

VII

ACROSS THE CAPE

WHEN we have returned from the seaside, we sometimes ask ourselves why we did not spend more time in gazing at the sea; but very soon the traveler does not look at the sea more than at the heavens. As for the interior, if the elevated sand-bar in the midst of the ocean can be said to have any interior, it was an exceedingly desolate landscape, with rarely a cultivated or cultivable field in sight. We saw no villages, and seldom a house, for these are generally on the Bay side. It was a succession of shrubby hills and valleys, now wearing an autumnal tint. You would frequently think, from the character of the surface, the dwarfish trees, and the bear-berries around, that you were on the top of a mountain. The only wood in Eastham was on the edge of Wellfleet. The pitch pines were not commonly more than fifteen or eighteen feet high. The larger ones were covered with lichens, — often hung with the long gray usnea. There is scarcely a white pine on the forearm of the Cape. Yet in the northwest part of Eastham, near the Camp-Ground, we saw, the next summer, some quite rural, and even sylvan retreats, — for the Cape, — where small rustling groves of oaks and locusts and whispering pines, on perfectly level ground, made a little paradise. The locusts, both transplanted and growing naturally about the houses

there, appeared to flourish better than any other tree. There were thin belts of wood in Wellfleet and Truro, a mile or more from the Atlantic, but, for the most part, we could see the horizon through them, or, if extensive, the trees were not large. Both oaks and pines had often the same flat look with the apple trees. Commonly, the oak woods twenty-five years old were a mere scraggy shrubbery nine or ten feet high, and we could frequently reach to their topmost leaf. Much that is called "woods" was about half as high as this, — only patches of shrub oak, bayberry, beach plum, and wild roses, overrun with woodbine. When the roses were in bloom, these patches in the midst of the sand displayed such a profusion of blossoms, mingled with the aroma of the bayberry, that no Italian or other artificial rose garden could equal them. They were perfectly elysian, and realized my idea of an oasis in the desert. Huckleberry bushes were very abundant, and the next summer they bore a remarkable quantity of that kind of gall called huckleberry-apple, forming quite handsome though monstrous blossoms. But it must be added, that this shrubbery swarmed with wood ticks, sometimes very troublesome parasites, and which it takes very horny fingers to crack.

The inhabitants of these towns have a great regard for a tree, though their standard for one is necessarily neither large nor high; and when they tell you of the large trees that once grew here, you must think of them, not as absolutely large, but large compared with the present generation. Their "brave old oaks," of which they speak with so much respect, and which they will

point out to you as relics of the primitive forest, one hundred or one hundred and fifty, ay, for aught they know, two hundred years old, have a ridiculously dwarfish appearance, which excites a smile in the beholder. The largest and most venerable which they will show you in such a case are, perhaps, not more than twenty or twenty-five feet high. I was especially amused by the Lilliputian old oaks in the south part of Truro. To the inexperienced eye, which appreciated their proportions only, they might appear vast as the tree which saved his royal majesty, but measured they were dwarfed at once almost into lichens which a deer might eat up in a morning. Yet they will tell you that large schooners were once built of timber which grew in Wellfleet. The old houses also are built of the timber of the Cape; but instead of the forests in the midst of which they originally stood, barren heaths, with poverty-grass for heather, now stretch away on every side. The modern houses are built of what is called "dimension timber," imported from Maine, all ready to be set up, so that commonly they do not touch it again with an axe. Almost all the wood used for fuel is *imported* by vessels or currents, and of course all the coal. I was told that probably a quarter of the fuel and a considerable part of the lumber used in North Truro was driftwood. Many get *all* their fuel from the beach.

Of birds not found in the interior of the State, — at least in my neighborhood, — I heard, in the summer, the black-throated bunting (*Fringilla Americana*) amid the shrubbery, and in the open land the upland plover (*Totanus Bartramius*), whose quivering notes were ever

and anon prolonged into a clear, somewhat plaintive yet hawk-like scream, which sounded at a very indefinite distance. The bird may have been in the next field, though it sounded a mile off.

To-day we were walking through Truro, a town of about eighteen hundred inhabitants. We had already come to Pamet River, which empties into the Bay. This was the limit of the Pilgrims' journey up the Cape from Provincetown, when seeking a place for settlement. It rises in a hollow within a few rods of the Atlantic, and one who lives near its source told us that in high tides the sea leaked through, yet the wind and waves preserve intact the barrier between them, and thus the whole river is steadily driven westward butt end foremost, — fountain-head, channel, and lighthouse at the mouth, all together.

Early in the afternoon we reached the Highland Light, whose white tower we had seen rising out of the bank in front of us for the last mile or two. It is fourteen miles from the Nauset Lights, on what is called the Clay Pounds, an immense bed of clay abutting on the Atlantic, and, as the keeper told us, stretching quite across the Cape, which is here only about two miles wide. We perceived at once a difference in the soil, for there was an interruption of the desert, and a slight appearance of a sod under our feet, such as we had not seen for the last two days.

After arranging to lodge at the lighthouse, we rambled across the Cape to the Bay, over a singularly bleak and barren-looking country, consisting of rounded hills and hollows, called by geologists diluvial elevations

and depressions, — a kind of scenery which has been compared to a chopped sea, though this suggests too sudden a transition. There is a delineation of this very landscape in Hitchcock's Report on the Geology of Massachusetts, a work which, by its size at least, reminds one of a diluvial elevation itself. Looking southward from the lighthouse, the Cape appeared like an elevated plateau, sloping very regularly, though slightly, downward from the edge of the bank on the Atlantic side, about one hundred and fifty feet above the ocean, to that on the Bay side. On traversing this we found it to be interrupted by broad valleys or gullies, which become the hollows in the bank when the sea has worn up to them. They are commonly at right angles with the shore, and often extend quite across the Cape. Some of the valleys, however, are circular, a hundred feet deep, without any outlet, as if the Cape had sunk in those places, or its sands had run out. The few scattered houses which we passed, being placed at the bottom of the hollows, for shelter and fertility, were, for the most part, concealed entirely, as much as if they had been swallowed up in the earth. Even a village with its meeting-house, which we had left little more than a stone's throw behind, had sunk in the earth, spire and all, and we saw only the surface of the upland and the sea on either hand. When approaching it, we had mistaken the belfry for a summer-house on the plain. We began to think that we might tumble into a village before we were aware of it, as into an ant-lion's hole, and be drawn into the sand irrecoverably. The most conspicuous objects on the land were a distant windmill, or a

meeting-house standing alone, for only they could afford to occupy an exposed place. A great part of the township, however, is a barren, heath-like plain, and perhaps one third of it lies in common, though the property of individuals. The author of the old "Description of Truro," speaking of the soil, says, "The snow, which would be of essential service to it provided it lay level and covered the ground, is blown into drifts and into the sea." This peculiar open country, with here and there a patch of shrubbery, extends as much as seven miles, or from Pamet River on the south to High Head on the north, and from ocean to bay. To walk over it makes on a stranger such an impression as being at sea, and he finds it impossible to estimate distances in any weather. A windmill or a herd of cows may seem to be far away in the horizon, yet, after going a few rods, he will be close upon them. He is also deluded by other kinds of mirage. When, in the summer, I saw a family of blueberries a mile off, walking about amid the dwarfish bushes which did not come up higher than their ankles, they seemed to me to be a race of giants, twenty feet high at least.

The highest and sandiest portion next the Atlantic was thinly covered with beach-grass and indigo-weed. Next to this the surface of the upland generally consisted of white sand and gravel, like coarse salt, through which a scanty vegetation found its way up. It will give an ornithologist some idea of its barrenness if I mention that the next June, the month of grass, I found a nighthawk's eggs there, and that almost any square rod thereabouts, taken at random, would be an eligible

site for such a deposit. The kildeer plover, which loves a similar locality, also drops its eggs there, and fills the air above with its din. This upland also produced cladonia lichens, poverty-grass, savory-leaved aster (*Diplopappus linariifolius*), mouse-ear, bear-berry, etc. On a few hillsides the savory-leaved aster and mouse-ear alone made quite a dense sward, said to be very pretty when the aster is in bloom. In some parts the two species of poverty-grass (*Hudsonia tomentosa* and *ericoides*), which deserve a better name, reign for miles in little hemispherical tufts or islets, like moss, scattered over the waste. They linger in bloom there till the middle of July. Occasionally near the beach these rounded beds, as also those of the sea sandwort (*Honkenya peploides*), were filled with sand within an inch of their tops, and were hard, like large ant-hills, while the surrounding sand was soft. In summer, if the poverty-grass grows at the head of a Hollow looking toward the sea, in a bleak position where the wind rushes up, the northern or exposed half of the tuft is sometimes all black and dead like an oven-broom, while the opposite half is yellow with blossoms, the whole hillside thus presenting a remarkable contrast when seen from the poverty-stricken and the flourishing side. This plant, which in many places would be esteemed an ornament, is here despised by many on account of its being associated with barrenness. It might well be adopted for the Barnstable coat-of-arms, in a field *sableux*. I should be proud of it. Here and there were tracts of beach-grass mingled with the seaside goldenrod and beach pea, which reminded us still more forcibly of the ocean.

We read that there was not a brook in Truro. Yet there were deer here once, which must often have panted in vain; but I am pretty sure that I afterward saw a small fresh-water brook emptying into the south side of Pamet River, though I was so heedless as not to taste it. At any rate, a little boy near by told me that he drank at it. There was not a tree as far as we could see, and that was many miles each way, the general level of the upland being about the same everywhere. Even from the Atlantic side we overlooked the Bay, and saw to Manomet Point in Plymouth, and better from that side because it was the highest. The almost universal bareness and smoothness of the landscape were as agreeable as novel, making it so much the more like the deck of a vessel. We saw vessels sailing south into the Bay, on the one hand, and north along the Atlantic shore, on the other, all with an aft wind.

The single road which runs lengthwise the Cape, now winding over the plain, now through the shrubbery, which scrapes the wheels of the stage, was a mere cart-track in the sand, commonly without any fences to confine it, and continually changing from this side to that, to harder ground, or sometimes to avoid the tide. But the inhabitants travel the waste here and there pilgrim-wise and staff in hand, by narrow foot-paths, through which the sand flows out and reveals the nakedness of the land. We shuddered at the thought of living there and taking our afternoon walks over those barren swells, where we could overlook every step of our walk before taking it, and would have to

pray for a fog or a snow-storm to conceal our destiny. The walker there must soon eat his heart.

In the north part of the town there is no house from shore to shore for several miles, and it is as wild and solitary as the Western Prairies—used to be. Indeed, one who has seen every house in Truro, will be surprised to hear of the number of the inhabitants, but perhaps five hundred of the men and boys of this small town were then abroad on their fishing-grounds. Only a few men stay at home to till the sand or watch for blackfish. The farmers are fishermen-farmers and understand better plowing the sea than the land. They do not disturb their sands much, though there is a plenty of seaweed in the creeks, to say nothing of blackfish occasionally rotting on the shore. Between the Pond and East Harbor Village there was an interesting plantation of pitch pines, twenty or thirty acres in extent, like those which we had already seen from the stage. One who lived near said that the land was purchased by two men for a shilling or twenty-five cents an acre. Some is not considered worth writing a deed for. This soil or sand, which was partially covered with poverty and beach grass, sorrel, etc., was furrowed at intervals of about four feet and the seed dropped by a machine. The pines had come up admirably and grown the first year three or four inches, and the second six inches and more. Where the seed had been lately planted the white sand was freshly exposed in an endless furrow winding round and round the sides of the deep hollows in a vortical, spiral manner, which produced a very singular effect, as if you

were looking into the reverse side of a vast banded shield. This experiment, so important to the Cape, appeared very successful, and perhaps the time will come when the greater part of this kind of land in Barnstable County will be thus covered with an artificial pine forest, as has been done in some parts of France. In that country 12,500 acres of downs had been thus covered in 1811 near Bayonne. They are called *pignadas*, and according to Loudon "constitute the principal riches of the inhabitants, where there was a drifting desert before." It seemed a nobler kind of grain to raise than corn even.

A few years ago Truro was remarkable among the Cape towns for the number of sheep raised in it; but I was told that at this time only two men kept sheep in the town, and in 1855, a Truro boy ten years old told me that he had never seen one. They were formerly pastured on the unfenced lands or general fields, but now the owners were more particular to assert their rights, and it cost too much for fencing. The rails are cedar from Maine, and two rails will answer for ordinary purposes, but four are required for sheep. This was the reason assigned by one who had formerly kept them for not keeping them any longer. Fencing-stuff is so expensive that I saw fences made with only one rail, and very often the rail when split was carefully tied with a string. In one of the villages I saw the next summer a cow tethered by a rope six rods long, the rope long in proportion as the feed was short and thin. Sixty rods, ay, all the cables of the Cape, would have been no more than fair. Tethered in the desert for

fear that she would get into Arabia Felix! I helped a man weigh a bundle of hay which he was selling to his neighbor, holding one end of a pole from which it swung by a steelyard hook, and this was just half his whole crop. In short, the country looked so barren that I several times refrained from asking the inhabitants for a string or a piece of wrapping-paper, for fear I should rob them, for they plainly were obliged to import these things as well as rails, and where there were no news-boys, I did not see what they would do for waste paper.

The objects around us, the makeshifts of fishermen ashore, often made us look down to see if we were standing on terra firma. In the wells everywhere a block and tackle were used to raise the bucket, instead of a windlass, and by almost every house was laid up a spar or a plank or two full of auger-holes, saved from a wreck. The windmills were partly built of these, and they were worked into the public bridges. The lighthouse-keeper, who was having his barn shingled, told me casually that he had made three thousand good shingles for that purpose out of a mast. You would sometimes see an old oar used for a rail. Frequently also some fair-weather finery ripped off a vessel by a storm near the coast was nailed up against an outhouse. I saw fastened to a shed near the lighthouse a long new sign with the words "ANGLO SAXON" on it in large gilt letters, as if it were a useless part which the ship could afford to lose, or which the sailors had discharged at the same time with the pilot. But it interested somewhat as if it had been a part

of the Argo, clipped off in passing through the Symplegades.

To the fisherman, the Cape itself is a sort of store-ship laden with supplies, — a safer and larger craft which carries the women and children, the old men and the sick, and indeed sea phrases are as common on it as on board a vessel. Thus is it ever with a seagoing people. The old Northmen used to speak of the “keel-ridge” of the country, that is, the ridge of the Doffrafield Mountains, as if the land were a boat turned bottom up. I was frequently reminded of the Northmen here. The inhabitants of the Cape are often at once farmers and sea-rovers; they are more than vikings or kings of the bays, for their sway extends over the open sea also. A farmer in Wellfleet, at whose house I afterward spent a night, who had raised fifty bushels of potatoes the previous year, which is a large crop for the Cape, and had extensive salt-works, pointed to his schooner, which lay in sight, in which he and his man and boy occasionally ran down the coast a-trading as far as the Capes of Virginia. This was his market-cart, and his hired man knew how to steer her. Thus he drove two teams afield,

“ere the high *seas* appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn.”

Though probably he would not hear much of the “gray-fly” on his way to Virginia.

A great proportion of the inhabitants of the Cape are always thus abroad about their teaming on some ocean highway or other, and the history of one of their ordinary trips would cast the Argonautic expe-

dition into the shade. I have just heard of a Cape Cod captain who was expected home in the beginning of the winter from the West Indies, but was long since given up for lost, till his relations at length have heard with joy, that, after getting within forty miles of Cape Cod light, he was driven back by nine successive gales to Key West, between Florida and Cuba, and was once again shaping his course for home. Thus he spent his winter. In ancient times the adventures of these two or three men and boys would have been made the basis of a myth, but now such tales are crowded into a line of shorthand signs, like an algebraic formula in the shipping news. “Wherever over the world,” said Palfrey in his oration at Barnstable, “you see the stars and stripes floating, you may have good hope that beneath them some one will be found who can tell you the soundings of Barnstable, or Wellfleet, or Chatham Harbor.”

I passed by the home of somebody’s (or everybody’s) Uncle Bill, one day over on the Plymouth shore. It was a schooner half keeled up on the mud; we aroused the master out of a sound sleep at noonday, by thumping on the bottom of his vessel till he presented himself at the hatchway, for we wanted to borrow his clam-digger. Meaning to make him a call, I looked out the next morning, and lo! he had run over to “the Pines” the evening before, fearing an easterly storm. He outrode the *great* gale in the spring of 1851, dashing about alone in Plymouth Bay. He goes after rockweed, lighters vessels, and saves wrecks. I still saw him lying in the mud over at “the Pines”

in the horizon, which place he could not leave if he would, till flood tide. But he would not then probably. This waiting for the tide is a singular feature in life by the seashore. A frequent answer is, "Well! you can't start for two hours yet." It is something new to a landsman, and at first he is not disposed to wait. History says that "two inhabitants of Truro were the first who adventured to the Falkland Isles in pursuit of whales. This voyage was undertaken in the year 1774, by the advice of Admiral Montague of the British navy, and was crowned with success."

At the Pond Village we saw a pond three eighths of a mile long densely filled with cat-tail flags, seven feet high, — enough for all the coopers in New England.

The western shore was nearly as sandy as the eastern, but the water was much smoother, and the bottom was partially covered with the slender grass-like seaweed (*Zostera*), which we had not seen on the Atlantic side; there were also a few rude sheds for trying fish on the beach there, which made it appear less wild. In the few marshes on this side we afterwards saw samphire, rosemary, and other plants new to us inlanders.

In the summer and fall sometimes, hundreds of blackfish (the social whale, *Globicephalus melas* of De Kay; called also black whale-fish, howling whale, bottle-head, etc.), fifteen feet or more in length, are driven ashore in a single school here. I witnessed such a scene in July, 1855. A carpenter who was working at the lighthouse, arriving early in the morning, remarked that he did not know but he had lost fifty dollars by coming to his work; for as he came along the

Bay side he heard them driving a school of blackfish ashore, and he had debated with himself whether he should not go and join them and take his share, but had concluded to come to his work. After breakfast I came over to this place, about two miles distant, and near the beach met some of the fishermen returning from their chase. Looking up and down the shore, I could see about a mile south some large black masses on the sand, which I knew must be blackfish, and a man or two about them. As I walked along towards them I soon came to a large carcass whose head was gone and whose blubber had been stripped off some weeks before; the tide was just beginning to move it, and the stench compelled me to go a long way round. When I came to Great Hollow I found a fisherman and some boys on the watch, and counted about thirty blackfish, just killed, with many lance wounds, and the water was more or less bloody around. They were partly on shore and partly in the water, held by a rope round their tails till the tide should leave them. A boat had been somewhat stove by the tail of one. They were a smooth, shining black, like india-rubber, and had remarkably simple and lumpish forms for animated creatures, with a blunt, round snout or head, whale-like, and simple, stiff-looking flippers. The largest were about fifteen feet long, but one or two were only five feet long, and still without teeth. The fisherman slashed one with his jack-knife, to show me how thick the blubber was, — about three inches; and as I passed my finger through the cut it was covered thick with oil. The blubber looked like pork, and this man said that

when they were trying it the boys would sometimes come round with a piece of bread in one hand, and take a piece of blubber in the other to eat with it, preferring it to pork scraps. He also cut into the flesh beneath, which was firm and red like beef, and he said that for his part he preferred it when fresh to beef. It is stated that in 1812 blackfish were used as food by the poor of Bretagne. They were waiting for the tide to leave these fishes high and dry, that they might strip off the blubber and carry it to their try-works in their boats, where they try it on the beach. They get commonly a barrel of oil, worth fifteen or twenty dollars, to a fish. There were many lances and harpoons in the boats, — much slenderer instruments than I had expected. An old man came along the beach with a horse and wagon distributing the dinners of the fishermen, which their wives had put up in little pails and jugs, and which he had collected in the Pond Village, and for this service, I suppose, he received a share of the oil. If one could not tell his own pail, he took the first he came to.

As I stood there they raised the cry of “another school,” and we could see their black backs and their blowing about a mile northward, as they went leaping over the sea like horses. Some boats were already in pursuit there, driving them toward the beach. Other fishermen and boys running up began to jump into the boats and push them off from where I stood, and I might have gone too had I chosen. Soon there were twenty-five or thirty boats in pursuit, some large ones under sail, and others rowing with might and main,

keeping outside of the school, those nearest to the fishes striking on the sides of their boats and blowing horns to drive them on to the beach. It was an exciting race. If they succeed in driving them ashore each boat takes one share, and then each man, but if they are compelled to strike them off shore each boat's company take what they strike. I walked rapidly along the shore toward the north, while the fishermen were rowing still more swiftly to join their companions, and a little boy who walked by my side was congratulating himself that his father's boat was beating another one. An old blind fisherman whom we met, inquired, “Where are they, I can't see. Have they got them?” In the meanwhile the fishes had turned and were escaping northward toward Provincetown, only occasionally the back of one being seen. So the nearest crews were compelled to strike them, and we saw several boats soon made fast, each to its fish, which, four or five rods ahead, was drawing it like a race-horse straight toward the beach, leaping half out of water, blowing blood and water from its hole, and leaving a streak of foam behind. But they went ashore too far north for us, though we could see the fishermen leap out and lance them on the sand. It was just like pictures of whaling which I have seen, and a fisherman told me that it was nearly as dangerous. In his first trial he had been much excited, and in his haste had used a lance with its scabbard on, but nevertheless had thrust it quite through his fish.

I learned that a few days before this one hundred and eighty blackfish had been driven ashore in one school at Eastham, a little farther south, and that the keeper

of Billingsgate Point light went out one morning about the same time and cut his initials on the backs of a large school which had run ashore in the night, and sold his right to them to Provincetown for one thousand dollars, and probably Provincetown made as much more. Another fisherman told me that nineteen years ago three hundred and eighty were driven ashore in one school at Great Hollow. In the Naturalists' Library, it is said that, in the winter of 1809-10, one thousand one hundred and ten "approached the shore of Hvalfiord, Iceland, and were captured." De Kay says it is not known why they are stranded. But one fisherman declared to me that they ran ashore in pursuit of squid, and that they generally came on the coast about the last of July.

About a week afterward, when I came to this shore, it was strewn, as far as I could see with a glass, with the carcasses of blackfish stripped of their blubber and their heads cut off; the latter lying higher up. Walking on the beach was out of the question on account of the stench. Between Provincetown and Truro they lay in the very path of the stage. Yet no steps were taken to abate the nuisance, and men were catching lobsters as usual just off the shore. I was told that they did sometimes tow them out and sink them; yet I wondered where they got the stones to sink them with. Of course they might be made into guano, and Cape Cod is not so fertile that her inhabitants can afford to do without this manure, — to say nothing of the diseases they may produce.

After my return home, wishing to learn what was

known about the blackfish, I had recourse to the reports of the zoölogical surveys of the State, and I found that Storer had rightfully omitted it in his Report on the Fishes, since it is not a fish; so I turned to Emmons's Report of the Mammalia, but was surprised to find that the seals and whales were omitted by him because he had had no opportunity to observe them. Considering how this State has risen and thriven by its fisheries, — that the legislature which authorized the Zoölogical Survey sat under the emblem of a codfish, — that Nantucket and New Bedford are within our limits, — that an early riser may find a thousand or fifteen hundred dollars' worth of blackfish on the shore in a morning, — that the Pilgrims saw the Indians cutting up a blackfish on the shore at Eastham, and called a part of that shore "Grampus Bay," from the number of blackfish they found there, before they got to Plymouth, — and that from that time to this these fishes have continued to enrich one or two counties almost annually, and that their decaying carcasses were now poisoning the air of one county for more than thirty miles, — I thought it remarkable that neither the popular nor scientific name was to be found in a report on our mammalia, — a *catalogue* of the productions of our land and water.

We had here, as well as all across the Cape, a fair view of Provincetown, five or six miles distant over the water toward the west, under its shrubby sand-hills, with its harbor now full of vessels, whose masts mingled with the spires of its churches, and gave it the appearance of a quite large seaport town.

The inhabitants of all the lower Cape towns enjoy thus the prospect of two seas. Standing on the western or larboard shore, and looking across to where the distant mainland looms, they can say, This is Massachusetts Bay; and then, after an hour's sauntering walk, they may stand on the starboard side, beyond which no land is seen to loom, and say, This is the Atlantic Ocean.

On our way back to the lighthouse, by whose white-washed tower we steered as securely as the mariner by its light at night, we passed through a graveyard, which apparently was saved from being blown away by its slates, for they had enabled a thick bed of huckleberry bushes to root themselves amid the graves. We thought it would be worth the while to read the epitaphs where so many were lost at sea; however, as not only their lives, but commonly their bodies also, were lost or not identified, there were fewer epitaphs of this sort than we expected, though there were not a few. Their graveyard is the ocean. Near the eastern side we started up a fox in a hollow, the only kind of wild quadruped, if I except a skunk in a salt marsh, that we saw in all our walk (unless painted and box tortoises may be called quadrupeds). He was a large, plump, shaggy fellow, like a yellow dog, with, as usual, a white tip to his tail, and looked as if he had fared well on the Cape. He cantered away into the shrub oaks and bay-berry bushes which chanced to grow there, but were hardly high enough to conceal him. I saw another the next summer leaping over the top of a beach plum a little farther north, a small arc of his course (which I

trust is not yet run), from which I endeavored in vain to calculate his whole orbit; there were too many unknown attractions to be allowed for. I also saw the exuviae of a third fast sinking into the sand, and added the skull to my collection. Hence, I concluded that they must be plenty thereabouts; but a traveler may meet with more than an inhabitant, since he is more likely to take an unfrequented route across the country. They told me that in some years they died off in great numbers by a kind of madness, under the effect of which they were seen whirling round and round as if in pursuit of their tails. In Crantz's account of Greenland, he says, "They [the foxes] live upon birds and their eggs, and, when they can't get them, upon crowberries, mussels, crabs, and what the sea casts up."

Just before reaching the lighthouse, we saw the sun set in the Bay,—for standing on that narrow cape was, as I have said, like being on the deck of a vessel, or rather at the masthead of a man-of-war, thirty miles at sea, though we knew that at the same moment the sun was setting behind our native hills, which were just below the horizon in that direction. This sight drove everything else quite out of our heads, and Homer and the Ocean came in again with a rush,—

'Εν δ' ἔπεισ' Ὀκεανῷ λαμπρὸν φάος ἡελίοιο,

the shining torch of the sun fell into the ocean.