

Some Experiences of a Laboring Man.

"A little nonsense now and then,
Is relished by the best of men."

Seeing an advertisement in a St. John paper asking for a farmer and his wife to take charge of and work a place at Westfield, and thinking it would be a good job, I answered the advertisement. In due course I received a reply asking me to go down to St. John to see the proprietor of the farm, and next morning I took the train and landed safely in the City of Fog. The advertisement had been signed by a legal firm doing business for the proprietor, whom I now found to be a gentleman named John Andrews, with whom I had an interview, and we soon arranged matters to our mutual satisfaction. He was a man of considerable wealth, owning a farm at Westfield, whither he and his family repaired in summer, living in St. John in the winter. It being Saturday Mr. Andrews left his place of business early and was about to proceed by steamer to Westfield, where his family then were. He invited me to accompany him, but that was impossible, as I had to return to Fredericton by the afternoon train. However, at his invitation, I had the pleasure of drinking a refreshing glass of ale, which was most acceptable, the day being very hot, and I was tired with my journey. I must say, right here, that whatever I afterwards found Mr. Andrews to be, he was a consistent man. If he indulged in a glass he did not deny it, nor did he damn all others who took a drink. For my part I do not uphold drunkenness, but I think that if a man, being able to afford it, wishes to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, he has a right to please himself. But for the wretch who drinks himself and blames others for doing the same thing, I have only words of scorn.

I arrived home safely that night, and the following Wednesday we embarked on the good steamer "Olivette," and landed safely at Westfield. I had sent some furniture down by train, and experienced all the trouble and expense of moving it by wagon from Lower St. Marys to the Fredericton depot, and afterwards from the St. John depot to Westfield. But I did it cheerfully, thinking I had secured a good position, with a decent, honest man; whether my thoughts were correct or otherwise, the sequel will show.

Of the trip down the beautiful St. John, how can I find words to express the pleasure? In my younger days, for twenty consecutive summers, I had been on outings down this beautiful river, with kindred spirits, in our bark canoes, enjoying the magnificent scenery, living under our canvas tent, and moving from one beautiful lake to another as fancy led us. I remember how, on one trip, we kept a diary and each one of us had to write something in it at night, in verse if he could make it up, and the more nonsensical the better. As I was pretty handy with the fry pan, I was generally cook, and on this trip one morning when we were camping on the Thoroughfare, I went down to the stream to get a pail of water and carelessly threw the tin pail ahead of me, when it began rolling down the steep bank, and before I could arrive it had rolled into the

water, and was speedily out of sight in deep stream. This led to a variety of verses being written in our diary that night, chief among which, for fun and nonsense, I may quote the following:

"Here we lost a kettle
Of the best tin metal
In a way that you never would think.
With a clink and a clank
It ran down the bank
And sank to the bottom of the drink!

And now it reclines
Where the woodbine twines,
And the big eels crawl the rocks among;
Where the great green frogs
Chaw the little pollywogs,
And the whangdoodle roareth for its young!"

I believe I have the complete record of that trip in verse laid away somewhere among my papers, and probably some day when the east wind fills my nostrils with the rejuvenating scent of the Grand Lake meadows, I may resurrect the record for the readers of THE JOURNAL.

Many years had intervened between my last juvenile camping trip on our beautiful river and lakes, and this trip, on a July morning, steaming down to Westfield to follow one of my vocations, that of farming, among strangers; and the pleasing panorama spread before us as we sped on charmed me with its beauty, and filled my mind with teeming recollections of those careless days of youth.

It is no wonder that travellers admire our river!

"There are level islands,
Highlands beyonds highlands,
Bending bays between them, dim gateways far beyond,
Where our beauteous river
Fares and furls for ever,
Outward to the ocean, of time and let unbound!"

It was about three o'clock when the good steamer "Olivette," safely piloted by her courteous and skilled officers and crew, landed us at Westfield, and we proceeded at once to our destination, Mr. Andrews' farm. My first impressions of the place were very favorable, and I was led to hope that I had at last found a place and an employer which would suit me, and that I might cease, for a long long time, from being a wanderer on the face of the earth. The folks were total strangers to me, but I tried to cheer myself with the axiom "If they be Christians, all will be well," for that is a ground on which all can meet and never disagree.

All went well for a time, though I found the work to be very hard, it being a very hilly place, and the labor of climbing the steep hills all day with heavy boots on, consumed as much energy as did the work of plowing, and at night there was at least one worn out man in Westfield!

But after a while I began to notice a change in Mr. Andrews' treatment of me. I had noticed during the first week of my engagement with him that he was possessed of the idea that because I did not make a noise about my work—because I did not bluster and swear—therefore I was not very efficient. I did all my work as thoroughly as possible, and if I was ever in doubt as to the best methods I referred

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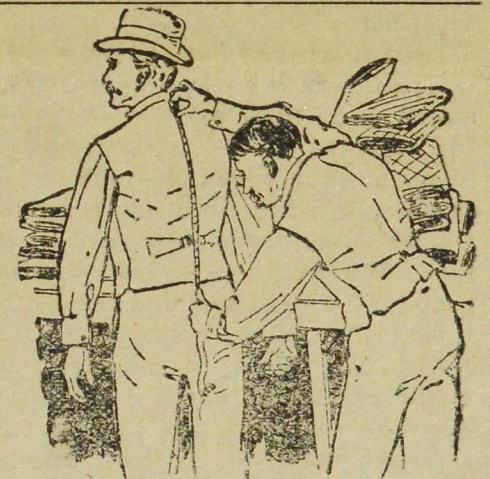
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