

CHAPTER III.

Portland in Maine.—Kennebec River.—Timber Trade.—Fossil Shells at Gardiner.—Augusta, the Capital of Maine.—Legal Profession: Advocates and Attorneys.—Equality of Sects.—Religious Toleration.—Calvinistic Theology.—Day of Doom.

Sept. 25, 1845.—HERE we are at mid-day flying along at the rate of twenty-five and occasionally thirty miles an hour, on our way to Portland, the chief city of Maine. It was only yesterday afternoon that we left Boston, and in less than three hours we performed what would have been formerly reckoned a good day's journey of forty⁵/₄ five miles, had seen at Portsmouth some collections of natural history, and afterward gone to a ball. In the forenoon of this day I have made geological excursions on both banks of the Piscataqua, and before dark shall have sailed far up the Kennebec. It is an agreeable novelty to a naturalist to combine the speed of a railway and the luxury of good inns with the sight of the native forest—the advantages of civilization with the beauty of unreclaimed nature—no hedges, few plowed fields, the wild plants, trees, birds, and animals undisturbed.

Cheap as are the fares, these railroads, I am told, yield high profits, because the land through which they run costs nothing. When we had traversed a distance of about sixty miles, the cars glided along some rails over the wharf at Portland, and we almost stepped from our seats on to the deck of the *Huntress* steamer, which was ready to convey us to the mouth of the Kennebec river.

After threading a cluster of rocky islands adorned with fir and birch in the beautiful Bay of Casco, we came to the Sound, and for a short space were in the open sea, with no view but that of a distant coast. As there was nothing to see, we were glad to be invited to dinner, and were conducted to the gentlemen's cabin, a sort of sunk story, to which the ladies, or the women of every degree, were, according to the usual etiquette, taken down first, and carefully seated at the table by the captain, before the