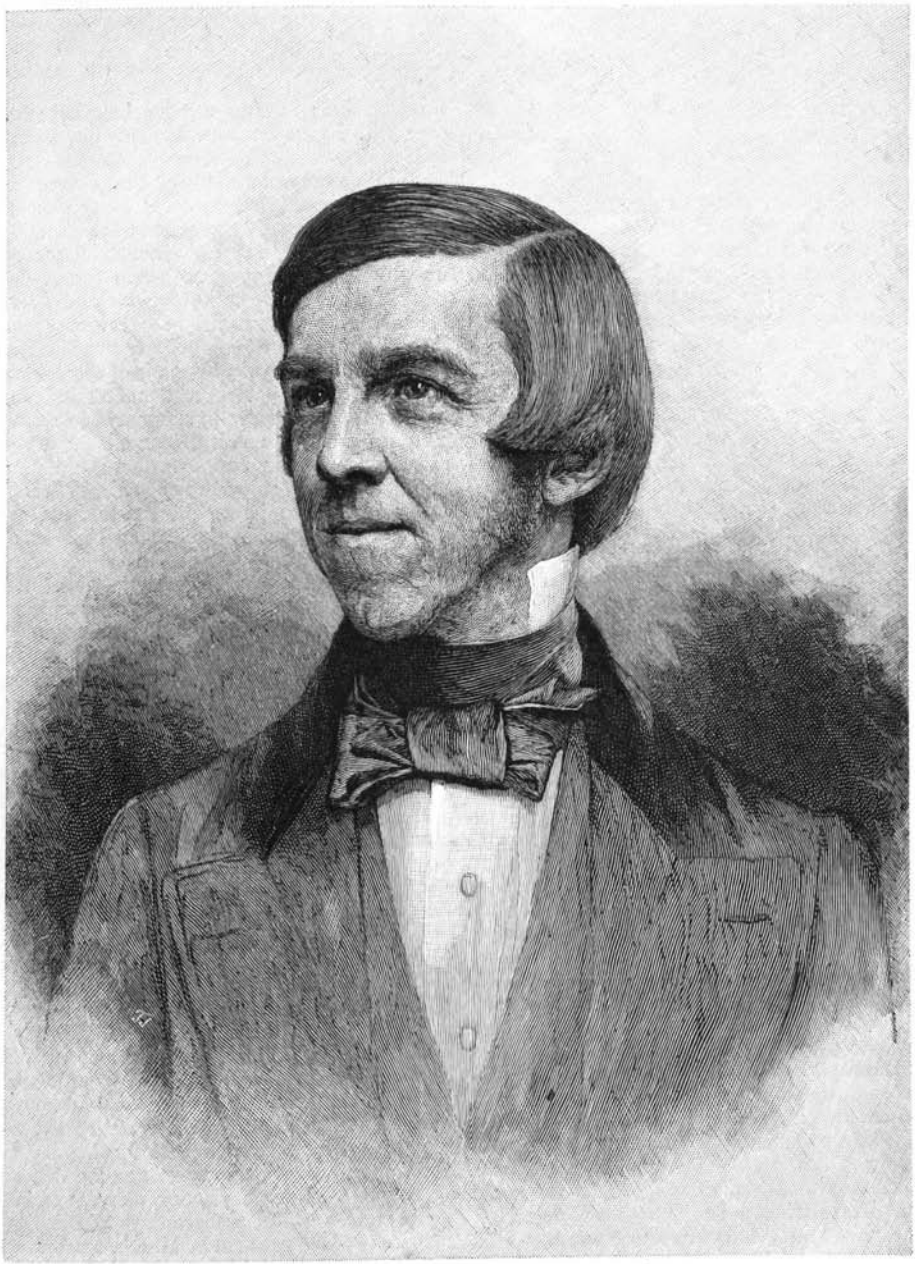


Oliver Wendell Holmes.

CANADA AS A WINTER RESORT.

WHEN the sarcastic Voltaire sneered at the New France which was lost to Louis XV. through the frivolous influence of a Pompadour and the ignorant indifference of the French court, he thought to gratify the vanity of his monarch by congratulating him upon getting rid of "those 1500 leagues of snow." This seems to have been the text which some modern tourists have taken for their descriptions of Canada; and it would be very amusing to collect such writings of early travelers, and to read them in January in Winnipeg, Toronto, Kingston, Montreal, Quebec, or Halifax, in face of the populations of these cities enjoying the gay delights of the snow in complete unconsciousness of the misery of their existence. Surely, then, the wind is tempered to the shorn Canadian lambs. But no! The more it blows and the more it snows, the better "Canucks" seem to like it.

It is only within the last quarter of a century that intelligent Europeans have really become ashamed of the Old World ignorance of America, which associated most of the continent, but especially the north, with eternal ice. How many supposed that polar bears and buffaloes were easily found about the suburbs of New York and Montreal! But how could an Englishman who has been brought up upon the damp and delusive pictures drawn by Spenser, Shakspere, Thomson, and a host of others, and who once every year passes through the long purgatory of a London winter,—how could he have any true conception of the charm and cheer to be got out of the dry snow, the bracing air, and the clear skies of the same season in Canada? How could any mortal who defines snow as "a wet, sticky substance, seven inches of which make one inch of water"; whose associations with it are full of slush in which he is more likely to drown than to drive; who lives where fogs, sleet, east winds, and suicidal blues are said to have made the English temperament what it is,—how could any soul, born and bred in such climatic conditions, be able to picture what a genuine Canadian winter means? Fancy what a difference it would have made to the literature of the world had the English poets had such a winter to write about. But Canada should yet produce the true poet of winter, for the true poetry of winter is here.

It would be folly to deny that winter has no dark side; but has not the balmiest summer, with its malaria and its many ills, a dark side too?

We do not pretend to say that Canada as a winter resort is suitable for every delicate invalid, but we do say that it is becoming popular, because the most beneficial for many invalids suffering from lung and throat diseases, for the whole train of nervous diseases brought on by overwork or overworry; and that it is possible to enjoy every hour here in a hundred ways in the open air of the coldest days, and to get far more benefit than even mountain or sea-shore in summer can bestow. You have only to test it to prove it. But you must not come in patent-leathers and light underclothing to enjoy the open air. It would be as absurd to go to the sea-side in July muffled to the eyes in woolens and bear-skin.

The historian who hopes to do justice to the development and idiosyncrasies of the Canadian people will find it impossible to ignore the molding influences of the winter. It is a peculiar fact that in a country containing three million and a half square miles, occupied by immense lakes and great prairies, there are fewer varieties of this particular season than in smaller countries of Europe corresponding in latitude. Excepting in strips along the ocean and lake coasts, the Canadian winter is strangely alike in its dry and bracing character; and, in fact, the same may be said of the climates of the other seasons. We have no fever-breeding miasmatic region from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and our winter is not the fickle fraud of New York and Illinois. Minnesota, Manitoba, and Quebec are much alike. Manitoba has the paradise of climates, summer and winter, and we shall soon see the invalid resorting there for restoration, instead of to Colorado or Florida. Every country and climate has drawbacks and disappointments. I can remember winters when we had heavy rain in Montreal; but these are very exceptional. The characteristic winter begins in December, has everything in good order for Christmas celebrations, is dry, clear, stimulating, except during the three days of the January thaw, and goes out in March, sometimes lion-like, often lamb-like. There is no part of the country in which it resembles the traditional damp and unpleasant season of England. Slight frosts, wet, windy days "to one thing constant never," warm changes,—it is this which cuts to the marrow. There are more

chilblains in New York than in all Canada. The winter diseases of England have hardly any existence in Canada from December to March. If you imagine for a moment that we are anxious to change the Canadian for any London or New York winter, I would commend you to drop in upon us almost any time from Christmas to March, and be in at the death of your own delusion. The "Winter Carnival" of Montreal has killed the superstition that our winter is inhospitable. Those who traduced it now come in thousands to enjoy it. To those who dreaded cold weather the season is something of a revelation. The atmosphere compels them to exertion, and exertion brings health.

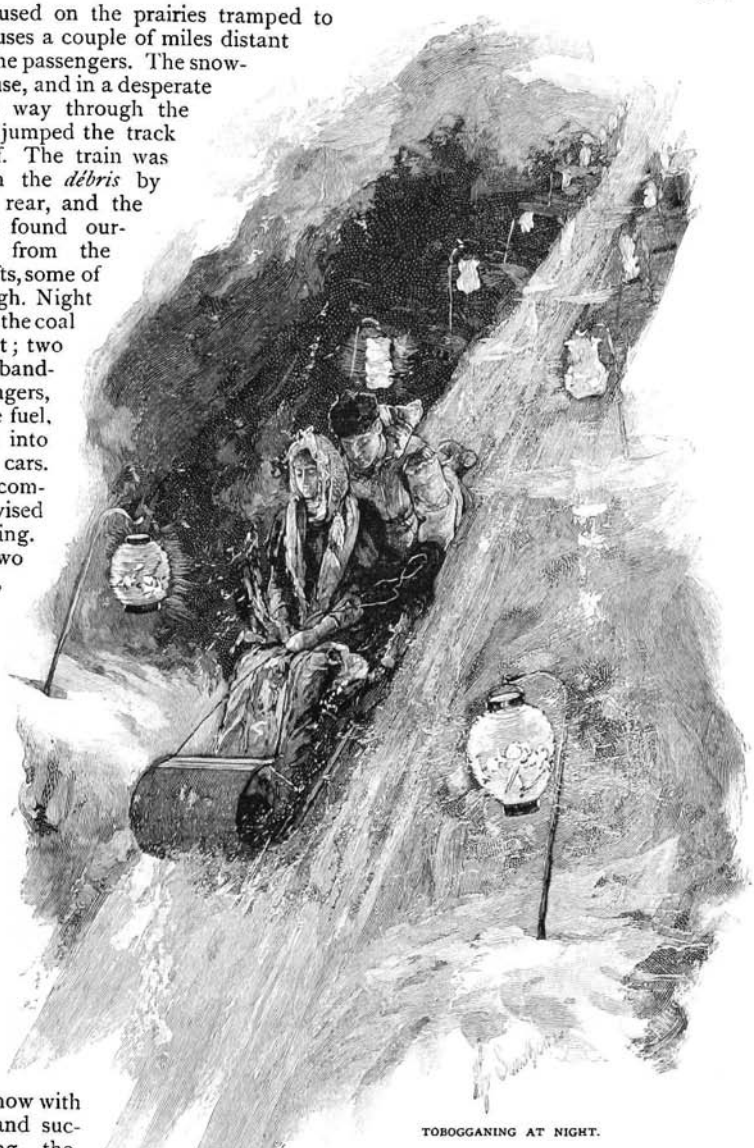
Nothing is truer than that the winter has an invigorating influence upon mankind. The Canadians are hardier and healthier than their cousins over the border, mainly because of this and of their indulgence in open-air exercises. Dr. Hurlburt, of Ottawa, who has given special attention to the subject of climates, shows very clearly, in his contrasts of the Old World with the New, that the regions of the Old which lie in latitudes and positions similar to the greater part of the United States, are inferior for the abode of man to those which correspond with Canada. He argues that our latitude is not only that in which the most valuable and abundant cereals and grasses are found, in which the ox, sheep, and horse find the most favorable conditions to health, but that in which man attains the greatest energy of body and mind; that from which have sprung the conquering races, and the races that best rule the rest of the world. In an interesting study of the regions of the Old and New Worlds lying in the same latitudes, he looks to a period when the population of five millions will become fifty millions, with the opening and development of the Dominion. He shows the value of frost as nature's own plowman in pulverizing the soil; the value of snow as a protector and a fertilizer; the importance to the farmer and lumberman of a season in which trees are more easily felled and drawn than in summer, land more easily cleared, produce more easily brought to market, and a great deal of work better done than could be done at any other time. It is well, too, that the land as well as the farmer should have a rest. To every picture there is a reverse side; but the reverse side is not the true side. Snow-blockades and drifts have their summer counterparts in mud and floods; but mud and floods are no true picture of summer. An invalid cannot enjoy a bracing air like a healthy man. There are people all the time dying "of the weather." Their bones are as sensitive to coming changes as a barometer. As I said before, it is by no means every delicate person who should make Canada his winter resort; but it is well known that our winters have cured chronic cases for which Colorado and Florida were alone supposed to be beneficial. Every winter numbers resort to Montreal, Quebec, Halifax, and Winnipeg for no other reason than that for which they once went to tropical climates. I know of patients who were regularly sent to Bermuda and the West Indies, and others to such winter climates as Nice, without more than temporary benefit, who were completely cured by the outdoor life of our Montreal and Quebec winters. Two years ago we had an exceptionally severe winter in Manitoba. Its severity and peculiarities were pre-

DRIVING IN THE STREETS OF MONTREAL.

CURLING.—"SOOP HER UP!"

cisely the same in Dakota and Minnesota. I was *en route* from Brandon to Winnipeg, a distance of one hundred and eighty miles by rail, and was caught in a snow-blockade which lasted eight days, and kept us in a situation not likely again to occur. The storm was so severe that relief-trains could not leave Winnipeg, and a couple of us who had the

long snow-shoes used on the prairies tramped to and from farm-houses a couple of miles distant for provisions for the passengers. The snow-plows were of no use, and in a desperate attempt to cut a way through the drifts, the engine jumped the track and came to grief. The train was pulled back from the *débris* by an engine in the rear, and the next morning we found ourselves separated from the wreck by deep drifts, some of them fifteen feet high. Night after night passed; the coal and wood ran short; two of the cars were abandoned by the passengers, and, to economize fuel, we were crowded into the two remaining cars. The sleeping accommodation improvised was very amusing. Fancy roosting two in a single seat, with your knees doubled up to your chin; or lying like sardines, four in a double seat; or propped on top of the back of the seats, which were turned up and brought together so as to form a sort of double-deck. Shovelers had been working day and night, but there were too few of them; and at last the passengers went to work, and from 9 A. M. until 5 P. M. pitched the snow with might and main, and succeeded in clearing the track. In order to pass the obstacle of the wrecked engine, we raised old rails, got ties and laid a new side-track on the hard snow, and our cars were safely shoved forward. Shovelers from Winnipeg had succeeded, with the snow-plow, in reaching us, and we were soon on our way. The effect of this exposure upon the health of many of the passengers was remarkably good. One clergyman who had come out from England for some affection of the throat, was determined to do his share of the shoveling. He had very thin moccasins on his feet, and during the day, as there was a warm wind, they were wet through. He never expected to see England again, but that one day's work cured him effectually. Other persons suffering from throat and lung affections have not since been troubled. One would suppose the conditions were just those to provoke illness, but the very reverse was the case.



TOBOGGANING AT NIGHT.

It is curious to observe the difference between the snow-fall in Manitoba and Quebec.

OLD INDIAN MAKING SNOW-SHOES.

In a heavy storm in Quebec, it falls lightly in large, fleecy flakes, and makes heavy tracks for snow-shoeing and sleighing. In Manitoba, as in Minnesota, it falls in crystals of a closer character, and packs so much finer and tighter that a square foot of it, after a dry storm, weighs nearly double that of Quebec snow. This density partly explains why, though only eighteen inches in depth, it remains so long on the ground. One can walk without snow-shoes on the top of high drifts immediately after a storm, and can travel very easily on the prairies on snow-shoes. In drifts the wooden shovel is of little use, owing to the compactness of the snow; and on the railway track snow-plows that would cut through a hundred yards in Quebec or Vermont will stick in Manitoba at thirty, as if they had run into a sand-bank. The Northern Pacific Railway, like the Canadian Pacific, has had the same difficulties to contend with; but they are not insurmountable, and the North-west snow, after all, is nothing to compare to that of Quebec. The study we have made, in Quebec especially, is one to convert Voltaire's "1500 leagues of snow" into a source of health and pleasure. I venture to assert the superiority of our Canadian climate, from Nova Scotia to the Rockies, and the hardier character and habits of the people, as displayed in their love of outdoor diversions, and the English fondness of hard work in these enjoyments. It may be that we devote too much attention to them; Americans do not devote enough. Athletic Rome did not decline when her sports were absorbing, but when they became brutal. Greece flourished most when her sports were most popular. You cannot trace all through our winter one taint of the vulgar or brutal in our enjoyments; they are as pure as the snow. You cannot find charity at any other season so generous. The poor suffer in every country and climate, but I believe they suffer less in Canada in winter than anywhere at any other time. There is a criminal pauperism with which no country can deal. The curse of drink brings its long train of evils, and it is no wonder if, in a Canadian winter, Jack Frost should have no mercy upon a class who have no pity for themselves.

The Province of Quebec, the ancient center of military, political, and ecclesiastical power under the French *régime*, must bear the palm of transforming winter into a national season of healthy enjoyment; and Montreal is the metropolis of the Snow King, as it is of commerce. You can have delightful days and weeks in Toronto, where ice-boating is brought to perfection, and the splendid bay is alive with the skaters and the winter sailors; or in curling or skating rink, or with the "Toronto Snow-shoe Club," when they meet at the Guns in Queen's Park for a tramp to Carleton, you may get a good company, and, at any rate, thorough pleasure. Kingston has its grand bay, its glorious toboggan slides on Fort Henry, its magnificent scope for sham-fights on the ice, its skating, curling, snow-shoeing, and its splendid roads. Winnipeg has its ambitious leaps into anything and everything which older cities possess. Halifax has its pleasant society, its garrison of British red-coats,—the only sight of them to be seen on the continent,—its lively winter brimful of everything the season in Canada is famed for. Quebec, ever glorious, kissing the skies up at its old citadel, is just the same rare old city, with its delightful mixture of ancient and modern, French and English; its vivacious ponies and its happy-go-lucky

A SKATING CARNIVAL.

cariole drivers; its rinks and its rollicking; its songs and its superstitions; its toboggan hill at Montmorenci, which nature has erected every year since the Falls first rolled over the cliffs; its hills and hollows, and its historic surroundings; its agreeable French-English society, the most charming brotherhood that ever shook hands over the past. Were it not for what Mr. Robert McGibbon and his committee invented for Montreal,—we mean the "Winter Carnival,"—Quebec would be the Mecca for tourists in winter. Indeed, they cannot complete their visit if they do not run down to Quebec for a day or two.

How shall I hope to describe what has been done to make Canada as a winter resort better known to all the world? The first snow-fall is an intoxicant. Boys go snow-mad. Montreal has a temporary insanity. The houses are prepared for the visit of King North Wind, and Canadians are the only people in the world who know how to keep warm outdoors as well as indoors. The streets are gay with life and laughter, and everybody seems determined to make the most of the great carnival. Business goes to the dogs. There is a mighty march of tourists and towns-people crunching over the crisp snow, and a constant jingle of sleigh-bells. If you go to any of the toboggan slides, you will witness a sight that thrills the onlooker as well as the toboganist. The natural hills were formerly the only resort; but some one introduced the Russian idea of erecting a high wooden structure, up one side of which you drag your toboggan, and down the other side of which you fly like a rocket. These artificial slides are the more popular, as they are easier of ascent, and can be made so as to avoid *cahots*, or bumps.

Within the last few years a score of regular toboggan clubs have been organized.

GOING TOBOGGANING.

Everybody has gone crazy on the subject, and men, women, and children revel in the dashing flight. The hills are lit by torches stuck in the snow on each side of the track, and huge bonfires are kept burning, around which gather picturesque groups. Perhaps of all sports of the carnival this is the most generally enjoyed by visitors. Some of the slides are very steep and look dangerous, and the sensation of rushing down the hill on the thin strip of basswood is one never to be forgotten.

"How did you like it?" asked a Canadian girl of an American visitor, whom she had steered down the steepest slide.

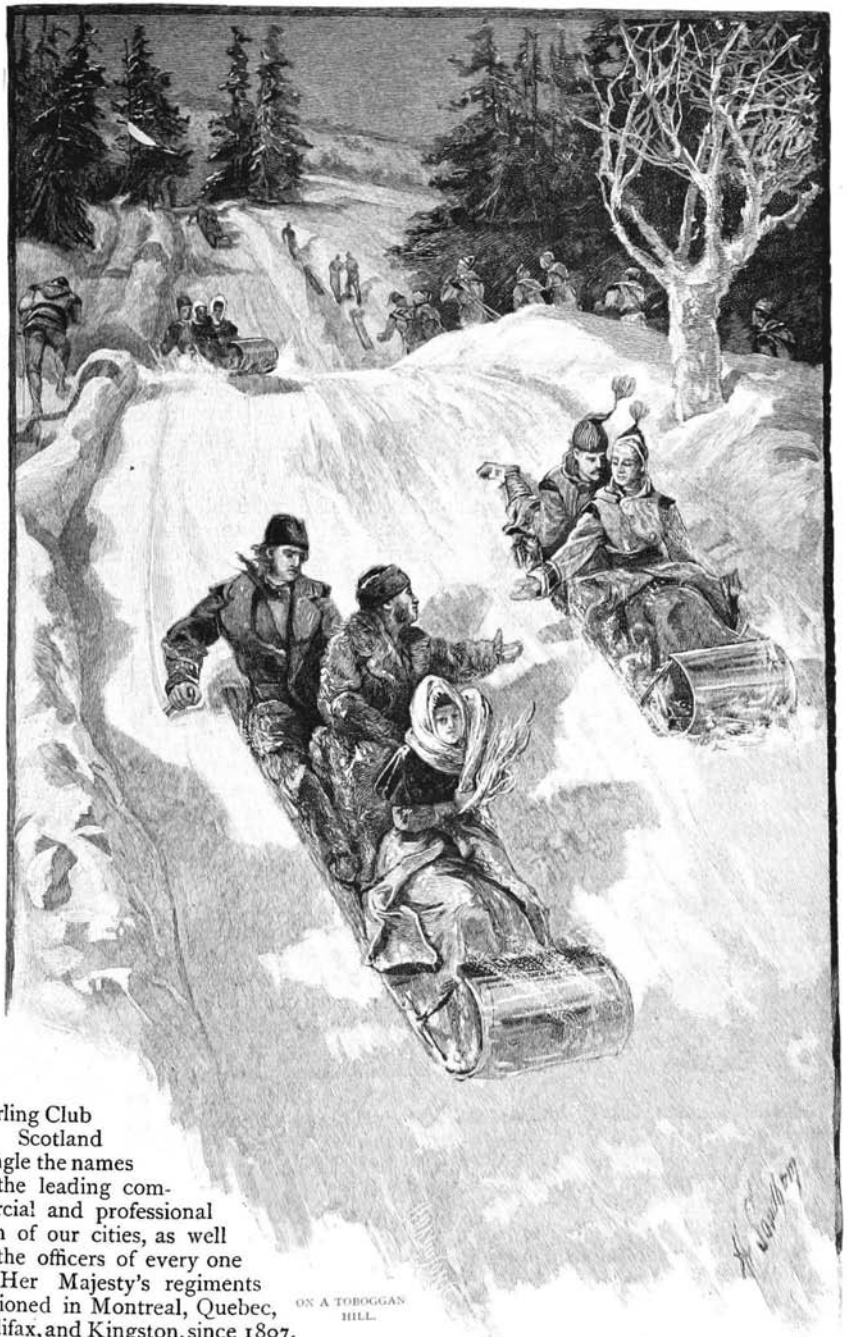
"Oh! I wouldn't have missed it for a hundred dollars!"

"You'll try it again, won't you?"

"Not for a thousand dollars!"

Perhaps, to some whose breath seems to be whisked from their bodies, this is the first reflection, but the fondness grows by practice, and now we read of these artificial slides in Boston, at Staten Island, and as far west as Detroit. Our tobogganing clubs have put a new spirit into the sport, and made it even more than ever one in which ladies can join.

In curling matters the Montreal Club, formed in 1807, leads a long array of enthusiastic successors, and the bonspiels attract hundreds of Scotchmen and their descendants from the principal cities of Canada and the United States. The associations of the Canadian branch of the Royal Caledonia



ON A TOBOGGAN HILL.

Curling Club of Scotland mingle the names of the leading commercial and professional men of our cities, as well as the officers of every one of Her Majesty's regiments stationed in Montreal, Quebec, Halifax, and Kingston, since 1807. The first time a French-Canadian *habitant* saw the game played at Quebec, he thought it was a sport of lunatics, and thus described it to his friends: "I saw to-day a gang of Scotchmen throwing on the ice large iron balls, shaped like

THE HEAD OF A SLIDE.

bomb-shells, after which they yelled *Soop! Soop!* laughing like fools, and I really think they were fools." But no one but a curler knows the keen delight in this famous Scottish sport.

There may be fleeter skaters than we can show in Canada, but nowhere in the world can you see such pictures of life and character on the ice, such brilliant tableaus, such melody and merriment, as at the fancy dress carnivals in our Victoria and other rinks. We have too much snow for general outdoor skating, but this is not neglected. The rinks, however, are charming resorts; and one of the most exquisite parts of the carnival are the evenings to be enjoyed there. Then you may see in the turn-out of the Tandem Club, with four-in-hand, unicorn or random, tandem, pairs, and single, and in that of the famed Montreal Fox Hunt, what Montreal has to show in the way of fine horses. The Ice Palace, ever beautiful, like a realization of a fairy-land dream, never palls upon the visitor. It is a constant and changing wonder of ice; a new revelation in crystal; "a thing of beauty" that, however, *does* "pass into nothingness" with the suns of spring.

But of all winter characteristics of Canada, snow-shoeing reigns supreme. It is the true national revel of robust "Canucks," who love the snow, however deep, and the storm, however stiff. In the short days and long nights, when the big log burns and glows on the broad fireplace, when the music of the wind whistles through chimney and crevice, and the snow-flakes are whizzing in mad race, the manly snow shoer hungers for the tramp on snow-shoes as the berserker longed for the sea. A few years ago I had only to tell of the existence of the Montreal, the Emerald, and the St. George's clubs; but the first, the alma mater of snow-shoeing, has of late years given birth to an extensive family from Halifax to Souris in Manitoba. From Mr. Becket's "Record" for 1883–84, I find that we have added "Le Canadien" and "Le Trappeur," the first French-Canadian clubs in Montreal; the Maple Leaf, the Argyle, the Athletic, the Custom House Club, the Wholesale Clothiers, the Prince of Wales, the Sixty-third Battalion Club, the St. Charles, St. Martin's, Wolseley, Alpine, Vandalia, Victoria, etc., etc.; while Toronto, Ottawa, Quebec, St. Hyacinthe, Winnipeg, Brandon, Souris, and Portage la Prairie all sent representatives to the carnival. When our American cousin was last under my care, as described in "Canadian Sports" in this magazine for August, 1877, I escorted him through the vicissitudes of snow-shoeing with the old "Montreal." "Evergreen Hughes" helped him out of many a drift. Alas! "Evergreen" is dead. Grant's dog "Monday" is dead, too, but he has a lively successor named "Keemo." Our prophet "Vennor" is dead, too; but the "Tuque Bleue" lives on and thrives, and looks now upon its numerous progeny with paternal eye. Let me show you its third-born,—for the Emerald was its first,—an active colonizing club, whose members to-day, including its Manitoba and St. Paul (Minnesota) branches, constitute the largest club in the Dominion.

I wonder if any of our Canadian saints of yore ever tramped through the forest on the Indian snow-shoe. How they would shake in their shoes could they rise from their graves, and on some Saturday afternoon meet hundreds of muscular Canadian Christians, ycleped "Saints of St. George," running wild in blanket-coat and tuque over the Mount Royal from whose summit Jacques Cartier gazed on the St. Lawrence, they intent on no better mission than the development of their muscle. And yet to all but the æsthetic human poodle, who contemns a sport that would split his stays, are they not worthy of the guerdon of praise?

In the Province of Quebec we have nearly all the saints in the calendar, from St. Adolphe to St. Zotique, and not a whit the better are we; for the old ecclesiastical idea of giving a village a good name to encourage its morality is about as successful an experiment as nam-

ing a babe Hercules to insure its strength. Many a saint-christened spot is notorious for its impiety; and Hercules, alas! has he not often died of teething, and instead of strangling even a new-born kitten in his crib, has he not often succumbed to convulsions in his nurse's lap? But our St. George, though he had long been immortalized in Canadian town and bay, has now descended from his noble steed to the snow-shoe. His good horse has gone off to look for grass, and from fighting dragons our saint now faces snow-storms. From patron of chivalry he has become one of the tutelary saints of the snow-shoe. Whether or not George of Cappadocia was identical with the saint of the Eastern Church, whether or not there was such a person at all, and the very dragon has to be destroyed along with other illusions, if you come to Montreal in winter, twice a week you may join the muster of his modern knighthood, and, in lieu of fiery steed and spear, rig yourself in the Tyrian purple-and-white of the "St. George's Snow-shoe Club," and meet your worst foe in the shape of a stiff storm or a high rail fence.

RACE BETWEEN A WHITE MAN AND AN INDIAN.

In my former article in this magazine, mentioned above, I gave a description of the manufacture and uses of the shoe, and the adventures of an American cousin in our Canadian sports. The reader will perhaps remember the pluck of the fellow in the vicissitudes of lacrosse, snow-shoeing, and tobogganing, and how, after parting company with his toboggan at a tree, he made for home with sprained hand and blackened eye, yet fully determined to come back and try his luck another winter. At that time the St. George's Club was only in its swaddling blanket as an offshoot of the time-honored "Montreal." But, owing likely to the perversity of human nature, which in a province of so many solemn dead saints insists upon at least one that is athletic and living, the St. George has won the heart of young Montreal, and has strengthened the sport by its manly rivalry. And if you were to spend a winter with us and follow the daily life of our athletes, you would not find it difficult to divine the reason why they are as a rule our successful business and professional men; for, however much the winter pastimes may be carried to extremes, they never tend to enervate or destroy. There is something in these indigenous Canadian sports that repels dissipation; and if it is true that the morals of a people are influenced by the character of their pastimes, why should not philosophers as well as athletes do all they can to promote those that have proved their superiority in this respect?

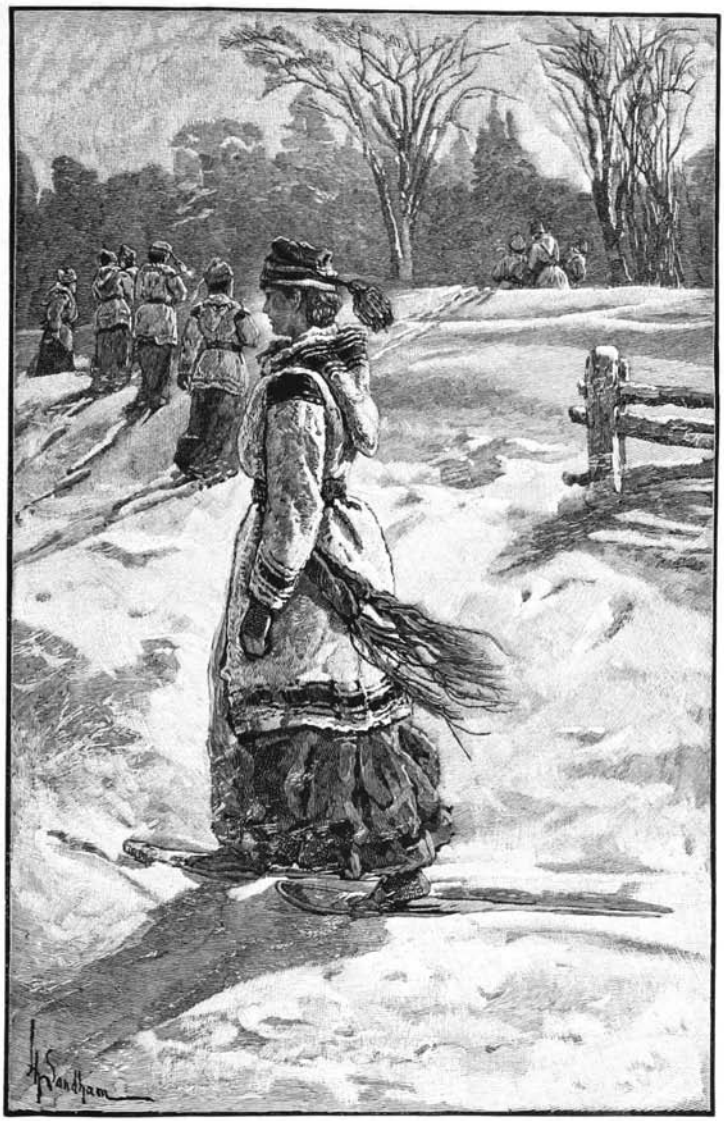
And why, too, should not our American cousin organize snow-shoe as well as lacrosse clubs? From Maine to California lacrosse is now flourishing; and surely there is no monopoly of snow in Canada to prevent the existence of American snow-shoe clubs. Sleigh-riding is a chill rival to it. Every pore of one's skin enjoys a tramp, while every

A BRUSH AT THE HURDLE.

pore shivers in a drive. Will you let me tempt you to meet us at McGill College gate sharp at three o'clock, Saturday afternoon? The day is cold and clear, and the crisp snow like fine sand is not too deep. And there, again, is our cousin from over the border, feeling perfectly at home on his shoes, and able to enjoy the memory of his own old mishaps, as well as the misfortunes of the novice. He has honorably won his spurs.

We have crossed Mount Royal every Tuesday night during the season, and startled prim propriety by the traditional frolic at Côte des Neiges.

Our Saturday afternoons have found us at the old and favorite rendezvous of St. Laurent, St. Vincent de Paul, Sault au Recollet, Bord à Plouffe, Longue Point, etc.; but Lachine — our tramp to-day — has long been a historic spot in the annals of the oar and the snow-shoe. There it was that Champlain thought the river above led to China, so he named the place Lachine. There it was, in the days of snow-shoeing yore, that the fathers of the Montreal Club wakened the villagers with their lusty songs after a long tramp. It is always a popular walk across country in the face of the sun. The saints are out to-day in force. The purple of the club is worn in stockings and mitts, and joined with white in the tuque. The white blanket-coat and capote are trimmed with purple or scarlet; and a pretty effect is given to the costume by the scarlet sash. A scarlet cross of St. George is worn on the left breast. Captain Henshaw, the president of the club, takes the lead. We start and fall into any sort of disorder until we reach the top of the hill of Côte St. Antoine, whence we have a fine view of the frozen St. Lawrence, in the far distance, and



THE "WHIPPER-IN" OF THE LADIES' SNOW-SHOE CLUB.

the Green Mountains of Vermont. Where the cross-roads meet, we strap on our shoes, and in Indian file follow our leader at a steady, swinging pace. The "whipper-in" takes the rear to give the novice or the lazy a lift, but not even Brother Jonathan needs his help to-day. The snow covered the fences last year, but this winter we have about forty to get over before we reach Lachine, and in some spots the cabbages stick up their ugly stalks, frozen stiff, to twist a shoe or stub a toe. "Number off!" shouts our leader. "No. 1," "No. 2," and so on until the whipper-in sings out, "No. 50! All up!" The pace increases, and, excepting an occasional nip at one's ears, Jack Frost is soon forgotten as the fellows warm to the work. Here and there a saint may drop out of the line to tie a loose strap. A pretty pic-

SUPPER AT THE CLUB-HOUSE.

ture it is as the snow-shoers turn down into a gully, some slipping, some recovering from a threatened upset by a feat of balancing, and then, still in Indian file, getting over the fence, every man in his own peculiar way. Some take it at a leap, others climb it cautiously; some roll over sideways in a lump, pitching feet and snow-shoes before them; some are too slowly careful, and, catching a shoe in the top rail, measure their full length in the snow. There is no stopping here, for we are far from road and railroad out in the open country, with several miles of field before us and twenty fences in the way. Most of the farmers, with fellow-feeling, have left a few rails down, so that there is no obstruction; but a tramp is as tame without a tumble as without a fence, so here goes for your five-feet-ten! Never was there charger could take a high fence like a snow-shoer. St. George himself would have been unhorsed, and his steed would have stuck hopelessly at the first leap, or would have broken his own and his rider's neck, unless, like Pegasus, he could have been ridden through the air. The very dragon would never in the world have wriggled out of such a drift, but would have been found in a week, stiff as an icicle, ready for bottling. But the saints are independent of the deepest drifts. Neither animal nor engine can follow them. As an old Montreal Club song goes:

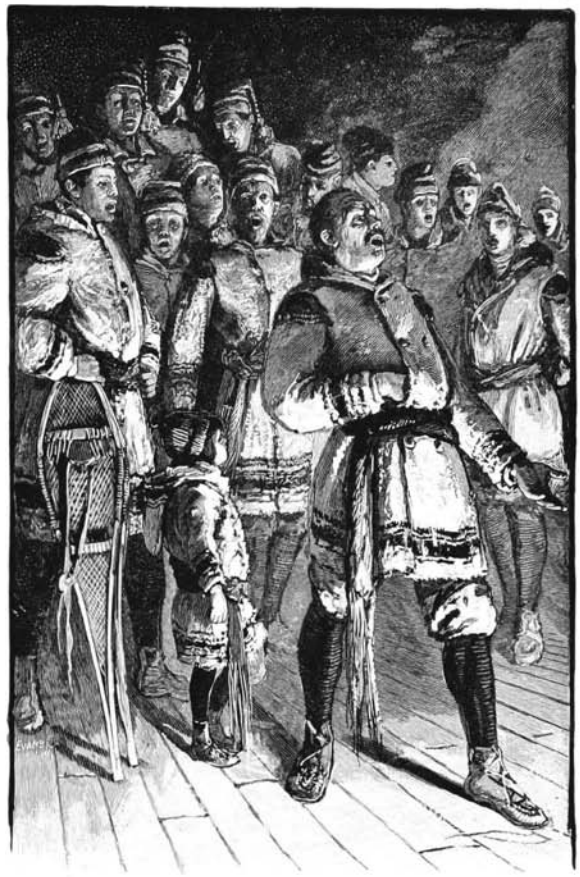
"Men may talk of steam and railroads,
But too well our comrades know
We can beat the fastest engines
In a night tramp on the snow.
They may puff, sir, they may blow, sir,
They may whistle, they may scream,—
Gently dipping, lightly tipping
Snow-shoes leave behind the steam!"

You can judge a snow-shoer by his grit at the fences. If he is fat or fagged, he will crawl between the rails, or coolly take them down if he can. If he is lusty and in trim, he puts both hands on the top rail and over he goes with a vault. Now the fields are level, and we have got into the swing which comes with practice, and one feels as if he could almost fly. Mercury's winged shoes must have given origin to the snow-shoe. Hilloa! There as we cross a drift stands the young wife of a farmer at a well, as if she were some sort of a Venus in wooden *sabots* that had just emerged from the water. "Oh! mademoiselle, *je meurs de soif!*" boldly gasps No. 1. And, of course, they are all as thirsty as No. 1, but he speaks French, and Venus seems to enjoy it. Evidently he is paying her more than the ordinary compliments of the season, for she toddles off in her *sabots* for home, while the fellows start off at a run to catch up to the file ahead, who had no soul for beauty and no taste for well-water.

We cross the railway track a mile or two

from our rendezvous. A locomotive shoots past us with a train of cars. We cross a stone fence and over a long field, where we meet an *habitant* holding his horse's head until the saints pass; for the nag, though used to the engine's screech, is scared at the yell of the saints on snow-shoes. The highway is blocked, and a road marked with cedar-trees has been made through the fields. "Whoa! whoa!" shout the saints, and the more they roar the more the horse rears; but the little box-sleigh is too square to upset, and the *habitant* has a tight grip. The saints are soon out of sight over a bank, and the farmer goes on his peaceful way.

And now we are in sight of Mrs. Hanna's hospitable home for all the votaries of all sorts of sport and athletics. The lazy fellows who have driven out by the road are there at the gate to see the "Tally-ho," as the leader gives the word, and a general rush for the house is made. The icicles are hanging in pendants from whisker and mustache, and even from eyelashes, as from the eaves of a house; and from top to toe the saints are covered with snow. Shoes are unstrapped or kicked out of their fastening, icicles pulled or thawed off, snow whisped off stockings and moccasins, blanket-coats and tuques pitched off, and piled up with the shoes in corners, and preparation made for dinner; for appetites are ravenous, and there is no midnight terror to be extracted from anything such stomachs can digest. Add the sweet sauce of hunger to appetizing hot joints, and you may fancy how very unlike Carthusian monks are these unorthodox saints. Here one may learn, perhaps, how the "jolly old monks of old" ate, like good muscular Christians, with cheerful chat and humor. By and by the tables are cleared, and the "tramps" lie around in happy disorder on the floor, a few on the sofa, and some on chairs, while the pet dogs of the club run around among their legs. Now the new saint is rushed upon, seized, and "canonized" or "bounced." This is done by as many members as can get a grip of the man from his head to his heels.



A SNOW-SHOE CONCERT.

The Montreal Club elevate their man to the ceiling, but the St. George's originated a new sensation, less likely to leave its mark on the house or the member. The victim is lifted bodily from the floor, and requested to "stiffen out." Two ranks of snow-shoers, facing each other, form down the whole length of the room, and the new man is held by about a dozen members at the top of the files. With a "One, two, three!" he is then jerked with full force down the ranks, and is caught in the arms of the lower files, who in turn shy him back again. He is then restored to his perpendicular, qualified to enter the sacred number of the saints. Visitors are always treated to this mark of club esteem; and as it is an excellent tonic and never hurts anybody, it is, as a rule, taken more cheerfully than other prescriptions for a disordered liver.

It is really a picturesque sight to see the saints in purple jerseys and blanket knickerbockers

SNOW-SHOEING BY TORCHLIGHT.

lounge about the room, and take their turn in the impromptu frolic of the evening. "A song!" calls some one. A member sits down at the piano. The singers lean against it in careless attitude, and in an off-hand, easy way give us whatever they like, and we all join vigorously in the chorus. "Jones's song!" Jones doesn't feel in the humor, and will not face the music. He is much too cozy there on the floor, with his pet pipe in his mouth and a favorite dog in his arms; but a couple of volunteers delicately induce him by taking him by the back of the neck, or hauling him out by his heels. "And so he plays his part." "Brown's song!" Loud applause as this broth of a boy steps forward and gives us his own inimitable "Irish Coterie," accompanied with a peculiarly amusing dance. No peace for a popular singer, so he is encored, and has us all in roars of laughter with his stump speech spoken with the *habitant* French accent, and translated into very broken English. Two visitors put their heads in at the door. "Bounce them!" is the cry, and the saints rush upon them and put them through the parallel movement. "A song! A song!" And as one happens to be a pure and unadulterated Scotchman, we have a rousing Highland air, and then he and his Irish friend join in a dance made up of a Highland fling and an Irish jig. A strange dog, not of the Order of St. George, shows his nose, and our pets resent the intrusion by a united assault. The saint at the piano strikes up a quadrille, and the snow-shoer's original is performed by several sets. In fact, the dancing of all kinds is one of the unique features, and every one puts his own individuality into it; some smoking as they dance; some with their tuques on their heads.

Now and then they come down in a heap upon the loungers on the floor, and an unrecognizable tangle of bodies struggle under and over one another in a rough-and-tumble, which excites nobody but the dogs. "Robinson's song!" An undecided look, and out he comes by the heels, and gives us a splendid German air and recitation. Then "the Lachine contingent" have their turn, and contribute their quota. Then a waltz, more songs, and finally the saints stand up as if the weight of the empire were on their shoulders, and sing the national anthem of "God Save the Queen"; and Brother Jonathan, hat off, joins in the chorus from the bottom of his heart. The frolic is over; blanket-coats and shoes are put on again. With a hearty cheer for Mrs. Hanna, we are off again, over the same fields and fences. The moon has risen, and the sky is a splendid blue. About eleven o'clock home is reached, the saints pull off their rigs and say their prayers, and tumble into delicious bed, feeling that in the afternoon's sport they have realized in a measure the wish that Endymion asked of Jupiter — always to be young, and to sleep as much as he would. For of all specifics for sleep, commend me to such a tramp with such good company; and if there are busy and bothered brains that feel like the French financier when he lamented that there was no slumber to be sold in any market, let them follow the snow-shoers for one week, and they can save money and secure sleep.

But think not, O growler, that these weekly tramps are the chief and only end of the club. For many a year the old "Montreal" contributed its musical talent for the benefit of languishing charities, hospitals, and country churches. A new departure was made by the St. George's in the shape of a drama entitled "A Winter's Night," written by a member of the club, Mr. F. Colson, and introducing pictures of life and character on snow-shoes as well as the club songs. The piece was performed in public for the benefit of the General Hospital, and was the great success of the dramatic season.

During the month of St. Valentine, the saints hold their annual races. The season of lacrosse was capital training for those who intended to run on this occasion. The weekly musters give the members a pretty fair idea of their own mettle. A Saturday afternoon is chosen, and the beauty and fashion of the city rally to encourage the favorite sport. The Indians generally open the day with a two-mile race. The best time made by an Indian was by Karonawie, an Iroquois, who ran the two miles in eleven minutes and seven seconds on an eight-ounce pair of racing snow-shoes. The good average time is twelve minutes. Half-mile, quarter, flat and hurdle one hundred yards, half-mile in full club dress, and boys' races occupy an afternoon. The prizes are presented to the winners at the annual club dinner in the evening. A dinner is as notable a way of closing or commemorating any event in Canada as it is in England; and the remark of Douglas Jerrold, that if the world was convulsed by an earthquake, a number of Englishmen would be sure to find a corner to lay a table-cloth, is as applicable here as across the ocean. When the few days' slush of early spring has come, and the green is peeping out through the thin white covering, the snow-shoer hangs his shoes in the shape of a St. Andrew's cross on the wall of his bedroom, beside his foils and his boxing-gloves and a quaint collection of old and modern pipes and pictures, hoping that when next winter arrives he may be here to see.

W. George Beers.

RAIN IN THE NIGHT.

I SIT by myself;
I hear the rain patter;
And down in the embers
The fire-light is dead.
I sit by myself:
I heed not the matter;
My soul but remembers
The tears that are fled.

I sit by myself:
The dream and the sorrow
Together are ended,
Together are dead.
I sit by myself:
I wait for the morrow;
Where sunlight is blended
With tears that are fled.

Samuel Willoughby Duffield.

THE BOSTONIANS.*

BY HENRY JAMES,

Author of "Portrait of a Lady," "Daisy Miller," "Lady Barberina," etc.

I.

"OLIVE will come down in about ten minutes; she told me to tell you that. About ten; that is exactly like Olive. Neither five nor fifteen, and yet not ten exactly, but either nine or eleven. She didn't tell me to say she was glad to see you, because she doesn't know whether she is or not, and she wouldn't for the world expose herself to telling a fib. She is very honest, is Olive Chancellor; she is full of rectitude. Nobody tells fibs in Boston; I don't know what to make of them all. Well, I am very glad to see you, at any rate."

These words were spoken with much volubility by a fair, plump, smiling woman who entered a narrow drawing-room in which a visitor, kept waiting for a few moments, was already absorbed in a book. The gentleman had not even needed to sit down to become interested; apparently he had taken up the volume from a table as soon as he came in, and standing there, after a single glance round the apartment, had lost himself in its pages. He threw it down at the approach of Mrs. Luna, laughed, shook hands with her, and said in answer to her last remark, "You imply that *you* do tell fibs. Perhaps that is one."

"Oh, no; there is nothing wonderful in my being glad to see you," Mrs. Luna rejoined, "when I tell you that I have been three long weeks in this unprevaricating city."

"That has an unflattering sound for me," said the young man. "I pretend not to prevaricate."

"Dear me, what's the good of being a Southerner?" the lady asked. "Olive told me to tell you she hoped you will stay to dinner. And if she said it, she does really hope it. She is willing to risk that."

"Just as I am?" the visitor inquired, presenting himself with rather a workaday aspect.

Mrs. Luna glanced at him from head to foot, and gave a little smiling sigh, as if he had been a long sum in addition. And, indeed, he was very long, Basil Ransom, and he even looked a little hard and discouraging, like a column of figures, in spite of the friendly face which he bent upon his hostess's deputy, and which, in its thinness, had a deep dry line, a sort of premature wrinkle, on either side of the mouth. He was tall and lean, and dressed throughout in black; his shirt-collar was low and wide, and the triangle of linen, a little crumpled, exhibited by the opening of his waistcoat, was adorned by a pin containing a small red stone. In spite of this decoration the young man looked poor—as poor as a young man could look who had such a fine head and such magnificent eyes. Those of Basil Ransom were dark, deep, and glowing; his head had a character of elevation which fairly added to his stature; it was a head to be seen above the level of a crowd, on some judicial bench or political platform, or even on a bronze medal. His forehead was high and broad, and his thick black hair, perfectly straight and glossy, and without any division, rolled back from it in a leonine manner. These things, the eyes especially, with their smoldering fire, might have indicated that he was to be a great American statesman; or, on the other hand, they might simply have proved that he came from Carolina or Alabama. He came, in fact, from Mississippi, and he spoke very perceptibly with the accent of that country. It is not in my power to reproduce by any combination of characters this charming dialect; but the initiated reader will have no difficulty in evoking the sound, which is to be associated in the present instance with nothing vulgar or vain. This lean, pale, sallow, shabby, striking young man, with his superior head, his sedentary shoulders, his expression of bright grimness and hard enthusiasm, his provincial, distinguished appearance, is, as a representative of his sex, the most important personage in my narrative; he played a very active part in the events I have undertaken in some degree to explain. And yet the reader who likes a complete image, who desires to read with the senses as well as with the reason, is entreated not to forget that he prolonged his consonants and swallowed his vowels, that he was guilty of elisions and interpolations which were equally unexpected, and that his discourse was pervaded by something sultry and vast, something almost African in its rich, basking tone, something that suggested the teeming