

NOTES ON THE LAKE ST. JOHN COUNTRY,

BY E. T. CHAMBERS.

The Lake St. John region is about one hundred miles north of the city of Quebec, and has for the last two years been the subject of much attention, from the fact that it contains a large amount of very fertile land, and has a climate remarkably mild for such a northern situation,—a fertility and temperature much better than is enjoyed by the settlers around the old fortress city, and nearly equal to that of Montreal. Separated from Quebec by the Laurentian Mountains, the tedious journey was a great hindrance to its settlement, but during the last five or six years a first-class railway has been constructed from the old capital to the very borders of the lake. This, after running some forty miles westward to the pretty town of St. Raymond, in the fertile valley of the St. Anne river, turns to the north, boldly making its way through the midst of the mountains, and after a course of 137 miles more, reaches the town of Chambord near the Lake St. John. A branch line of five miles goes to the mouth of the Metabetchouan where a steamboat is able to come close to the shore. A few notes on this somewhat remarkable route and on the lake itself may be, perhaps, of some interest.

After leaving the alluvial clay of the river St. Charles at Quebec, the track has a somewhat steep incline of 132 feet in the mile. At St. Ambroise, about ten miles from Quebec, it passes through the post-pleiocene in a cutting, and two or three years ago, before they were overgrown with herbage, the banks on each side exhibited a large deposit of shells of *Saxicava rugosa* and *Mya truncata*, chiefly of the former, and in such quantities that the banks were quite white. I am told by the railway people that the elevation here is 533 feet above the St. Lawrence. Soon after this the line passes through a marshy country, but a few miles after leaving St. Raymond, comes upon the grey Laurentian gneiss, which appears to form the mass of the mountains till we reach Lake Bouchette, about twenty miles from Lake St. John. This gneiss varies much in the size and