

nothing but a few sandwiches having been partaken of since early morning, it was satisfactory to learn that a station, with hotel alongside, were situated just about three-quarters of a mile further on, and thither we at once repaired, and were shortly afterwards discussing an elaborate menu of beef-steak, ham and eggs, tea and bread and butter. Had we been stranded out of reach of civilization, i.e. with no means of procuring food, I do not like to think of what the feelings of one of the party would have been; his poignant regret, his unsatisfied cravings, possibly his physical suffering, for one cannot forgive everything.

If one was asked to describe Rivière-à-Pierre, the place where for the time being we were taking up our compulsory abode, the description might briefly be summarized as follows:—

Location—Very pretty; river, wood, and mountain scenery.

Accommodation—Hotel Rivière-à-Pierre.

Amusements—Croquet; the hotel and surrounding cottages (habitants) possessing good hard earth grounds.

Attractions—Four trains a day, by any of which it can be left.

We reached Rivière-à-Pierre expecting to stay one or two hours; we stayed twenty-one. * We dined, had supper, and breakfasted there. We sat on the verandah of the hotel and played on its croquet ground. We explored the immediate neighbourhood, and stood on its bridge, gazing down into the limpid depths of the Rivière-à-Pierre. And all the time there were rumours of the time of arrival of the train which had left Roberval that morning; rumours of large washouts, and small breaks on the line higher up; rumours of departure that night for Roberval, of returning to Quebec: and then the sun declined, the air grew cool, the shadows of evening deepened—and we were still at Rivière-à-Pierre.

About a quarter to eight, a light engine came down the line with our friend of the morning on it. He had gone up early in the afternoon to inspect, and now reported the train close behind, crowded with passengers, as it had not run for two days. It is said that it is the unexpected which happens: we expected that train, and it did not come. An hour passed and there was no sign of it,—not the faintest sound by straining the ear, not the faintest vibration by touching the metals. The light engine, or those on it, had seen its headlight on the further side of a bad break more than an hour before; the break had been practically repaired, and it should have followed the engine down at once. There was undoubtedly cause for anxiety; and it was a relief to all, officials as well as others, when at last its whistle was heard.

To us, the belated, stranded passengers, who had left Quebec in high hope just twelve hours before, there remained three courses of action:—To return to Quebec with the passengers just arrived from Roberval; to