Ashes.

Nothing but a boutoniere
Of wild flowers, dead and dry;
Nothing but some violets fair
That lived in days gone by.
Nothing but a tress of hair,
That binds them round and round,
Oh, but in those ashes there
What memories are bound!

The Montagnais at Betshiamits.

It was my good fortune this summer to visit the Indian village at Betshiamits, which is situated on the banks of the St. Lawrence, about eighty miles east of the Saguenay. There, in a village of about thirty small square houses, dwell the Montagnais; a tribe of Indians still retaining many of the old customs of earlier days, and as yet uncontaminated by contact with the whites.

The parsonage, chapel, Father Arnaud's interesting museum of natural history and Indian antiquities, and Hudson Bay Company's store, together with a genuine glimpse of simple Indian life, form a combination of more than ordinary interest. The village is scattered along the top of the bank which rises above the sand beach, its white houses seeming out of place. The Indians had them built many years ago, and find them very convenient for storing away duffle not taken to the woods, and for living in when they are at the village, for they only stay there during the summer months. Although the houses are comfortable, here and there will be seen a family who cannot give up the primitive wigwam of birch bark, and have consequently erected one in the yard, preferring its airy, but at the same time somewhat cramped, quarters, to the spacious "maison."

As usual, the women do the drudgery of the camp, bringing in the wood, fishing, etc. They wear a singularly picturesque article of dress,—the Montagnais cap, with its alternate red and black pieces meeting at the top, and its band of bright silk embroidery; they also wear a bright red shawl on state occasions. The men wear ordinary store clothes with a red sash. The artistic effect of these costumes is better brought out when a number of them are grouped together, as was the case when I first saw them about six o'clock on a bright-August morning. It was the occasion of a funeral of one of their number, and according to custom the entire village turned out to do honor in holiday attire to the departed one.

Betshiamits is the Indian's Bar Harbor, his summer resort by the sea-side, where he lives in comparative luxury and enjoys a taste of civilization. The wigwam is still his favorite abode, and its shape and construction have not changed for hundreds of years. It is formed like the mound of a muskrat, an elliptical dome, being made of bent poles covered with a strip of birch bark; there is a window at each end covered with cotton cloth, and a door in the centre so low that it is necessary on entering to crawl on one's hands and knees. Once inside you find yourself in a dimly-lighted room about eighteen feet long, seven feet wide, and ten feet high.

In all probability you will find eight or ten Indians of both sexes squatted on the floor in all possible attitudes, some sewing, some sleeping, but most of them taking a grand loaf. As there were no beds or shelves, everything was stored overhead by being tied to the poles. It was rather startling to feel something hitting the back of your head, and perhaps on turning around the cause of the annoyance would be a baby with bead-like black eyes, suspended in a small hammock from those doubly useful poles.

Although very hospitable, it is very hard to start a conversation with the Indians, especially the squaws. If you speak to them they will pretend in many cases not to understand you, or will grant your request without answering. This reserve is probably owing to the command of the priests not to have any intercourse with the white men. But there was always one subject you could strike the men on,—the