

There is no good authority for any one of them.

Eighteen miles more of a railway ride brings one to

### BIC! BEAUTIFUL BIC!

You are in the air above it when you first catch sight of the village, with its harbor and islets. In order to get through this part of the country, the railway had to be carried around Bic mountain, and is in one place 150 feet above the post road. The mountain rises over the railway again for a height of 250 feet more. A vast amount of labor was expended on this part of the road. In some places the rock was blasted to a depth of eighty feet to allow space for the track to hug the mountain side. From this height a splendid view of the St. Lawrence is obtained, the estuary being about twenty-five miles wide and rapidly widening below until it merges with the world of waters. Was it not from the heights of Bic that anxious eyes watched the fleet of Wolfe, sailing quietly up the St. Lawrence on a fair day in June, long years ago? Nearer it came, and oh, joy! the vessels carried the flag of France. The long expected succour had come from beyond the sea. Every heart was filled with joy; swift messengers started to carry the glad news to Quebec. Suddenly the flag of the leading vessel was run down; a moment later and the flag of England screamed out to the breeze. It was the fleet of the enemy with thousands of soldiers destined to conquer Canada! Among the watchers on shore was a priest whose nerves had been strung to the utmost tension with joy. When the dread truth so suddenly burst upon him, Nature could bear no more, and he fell to the earth—dead!

Descending the mountain, Bic village is soon reached. It is one of the loveliest natural watering-places on the whole St. Lawrence. The mountains are around it, and it nestles at their feet amid the beauties of the scenery. There is more here than a mere stretch of shores. There is a harbor in which an ocean steamer may ride, a haven wherein vessels may hide from the wrath of the storm-king. Romantic isles lie amid the waters, and crags of rugged beauty rear their heads around the shores. Pleasant beaches tempt the bather; placid waters invite the boatman; and beauty everywhere summons the idler from his resting place to drive or ramble in its midst. The harbor is simply charming to one who first beholds it, and "time but the impression deeper makes." It never becomes monotonous; one never wearies of gazing upon it.

Long ago the French recognized the value of Bic and its harbor. Here they proposed to erect fortifications and maintain a naval station. England, too, found its value as a port when her men and munitions of war were landed here from the *Persia*, at the time of the Trent trouble. Since the completion of the railway, Bic has become better known than before. Lovers of beauty have located summer residences in the village, and year by year enjoy the summer breezes. Fishing is had in abundance; and if there were no fish, the streams winding their way among the hills, through all kinds of picturesque dells, would well repay full many a toilsome tramp.

No account of Bic would be complete without some reference to the story of *L'Ilet au Massacre*, one of the isles near the village. The tale is an old one. Donnacona told it to Jacques Cartier on his second visit to Canada, and it has been told in a great variety of forms ever since. The tradition is that a band of Micmacs, consisting of about two hundred men, women and children, heard of the approach of a party of hostile Iroquois and fled for concealment to the large cave on this island. The Iroquois discovered the place of retreat and laid siege to it, but met with an obstinate resistance. Finding themselves unable to dislodge the Micmacs by ordinary means, they advanced behind shields of boughs, carrying torches of bark, and by igniting all the dry wood in the vicinity compelled the enemy to come forth. A general massacre took place, in which all the Micmacs, save five, were slaughtered and their bones left to bleach upon the island. Here the narrative usually ends, but Mr. Taché, in his *Trois Légendes*, gives a sequel which, whether historically correct or not, gives a better dramatic effect and is more satisfactory to lovers of fair-play. He alleges that all who were in the cave were killed, and that the five said to have escaped were despatched, at the first alarm, a part to demand assistance from the friendly Malacites at Madawaska, and the others to act as scouts. Twenty-five Malacite warriors responded to the summons, but too late to prevent the massacre. They then, aided by their five allies, secretly followed the track of the Iroquois, and unseen themselves, dealt death among the party as it proceeded. The scouts had previously removed the canoes and provisions which the Iroquois had left in the woods, and so they marched, dying by the hand of an unseen foe and threatened with famine ere they could reach their own country. At length they reached the open woods, near