

Among the rivers which fall into Lake St. John is the Mistassini, called also R. des Sables, from the great quantity of sand which it brings down. By this river, which has a length of about 150 miles, the Indians known by the name of Mistassins, and living around the great lake of that name, were accustomed to descend at Pointe Bleue, the most northern trading-post in this region, where they sold their furs. They still come down every year in the month of June for the purpose of trade, and also to meet the missionary who pays them an annual visit. It was by this river that Michaux proposed to pass to Hudson's Bay. Leaving the post at Pointe Bleue on the 21st August, he reached in a few hours the river Mistassini. The waters were shallow, and for five or six leagues flowed through banks of moving sands, which were sometimes more than half a league long. The lands on either side were low and fertile, no mountains were visible, and the trees were chiefly elms, ashes, and pines, of a good growth.* At the end of about eighteen leagues Michaux arrived at a beautiful waterfall about eighty feet in height, and on the evening of the 22nd August encamped on the borders of the basin below.

This point which was known as Larges Rapides, Michaux observed as the northern limit of *Potentilla tridentata*, while *Gaultheria procumbens*† disappeared ten leagues above Lake St. John, although Hooker, in his *Flora Boreali-Americana*, has indicated Quebec as its northern limit.

The 23rd being a day of rain, Michaux remained in camp; but the three following days he continued the ascent of the river, which became narrower, and so rapid that the canoes could only be propelled by means of poles. At length he reached the portage called *Monte-à-peine*, where he was obliged to make a difficult and even dangerous ascent of a hill eight or nine hundred feet in height. From the summit he looked down into an immense valley, traversed by green hills which resembled great waves in an ocean of verdure. A single small river alone broke the monotony of this landscape; to it the travellers directed their steps, and soon reached a stream which was only about eighteen feet wide. During

* Flora, in Canada ad amnem *Mistassini*, vol. i, fol. 34, 61, 110.

† Some botanists have ventured to change the name of this plant to *Gautiera*; but the true orthography of the name of its discoverer is *Gauthier*, as appears from the registers of Notre Dame de Quebec (Register of Aug. 26, 1751). It would besides be undesirable to change a name consecrated like this by long use.