intense, and we dreaded the moment when the sun should break through the low clouds behind which he still lingered, and bend his fiery gaze full upon us. There was an almost noontide stillness in the air—

"No bird-song floated down the hill,
The tangled bank below was still;

No rustle from the birchen stem,
No ripple from the water's hem."

And as we drove slowly along we felt the keenness of the contrast between this noon of summer and that "brief December day" described in the beautiful winter poem. To-day no

"——hard, dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told."

Nor did we look out upon'

"A universe of sky and snow,"

but upon green hills and luxuriant woods and sparkling streams, and fields of varying hues of green and gold and red and brown, over which now and then the sunlight gleamed, and lovely cloud-shadows, spirit-like, softly came and went. To one who likes a tropical degree of heat, life is very rich and bright on such a day as this. Cares and sorrows are forgotten for a time, or, if they do cross the mind, they are even as fleeting as those cloud-shadows, and leave no deeper impression.

We drove among pleasant hills, with frequent glimpses of the "shining Merrimack," and through the beautiful Bradford woods, so rich in ferns and fragrant pines, coming out at last upon the streets of quiet old Bradford town. Straightway loomed up before us the famous Seminary, a great unsightly mass of red brick, without a tree or shrub near enough to tone down its glare in the fierce noonday sun. But we forgot its ugliness when we entered the spacious, airy halls, and viewed with delight from its windows the scenes and places which Whittier has made so familiar to us—"the homes of Haverhill," the "Mountain-born" Merrimack, the lakes, the Bradford woods, the hills—not "bleak" now, but green and fair, and softened by a faint purple haze.

We entered our carriage again and drove over an old bridge which crosses the Merrimack, and is most carefully and provokingly covered so as to shut out completely the view of the lovely river. Then we found ourselves in the business street of Haverhill, which would be as uninteresting as business streets usually are, were it not for its fine City Hall, which has a wonderful clock whose "deep sepulchral tones" quite startled us as they fell solemnly upon our ears.

Thence along pleasanter and shadier streets and through roads beautiful with locust-trees, until we came within sight of Kenoza Lake, to which Whittier gave its musical Indian name, instead of that of "Great Pond," as it had formerly been called. Kenoza is the Indian name for pickerel. The lake—

"Fair mirror of the woods and skies"—

is very lovely—so calm and peaceful, sleeping in the embrace of the wooded hills.

Dr. J. R. Nichols, a scientific and literary man of note in this region, and a friend of the poet, has a fine place on the shore of the lake. We drove through his grounds, up a winding road, getting constant glimpses of the lake midst the noble trees, reaching at

last the summit of a hill from which the view was beautiful. At our feet lay the lake, over which one or two little boats floated dreamily; near by the picturesque towns of Bradford and Haverhill nestled among the woods and hills, which stretched away on every side. Driving slowly down, we turned again and again for a last look at the lake. Very fitting is the poet's description:—

"Kenoza, o'er no sweeter lake
Shall morning break or noon-cloud sail!
No fairer face than thine shall take
The sunset's golden veil.

"Long be it ere the tide of trade
Shall break with harsh-resounding din
The quiet of thy banks of shade,
And hills that fold thee in.

"Still let thy woodlands hide the hare,
The shy loon sound his trumpet note;
Wing-weary from his fields of air,
The wild-goose on thee float.

"Thy peace rebuke our feverish strife,
Thy beauty our deforming stir;
Thy woods and waters minister
The healing of their life."

As we rode on the roads grew wilder and more solitary, until at last we came upon a little school-house, old and brown. Here was kept the "ragged winter school" which Whittier attended in his boyhood.

"Still sits the school-house by the road,
A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
And blackberry vines are running.

"Within, the master's desk is seen,
Deep-scarred by raps official,
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knife's carved initial;

"The charcoal frescoes on its wall;
Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing!"

The "cracked and crazy wall" seems unrepaired, but through the windows we saw that festoons of evergreen, long since withered, adorned the "smoked and dingy room." We fancied that we could see the poet as he describes himself—a school-boy,—

"His cap pulled low upon a face
Where pride and shame were mingled."

while near him, with

"—— tangled golden curls,
And brown eyes full of grieving,"

stood the charming child whose gentle heart was pained because she had "spelt the word" and "gone above him."

"Still memory to a gray-haired man
That sweet child-face is showing.
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing!"

"He lives to learn, in life's hard school,
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her,—because they love him."

Leaving the school-house, a short drive brought us to the old homestead which "Snow-Bound" and the pictures have made so familiar,—a low, brown wooden house, the back part painted red, standing close to the road. In front is a fine large ash tree. We did not see the old well-sweep which is in the picture. Across the road are the barn and sheds and a little workshop. We "camped out" for several hours in a field near the house, under a large oak tree and close to the pretty little murmuring brook of the "Barefoot Boy."

"Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering, at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall."

We lay on the grass and listened to its pleasant voice, and tried to imagine the poet, a rosy-cheeked, curly-headed, "Barefoot Boy," dabbling in its clear waters. And we wished that the blessed gift of health might again be granted him as in that happy time, his

"—— boyhood's time of June."

The place was so lovely, the associations were so interesting, that we were loath to leave—the grass was so green, the brook so sweet-voiced. The air was full of warm, delightful summer sounds;—the drowsy hum of bees, the shrill cry of the locust, the distant lowing of cows. We looked and listened, and dipped into *Wake-Robin*, and dreamed dreams, and sang snatches of song.

We cooled our hands and faces in the brook, in which one of the party also cooled his feet, sitting in a most picturesque attitude on its brink and laughingly dubbing himself a "barefoot boy." We gathered lovely ferns which grew on the edge, and pressed them in *Wake-Robin*; then we sauntered to the house, and, standing on "the door-stone gray and rude," begged for a draught of cold water, which was graciously granted us in a tin dipper of astonishing dimensions. In the clear cold water we drank to the health and happiness of the poet dearest to our hearts.

Then our good and patient steed, who had been beguiling himself in a shady nook, was harnessed to the carriage again, and we drove slowly homeward in the pleasant afternoon sunshine.

FOUND WANTING.

How long wilt thou the mock remain
Of dwarfs who leave thee thus behind?
Or can heroic mould contain
A lesser soul than pigmy-kind!
Wilt thou have lived through manhood's
prime,
Yet not have known what living meant?
In the grand battle of thy time
No blow have struck, no aid have lent?

Thou sittest nerveless in the dust,
Unmindful of the glorious fray:
Neglected in their scabbard rust
The weapons that should cut thy way.
Of thine own untried strength afraid,
Nor daring to be wholly great,
Thou offerest, for thine idle blade,
The coward's facile plea of fate.

Fate! what is fate? weak chance, that
holds
Distrustful purpose in its bands:
A spider's web, whose flimsy folds
Are spun about a giant's hands!
Wouldst thou but once essay the might,
The godlike stature given thee,
Swift as a strong flame to its height
Thou shouldst leap up erect and free.

But fear the fate thyself may make!
For custom's quicksand yet can drown,
And thine own powers, ungoverned, take
Rebellious force to drag thee down.
Bethink thee that the giant's weight
Sinks lower than the pigmy can;
And tremble, lest heroic state
Dwindle to something less than man!