

four months of the year made up for it all. About the middle of October navigation closed. How well I remember the quiet of the placé. Once a month the mail came, when it didn't miss.

The religion of the inhabitants was Roman Catholic. There was no regular priest stationed there, but one came occasionally. We had no schools, and no amusements except private parties, and these were principally card parties. All ladies played whist and piquet. The other set had their balls. The children were happy in making houses in the snow-drifts, and in sliding down hill, or coasting, as it is now called. In the autumn of 1823, the ice made very early, but owing to high winds and a strong current in the straits, the ice would break up over and over again, and was tossed to and fro, until it become piled up in clear, towering, blue masses. These immense blocks extended from island to island, block piled upon block to a great height, so that all that met the eye were beautiful mountains of ice, with gorges of exquisite light and shade. A beautiful sight, indeed, on a sunny day. As soon as the mass became sufficiently solid, the soldiers—for Mackinaw had been a military post for years, held in turn by the French, British, and Americans—and the fishermen turned out and cut a road through the ice from one island to the other. This was necessary, as fire-wood had to be procured from the opposite island. The fishermen also had to cut places for their nets.

A sleigh-ride through that road-way was novel and grand; and in a dog-sled it was at times in a degree terrifying. On each side a high wall of ice, nothing to be seen but the sky above; the road so winding that one seemed hemmed in by the high masses of ice, until a sharp turn brought him into the road again. With horse and cutter, which at a late date had been introduced on the island, it was a charming drive-way.

Some seasons the lakes and basins would be clear of ice, except as great cakes of it would fill the shore; it was piled so high at times, as to exclude all sight of the water, except through occasional glacial openings. Other seasons the ice would be as smooth as possible. Spring always came late at Mackinaw, and it used