

**LIFE ON THE LAKES: BEING TALES
AND SKETCHES COLLECTED
DURING A TRIP TO THE PICTURED
ROCKS OF LAKE SUPERIOR, IN
TWO VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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Life on the Lakes: being tales and sketches collected during a trip to the pictured rocks of Lake Superior, in two volumes, Vol. I by Chandler Robbins Gilman

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CHANDLER ROBBINS GILMAN

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Edilman Chandira Rusbram
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**A TRIP TO THE PICTURED ROCKS
OF LAKE SUPERIOR.**

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LEGENDS OF A LOG CABIN."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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1836.

TRIP
TO
THE PICTURED ROCKS.

LETTER I.

August 19, 1835.

THIS day I left my home on a tour of pleasure. Pleasure! how that word mocks the feelings of my heart. Pleasure! Leave my home—my best of friends—my sweet girls—my little bright-eyed boy; all these I leave—for pleasure. I leave the quiet joys—the dear, the heartfelt delights of home—in search of pleasure. Vain thought; or, if pleasure be thus found, oh, how widely does it differ from happiness! They do, indeed, differ; pleasure may curl the lip or flush the cheek; pleasure may beam in the kindling eye, or move in the dancing step; pleasure may do all this, and yet

the heart, that home of happiness, be void and desolate. But you will say, dear S——, that I forget the task you have assigned me. You asked me for an account of my wanderings, and I begin with an avowal of my feelings; and why not? they are the wanderings of the heart.

Five o'clock, P. M. On board the steam boat at last, after a world of bustle, noise, and confusion at the landing-place. It is amusing to watch the moving throng that crowd on board the departing steam boat. How they push, and scold, and swear; how they seem to rejoice when those before them are checked, even though the pause does not at all advance, perhaps impedes, their own progress. Where now is that regard for others, that benevolence, that philanthropy of which each individual of this crowd thinks himself possessed? Gone! Gone! The universal passion, selfishness, has swallowed up all the minor propensities of the man—even his vanity and affectation. * * * The last bell has

rung or tolled, I do not know which they call it, and now we are off. The eager, intent look of busy anxiety, which marked the face of the traveller while there was yet something to be done to secure the certainty or the comfort of his passage, now gives place to a calm satisfied expression, as each feels that the first step in his journey is taken, and, as he flatters himself, well taken.

Half-past 8. Leaning over the taffrail to watch the bright sparklings that streamed from around the rudder, Murray, who, as you know, is very learned in all matters relative to the steamboat navigation of the North River, says he never saw the phosphorescence so bright before. After we had for a long time watched, and mused, and moralized on the subject, I was so superfluous as to direct the attention of a young doctor to the sight; he glanced for an instant at the bright bubbles as they sprang from beneath the keel and went dancing and sparkling along the dark water, and then turned coldly away: "Oh, I have seen the

same at sea," said he, "and much finer." Bah! there spake the doctor! he has the true Esculapian pretension to omniscience; he has seen every thing—knows every thing—understands every thing: he is a learned man and a wise doctor. Aye! aye! learned and wise, no doubt; for who is so learned, who so wise, as your fool? I recovered my good humour in a long pleasant chat with E——, that prince of lawyers and pleasantest of Irishmen. By his influence—and it is deservedly great—I have obtained a good berth, instead of being obliged to pass the night (for sleep would have been out of the question) on a settee. Nor did the counsellor's kindness end here. He is an angler; not a mere catcher of fish, but an angler, *dignus nomine*. Islip knows his name, and even Jerusalem (Long Island) has heard his fame. And yet he has given me permission to troll for salmon trout on the Upper Lakes. Let me, however, while I acknowledge the counsellor's kindness, do justice to his consistency; this concession

was only obtained by many specious arguments and much vehement entreaty. At first he was firm as a rock. Trolling ! that vile, that murderous practice ! abhorred at once and despised by all good men and true anglers. He permit or countenance it ? Never. The bones of old Izaak Walton would move in his coffin in horror at the degeneracy of his disciple !

But I had my arguments, though they were directed rather to extenuate than to justify the proposed aberration. The scene of my transgression was distant, and something might be conceded to that. My evil example could not contaminate any true disciple of the gentle craft, as the secret of my criminality would be buried in mine own breast, or at most only known to the rude children of the forest, on whose darkened minds the rays of science have never beamed ; to whom the fly is unknown ; the reel unheard of ; who live, and, alas ! will die, ignorant of the joys, the triumphs, and the glories of angling. This argument, though the counsellor al-