

Monday, August 21st. In camp in the home-mead at Stafholt.

UP pretty early and away at about eleven on a bright warm morning that put us all in good spirits. About the country there is not much to say, because we partly retraced our road of Saturday, and for the rest it was the same sort of country, ledges of rock making shallow valleys grown about with birch-bushes; the same mountains were in the distance also, and too far off for our short day's journey to change them much. We stopped for coffee at a bonder's house, which I have got put down as Giallar-loekjar,¹ but can't find in the map, and after a short ride thence came into a wide plain across which we could see Stafholt lying on a slope under a grey ledge of rock on the other side of a wide shallow clear river, North-water (Norðrá). The river is rockless and sandy, and has an evil reputation for quicksands, the only experience of which that we had was C. J. F. floundering in the black sand up to his saddle-girths as soon as he took the water. Over the river we passed through pleasant pastures to the dean's stead, where his wife in his absence gave us good welcome in a pleasant house though now growing somewhat old. We were to have two beds in the house, for Magnússon and Evans, which latter was somewhat sick still, and C. J. F. and I pitched our tent in the tún for the

¹ Probably Galtarhorn, which is the only place-name that suits.
E.M.

Stafholt

rest. We dined luxuriously off roast mutton at 8 p.m.; but the dean came home at nine and was very cheerful and glad to see us: he swore a good deal in his talk, but swearing in a foreign tongue does not sound very dreadful. He showed us two very handsome seventeenth century brass candlesticks out of his church, by the way.

So to bed in our tent, where in the dead of night C. J. F. and I quarrelled—in this wise; I who upon my honour was lying awake, heard him snoring violently, but bore it well for a time, till it rose to a roaring snuffing climax, and I thought I should go mad, and shouted out “damn!” This woke C. J. F. who said, as if he had never been asleep in his life, and in a most disagreeable tone of voice, just as if he were seeking a quarrel,

“What’s the matter now?”

Justly indignant at this speech and the tone of it, I said rather hotly,

“You were snoring like the devil.”

He (and in a most unpleasant tone, as if I *must* always be in the wrong),

“I have been awake for half an hour.”

I (still indignant, but willing in my good nature to give him a loop-hole for honourable escape),

“You must have been snoring awake then, and I wish the Devil you wouldn’t.”

He (sourly and obstinately), “It so happens that I particularly noticed that I was awake, for I was thinking that the wind was getting up and that it might rain in the night, and that I had better move the things from the tent-walls.”

I (rather curtly, for I was getting roused), “Why did you snore then?”

He, “I didn’t.”

I, “You did.”

He, “It was you who were snoring, and dreamed it was I.”

Indignation should have kept me silent after this, but I thought it disrespectful not to answer an old friend, so I exerted myself to say: “It so happens that I particularly noticed

that I was awake, for I was just thinking of getting up to Stafhol
move the gun-case away from the tent-walls."

He (most disagreeably) "Rubbish!"

Speechless indignation now indeed: and so to sleep.