

LITERATURE.

The Canadas in 1841. By Sir Richard H. Bonnycastle, Lieut. Col. R. E., and Lieut. Col. in the Militia of U. C. 2 vols. Henry Colburn. London, 1841.

SIR RICHARD BONNYCASTLE resided close to the Falls of Niagara many months, and had constant opportunities of viewing them under every aspect for four years. His account, therefore, is not that of a hasty tourist, but of one who has really examined every inch of the ground, and taken deliberate pains to inform himself thoroughly upon the minutest points connected with this marvellous scene.

"To see them 'aright,' you must not only visit them 'by fair moonlight,' but you must descend to the very edge of the trembling rocky brink of the cauldron on the British side, immediately under the stairs, and sixty or seventy feet below the narrow platform of rock on which you have stood when you have reached the last of these stairs. This is not to be effected without some trouble, risk, and fatigue; but it repays all your exertion; for when you have reached the edge, close to the rainbow or split rock, you are, as it were, at once in a new world: chaos seems there to have never been disturbed by the regularity of nature, but reigns solitary and supreme.

"Place your back against the projecting, blackened, and slime-covered rocks, and look towards the mighty mass of vapour and water before you, around you, beneath you, and above you. Hearing, sight, feeling, become, as it were, blended and confounded. You are sensible that you exist, perhaps; but in what state of existence has, for a few minutes, vanished from your imagination. The rocks vibrate under your feet; the milk-white boiling and mountain surge advances, swells up, subsides, recoils, lashes, and mingles with the thick vapour. An indescribable and terrific, dull, yet deafening sound shakes the air; your nerves feel the concussion, and the words of surprise which at length escape from your lips are inaudible to yourself, so awfully stern is the uproar of the contending air and water in their conflict for mastery."

Few visitors venture to the edge of the cauldron and of the Split Rainbow Rock:—

"These form a huge mass, buried cables deep in the gulph, fallen headlong from above, rent by the fall in twain nearly to its base, wedged into the lip of the cauldron, and towering twenty or thirty feet above the mounting surge. How it became so transfixed baffles conjecture, for it was evidently hurled from the table rock above.

"This rainbow rock, as it is called, or Iris' throne, from the extremity of the arc appearing to rest upon it, when you view the great fall from the rocky table above, cannot now be approached so easily. The ladder by which, at much personal hazard, its flat and slippery surface was gained, has been swept away by the raging flood; and it is, perhaps, fortunate that it is so, for the experiment of gaining and standing on the surface was attended with great risk.

"I saw one person, whilst I was sketching the scene, actually lying down at full length upon the edge of it, with his head projected over, to look into the very cauldron. I shuddered at the hardihood displayed, for a false movement would be inevitable and instant destruction on that slippery platform. When he descended the ladder, I told him what I had felt, and he was fully aware of his danger, but said that, from his childhood, he had been a ranger in the Alps.

"To add to the difficulties of your situation on the edge of the cauldron, the descending and ascending spray is so great that you are wet through very soon; whilst the clouds of arrowy sleet driving in your eyes render sketching not very pleasant; whilst to add to your stock of ideas, you behold a truly Freischutz display; for crawling at your feet, amidst a mass of ground and splintered timber, bones, and shivered rocks, are the loathsome and large black toad, the hideously deformed black lizard eels, of a most equivocal appearance, and even that prototype of the eel, the fierce black water serpent."

The view of the Horse-shoe from the edge of the cauldron is limited, but of a most awful grandeur:—

"It does not require much stretch of the imagination to fancy that you see, amidst the huge mountains of creaming foam, and vapour, the dim form of the water king combating, in a grand and majestic attitude, with the monarch of air, and the battle hurled between their mighty squadrons; for the fantastic shapes on which mystic light is continually impressing new relations is, perhaps, the most wonderful portion of the phenomena of a near view of the cauldron; whilst the rose of lustre, in peculiar states of beauty of tints, and an indescribable spray, creates a combined with the partial glimpses of the bright wall of liquid deep marine emerald in the sky, the view of the Horse-shoe, which it is useless to write about, no language can convey even a faint idea of its gorgeous sublimity."

But one of the most striking aspects is that of the table-rock on a tempestuous stormy day. From above the face of the magnificent scene is changed:—

"The blacker and more gloomy the sky, the grand and awful the contrast of the white, foaming, and indescribable flood. It forms an exact opposite to the view on a fine and tranquil afternoon of autumn, with the gloriously tinted forest; the blue—the peculiar blue—sky of Canada; the glittering of the waters; their thousand hues, from the emerald to the diamond, through every shade of green, yellow, brown, purple, red, blue; the soft and wool-like mountains of vapour in the cauldron; the rainbow stealing into the very depths of it; and that mellow and peculiar shade, the slightest imaginable, of rose colour, thrown over the ascending vapour."

About four miles along the river towards the cape the traveller comes upon the whirlpool of Niagara, which is almost as great a wonder as the Horse-shoe itself. Sir Richard attempted to construct a road to this place, but he found so many conflicting interests that he was obliged to abandon the project. At present the whirlpool is approached by a difficult and hazardous track on the top of the rocky wall that hems in the stream. But, having achieved this labour, the result will abundantly reward the courageous traveller:—

"The river, which has gradually contracted its channel very much, after passing the great white sheet of the American Fall, proceeds in a curved form towards the north-west, and, after falling over tremendous rapids, suddenly turns, at right angles, to its former course, and

runs towards the north-east, still hemmed in by the precipice, which now increases in altitude. Here it has scooped out a vast basin in the rocks, of a circular form, and the rushing and roaring waters, entering the narrow gorge from the south-east, strike by their impetus with such force on the perpendicular wall of the opposite gorge, that an under-current is immediately created, and the waters whirl in a dizzy vortex until they find egress towards the north-east, between the precipitous walls of the chasm.

"As the rock is very lofty here (between two and three hundred feet) the view from above is so distant, that very little but the faint whirling or concentrically enlarging circles of the water can be traced; for the largest trunk trees which are spinning in its eddies seem there no bigger than sticks. It is from below that the curious visitant must see the effect. But the descent is dangerous, from the vicinity of the Table Rock, and it is necessary to go back about a mile on the road, and ask permission to cross a farmer's grounds, where there is a path more accessible.

"Here, after crossing a field or two, you enter into a beautiful wood, and, going through it for a quarter of a mile, begin to descend by a narrow, obscure, and winding path, cut out of the mountain, which is covered with the primæval forest. The descent is not very difficult, perfectly safe, and with a little expense would be pleasant. It leads to the centre of the bay-coast of the whirlpool, where there are but few rocks, and a narrow shingle beach. Here you see the vastness of the scene, the great expanse of the circular basin, the mass of mountain which encloses it almost to its very edge, and the overhanging Table Rock, nearly like that at the Falls, and probably produced by a similar cause, the disintegration of the slate beds under the more unyielding limestone.

"So extensive, however, is the surface of water, that the huge trunks of trees floating in the concentric circles of the whirling waters, when they reach their ultimate doom in the actual vortex, appear still not larger than small logs. They revolve for a great length of time, touching the shores in their extreme gyrations, and then, as the circles narrow, are tossed about with increasing rapidity, until, in the middle, the largest giants of the forest are lifted perpendicularly, and appear to be sucked under, after a time, altogether."

The whole account of Niagara and its neighbourhood is full of interest, and is written in such detail as to form an indispensable companion to all future tourists in that part of the world.

Let us now turn to scenery of a different kind. At the extremity of Lower Canada the voyageur finds himself in Gaspé Bay, an arm of the sea, with Cape Gaspé on one side and the high land of Percé on the other, at a great distance. The panorama here is one of the most magnificent in British America; but we must approach the shore for a close view to suit our columns:—

"Here one of the most singular scenes we had observed in our whole progress presented itself, and part of which has been already mentioned. The small neat whitewashed houses of the town and fishing station of Percé, with long lines of stages to cure the codfish, and a handsome clean beach, are backed by a lofty and sharp mountain, and surmounted by a mass of beetling and overhanging bright red rock lower down on the right. This rock was cut into fantastic and abrupt cliffs, descending sheer into the ocean, beyond the promontory of Mont Joli; and was contrasted by belts of cultivated fields carried up, by man's industry and patient toil, the steep mountain as far as appeared practicable; and these fields were intersected and frowned over by dark and dismal woods, except where a deep stratum, or projecting ledge, of the Indian red sandstone broke the gloom with its vivid colouring."

The mirage, white squalls, and optical illusions are frequent in these latitudes. The inhabitants are almost exclusively fishermen, and the imagination can hardly compass the sort of life they lead in such remote solitudes. Except an occasional visit on some such tour of inspection as Sir Richard was engaged upon, or a descent of the Indians, it does not appear that the people who carry on these extensive fisheries have any opportunities of enjoying much human intercourse.

The island of Anticosti, buried in lurid fogs, with its reefs and rocks, presents quite as terrible a picture to the navigator as the iron-bound cliffs of Gaspé, upwards of five hundred feet in perpendicular altitude. We must give the reader a peep into this strange and startling scenery:—

"The white cliffs of Anticosti are very remarkable from the sea, and so dangerous is the whole neighbourhood, that at the most projecting part, about twelve miles east, or on the south-west point of the island, a very elevated and magnificent light-house, equal to any of the best on the coast of England, has been constructed, of a species of white marble found there.

"On rounding the corner of the white cliffs, we came suddenly upon one of the most singularly romantic scenes which it has fallen to my lot to survey,—the mouth of Jupiter River—lonely, desolate, beautiful, and wild, where, if stern and destructive winter never held his awful court, we might suppose that a Crusoe had dwelt.

"A deep recess in the curiously formed hills gave the many windings of the secluded stream unexpectedly to view; and although a large river for Anticosti, its mouth, barred by a deep belt of shifting sand, which some storm had thrown up, left its confluence with the ocean almost reduced to nothing, and only known to us in the boat by our being, by the violent commotion of the pent up waters, prevented from landing near it. The river here and more than twenty yards wide, and has the true force and three of a Canadian rapid. It gained its name from the wreck of a large French frigate, the 'Jupiter,' which sufficed for its treacherous margin."

From this point the river expands. Farther on, as the eye could range over the region as far as green clearing where broken at one place by a small ago endeavoured to find a shelter, probably after ship-

"Advancing along the ridge, which here barred up the river, we came, in the centre of the flat small wooden house, or shed, round the cliffs, to a of vetches, with their lovely purple blossom a profusion uriantly growing; whilst all along the shore were luxuriant vestiges of recent wreck, masts, spars, and pieces strewn

"This house we at first supposed to be a ship, fishermen, as, on opening both the doors which led for its two apartments, and were only fastened by a late and string, we found in one a wooden bed, like the guard-bed used for soldiers; a basket, with a few sea-biscuits; a tin canister, with the apparatus for striking a light; a knife, formed out of a razor-blade; bottles and cooking utensils. We afterwards learned that these

objects were purposely left, to assist shipwrecked persons on their way along shore to the other provision posts. In the second room we found every requisite for fishing; and a large iron kettle, probably for boiling the seal-oil; and the whole space round the house was covered with barrels, &c. On the seaward side of the building was a large board, on which was deeply cut in relief—"Twelve leagues west to provision post." This was for information of wrecked mariners, who would here find a comfortable temporary shelter, the windows being made airtight, and there being a stove in the building."

The provision post, however, was empty. These posts fill the mind with a feeling of desolation, arising from the very loneliness of which they are the only witnesses. It may be doubted, however, whether much reliance can be placed upon the people to whom they are entrusted, and who must be in circumstances of the utmost despair before they can be induced to accept such appointments.—

"There is another provision post at Gamaché's, on the west point of the Island, who is the superintendent of that part, and lives there; and there is also one (that pointed out by the board) between his house and the river next to Gamaché's; and fifty miles east of him is the new light-house, which is twelve miles east of Jupiter river, in which lives Lieutenant Harvey, an officer on half-pay, who has chosen, with an amiable wife and large family, to reign over desolation; and fortunate for the poor weather-beaten and unhappy victim of the storm is it that he has done so, for he will control and check the residents of the other posts, who adopted their solitary mode of existence from other causes."

A few years ago one of these provision posts was kept by a Mr. Godin. A melancholy and horrible story is connected with the place:—

"On the 15th of November, 1823, the brig 'Granicus' left the port of Quebec on her voyage to Britain or Ireland, with timber. It is supposed she was wrecked on the east point, as parts of the ship were found there, and that the crew must have met with one of the direction-boards, which indicated a supply of provision twelve miles off, in the direction of Fox Cove, as the board was found, as if brought by one of the unhappy sufferers, at the place where the tragedy afterwards happened.

"Upon arriving at the provision post, after what must have been to them a dreadful and perilous journey, they must have found it deserted, and nothing but an empty log hut and store-room to receive them, weary as they were. Godin had left it in the autumn for Quebec, where he is said to have been imprisoned for debt; and in his subsequent examination he averred that he had received orders to withdraw, and that the provisions, consisting chiefly of salt pork, biscuit, and flour, had rotted. He has been accused of plundering it; but it is said that he proved his orders to withdraw, and was acquitted of all blame."

"The scene that now ensued harrows the feelings. The boat was found at Fox Cove, not far from another post, with provision in it, by some of the Magdalen Island fishermen, in May, 1829, and it is probable that the crew had been too much exhausted, after the ship was wrecked, to make any further use of it.

"The fishermen stated that they found in the house many bodies, or parts of bodies, suspended, and a chest filled with human flesh. There was a rude almanack scribbled on the boards of the house, which terminated on the 23d of April, the 22d being the last day legibly executed. The beams were literally hung, like a butcher's stall, with human carcasses; and a pot was found resting on the ashes, in which some of the undevoured and monstrous meal still remained. Bones and putrid flesh were found strewed about the place; money, watches, rings, and a note in pencil, signed 'B. Harrington,' desiring that forty-eight sovereigns, which were found as therein stated, with his body in his hammock, should be sent home to Mary Harrington, Barrack-street, Cove of Cork. This unfortunate being, true to his filial or marital duty even amidst all his wretchedness, was the only un mutilated form amid the heap of dead. He had fed on the last surviving relic of the horrible mortality!

"The fishermen gathered together as much of the sad remains of their fellow-creatures as they could, and decently interred them. They thought they could perceive the skeletons and part of the flesh of three children, two women, and eight men; and the loathsome skeletons of two others were also found in the forest, to which it is supposed they must have retired to suffer the excruciating pangs of hunger, and thus, by meeting the death of nature, to avoid being preyed upon by these maddened cannibals. The fishermen reported the dreadful sight they had witnessed, and a vessel was soon afterwards sent to examine into all the evidence which could be collected. Godin returned to his domain, the theatre of these horrors, and there he reigns, with two fit associates, as we are told, a ferocious-looking one-eyed wretch, and a half idiot."

The desolate Labrador—abandoned to "the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the denizens of the water"—is, if possible, still more appalling than Anticosti.

The approach to the coast and the entrance into Trinity Cove are thus described:—

"Every thing is on a grand scale of wildness. Whales played round the vessel; the grampus, the porpoise, and the seal, were busy in their vocations; and a grampus actually drove a shoal of the brilliant and delicate lance-fish against the sides of the vessel, where they remained darting about in great quantities.

"In this cove we found the river which I have depicted, which proved to be a place where the Indians of the coast, called Montagnards, or Esquimaux, occasionally resort to for salmon. The estuary of this river is a singular place. An accumulation of enormous stones of gneissoid and feldspathose boulders, of the granite family, have been hurled into the mouth, and into the sea on each side, for a quarter of a mile, and the river forces itself through them. The sparkling sand in front, covered with large sea-shells; the roaring river; the dark spruce woods, with their beautiful but stunted spiry-formed trees in the background; the hedge of forest, actually impenetrable, which closes in the river, intermixed as it is with the pure white of the silver birch; the innumerable boulders; the foaming and struggling water, with the little space clear of trees, but matted with blue berry and pigeon-berry plants; all together formed a picture of which the engraving will afford a very faint conception. We traversed the open space, and came suddenly on the bend of the river, which here lost all its rushing and contentious strivings with the banks, and its black solemn flood flowed in a dark glen, and in to the very edge by the fir-forest, and deep

We here as night," which will not be touched upon those parts of this work which we recommend it to settlers and others

visiting Canada, because we cannot afford space for the details entered into by the author. But we recommend it to the perusal of emigrants and travellers. It is exceedingly minute, and enters into a mass of particulars concerning localities, regulations, government proceedings, and other subjects of immediate interest, which are not to be found treated with equal fulness in any other work with which we are acquainted.—London Atlas.

ADEN.—By the last accounts from Captain Harris's mission to Abyssinia, they were getting on very well, and had reached Ankobar, after a journey of thirty-seven days from Tadjourra; they succeeded in conveying one brass gun there, but a great portion of the heavy articles which were left behind at Tadjourra have been brought back here in the "Euphrates" and "Clive". Mr. Horton and Dr. Impey, who accompanied the mission, have also returned. Two of the soldiers of H. M. 6th regiment, who accompanied them, and one servant, were murdered on the road. The mission was encamped in a ravine on a bright moonlight night; the sentry heard a shriek from the tent in which the soldiers were sleeping; on proceeding to it he found a sergeant of the 6th with his jugular vein cut through, a soldier of the same regiment stabbed to the heart, and a servant with his belly ripped open: the two soldiers had apparently been murdered in their sleep; nothing was stolen, and it is supposed to have been done through enmity by a tribe of Somanlies. We have not been very quiet here lately; we have continual reports of attacks, and the troops are in consequence hard worked with reinforcing parties, pickets, &c. Last month a party of Arabs came down to the Turkish wall, and represented themselves as accompanying a syed coming to visit the place; on the Arab interpreter going a few yards outside the gate, to kiss the supposed syed's hand, they thrust two spears into his back, and he died almost immediately afterwards; he is a great loss to the place, and he was principally depended upon for information of the movements of the Arabs, and since his death we have been entirely without information of what is passing in the interior: two brothers of the Sultan of the Futhlies were of the party who assassinated him; it was rather a bold thing for they were not more than fifty yards from the guns and sentry in the field work; three or four shots were fired at them without effect. About seven o'clock on the evening of the 10th inst. we were alarmed at hearing a heavy firing from the Turkish wall; it appears that about 400 camel-men who had left Aden in the evening waited outside, and being joined by another party, came down to surprise the wall or cut off the sentries; they were, however, beaten off without doing any damage; it is not ascertained how many of the Arabs are killed, as they always carry off their slain, but four camels without riders were found, and one was shot; a number of matchlocks, spears, &c., were found in the morning, and also three prisoners taken. The whole of the 10th lines were burnt a few nights ago, together with five of the officers' bungalows: one native officer's wife was burnt; very little property was saved; Captain Hume, who has his family here, only saved one box. The "Auckland" and another steamer are expected about the 20th inst., with 200 men of the 17th foot, to relieve the wing of the 6th Royals.

THE LATE SIR FRANCIS CHANTREY.—He had finished the model of the head of the Duke of Wellington for the colossal equestrian statue for the City of London, having had a last sitting from the Duke just before he went to Holkham; and he had recently given the finishing touch to an admirable bust of Lord Melbourne. These were the last models he put his hand to; and we are informed by one whose judgment is entitled to respect, that they both rank among his finest works. The career of Chantrey was active and prosperous; and he owed his success entirely to his own great talents. He originally worked in the shop of a carver and gilder, where his genius shot forth; and, before he applied himself to sculpture, he painted a few portraits, one of which we have seen: though possessing little beauty of colour, it has the merit of true expression, and is remarkable as a likeness. The great value of Chantrey's statues consists in the intellectual character of the heads. The mind of the original predominated in his likeness; which circumstance contributed more than the improving touch of art to elevate and refine lineaments. The faces of his figures thought; the eyes were eloquent of meaning, and the mouth expressed the transient emotion of the happy moment when he seized the living resemblance. His style of modelling was masterly, elegant, and bold: the outline and play of the features in his busts are brought out by means of the light and shade produced by the forms in marble; in effect, he painted with his chisel. No sculptor of any age, perhaps, has executed a greater number of busts, statues, or produced finer likenesses of the countenance. His figures, on the contrary, are conventional, not characteristic. Invention was not his forte; his only ideal work was the exquisite group of two sleeping children, in Litchfield Cathedral; and for this Stothard furnished the design. The colossal statue of Watt, in Westminster Abbey, is one of his grandest works. He drew with taste; as his sketches of Dove Dale, which were engraved, testify. Sir Francis Chantrey was born in 1739; and consequently had passed his fifty-ninth year: he was married, and has left a widow, but no children. He was a man of shrewdness and penetration, and remarkable for bon hommie: he was not only an agreeable companion, but a steady friend, and a kind master. Mr. Allan Cunningham, who originally filled the humble office of rough hewer of marble, and up to the present time was occupied with the business of the studio—his numerous literary productions being the produce of his leisure hours solely—has been with Sir Francis twenty-eight years; and Mr. Hefferman, who has cut in marble almost every one of Chantrey's busts, literally from the first to the last, has been engaged during thirty years.—Spectator.

* What next? I saw (says the correspondent of an Irish paper) on Saturday a perfect little steam-engine of "a child of two-years-old power," to which a very simple apparatus is fitted by the action of the steam-engine, upon which a cradle containing an infant was rocked to and fro with infinitely more regularity than the too of the most experienced nurse could accomplish.

There is a new sliding project a-foot that promises to transcend even Sir Robert himself. It is a new company of private individuals, who have formed themselves into a body for the purpose of making a composition to imitate ice to skate on at any time in the year!