

THE Cities and Towns of Canada

ILLUSTRATED.

XII.

ON THE UPPER OTTAWA.

FROM PEMBROKE TO MATTAWA.

The steamer *John Egan* leaves Pembroke at 7 a.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for Des Joachims, where rapids put an end to the navigable stretch formed by Lake Allumette and that portion of the Ottawa known as "Deep River." The run is exceedingly pleasant; the steamer is large and well fitted up, and the scenery is most charming. Soon after leaving Pembroke the boat threads its way among pretty islands of all shapes and sizes. Ten miles up, the Petawawa—a famous lumbering stream—enters the Ottawa. Five miles above is the mouth of the Chalk river. Both are on the Ontario or south side of the lake. Chalk River is noted for the size and gameness of its bass. In the country about these rivers excellent deer-shooting is to be had—one man is known to have shot thirty-seven in a week. Opposite Chalk River is Fort William, till within a few years a Hudson Bay Co.'s post, now the nucleus of a small village and a favourite camping ground with the aborigines. Twenty miles from Pembroke the lake narrows, and the course of the stream takes a sharp turn to the left. Here the Laurentian Mountains touch the river for the first time, and from this point to the Rapids des Joachims the water stretch is known as the Deep River. The change in the scenery as compared with that from Pembroke up is very marked. Henceforward the river flows through a deep valley, as it were; the mountains rise precipitously from the water's edge, and the glimpses obtained occasionally of the country behind show that these mountains extend back many miles. Two miles from the entrance to Deep River is situated the famous

OISEAU ROCK,

which seems to have been the result of a mountain splitting in half, one piece falling into the river. Sheer from the water this great bald rock rises several hundred feet high; not a shrub or blade of grass on its face, but pines and brush growing plentifully to the very edge of where the great split took place. Near the summit there is a lake of considerable size, said to contain trout. The tumbling of this enormous mass into the river has not interfered with navigation in the slightest—the steamer passes by the rock so close that a landing could be effected by running out the gangway; indeed, this is done in the case of picnic parties visiting the Rock.

Twenty-five miles through scenery of the same mountainous character brings to view the Rapids des Joachims, where the river takes another acute turn to the left. At Des Joachims—it was amusing to hear some American visitors attempt to pronounce this name;—for the benefit of those coming after, I may as well say that it is locally uttered as if spelled "Der Swisher"—at Des Joachims, the run of the *John Egan* ends, and after a stay of about two hours, during which time the traveller can view the rapids and lumber slides, she returns to Pembroke, dinner being served immediately after starting. My motto was "Onward and upward," so, with others, I mounted the mail stage and crossed the portage or space intervening between Deep River and the next stretch of navigable water. The distance is about two miles, through a rather pretty bit of mountain country. On the other side the steamer *Kippewa* was in waiting, and in a short time we were speeding on towards Roche Capitaine, eighteen miles distant, where rapids once more necessitate a portage. On the Quebec side, eight miles up, the DuMoine, a wild stream flowing through a fine lumbering district, enters the Ottawa. Six miles further, on the Ontario side, the boat calls at Rockcliff, which is not a village or town, but the residence of Mr. W. H. McIntyre, farmer, postmaster, agent for the Montreal Telegraph Co., and clerk of the weather—Rockcliff being a meteorological station, and the one giving Canada the greatest breadth. Mr. McIntyre was agent for Messrs. Bronson & Weston, lumbermen, for twenty-three years. He purchased for them some limits, which proved very profitable, and when he signified his desire to resign his berth, the firm made him a present of the Rockcliff homestead. The country in rear of this point is very fair, and contains a good many settlers.

AN AWFUL SPOT.

The river opposite Mr. McIntyre's is alarmingly deep. One day, being desirous of ascertaining the depth, he and a friend rowed to the centre of the stream and began to let down a weighted line. When the line had run out—it measured nearly 100 feet—the pair were somewhat scared and got ashore as soon as possible. Soon after, Mr. McIntyre joined several lines and fastened a clock weight to the end. He gravely began letting out line hand over fist, and kept at it until he was about to conclude that at some remote period of the earth's history the bottom had fallen out of this particular part of the river. Just then he felt the weight bump, and to make sure that he had reached hard pan, he bumped it several times. Tying a piece of

rag round the cord to mark the depth, he hauled in and pulled for the shore. It was a good afternoon's work to measure the line with a two-foot rule, but perseverance is one of Mr. McIntyre's special traits, and he went on with the job manfully. The end of it was, he found he was living on the brink of a water-filled valley three hundred and ninety-seven feet deep! He says if the water were run off, he wouldn't stay in the place a moment—the sight would be too terrific—but, as it is, the kindly element conceals the awful depth, and the youthful McIntyres swim about the gigantic pool as unconcerned as if they could touch bottom with a four-foot pole.

NAVIGATION UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

Above this, the river is broken by several rapids, which, during the latter part of the season, render steamboat navigation impossible, necessitating transshipment to row boats. The water stretches above—between Roche Capitaine and Deux Rivieres, and the latter point and Mattawa—are subject to the same conditions. I am informed that the improvements required to enable the steamers to make complete trips throughout the season could be accomplished with comparative ease and a moderate outlay. So far, I believe, not one cent of public money has been expended in this direction, yet it is plain that nowhere would a judicious expenditure be more justifiable. Being the highway to the chief lumbering and fur-producing districts of the Dominion, the volume of travel is very considerable, and the inconveniences above referred to are felt just at the time when means of transit are most in request—lumberers going to the woods and merchants getting in winter supplies. During the period of low water, one of the rapids referred to is surmounted by the *Kippewa* in a rather ingenious manner. When the steamer arrives at the foot of the rapid, a boat is launched containing two men, a coil of line and a small barrel. The men row up the eddy, and, by hook or by crook, reach a point beyond the head of the rapid. One end of the line they attach to an anchored buoy, and the other to the aforesaid barrel. The latter being let go is speedily carried down stream straight for the steamer, where a man is on the look-out to catch the line with a boat-hook. The barrel being detached, a few turns of the line are taken round the paddle wheel shaft and the machinery is set in motion, the result being that the boat pulls herself up the rapid in gallant style.

The Roche Capitaine rapids are among the roughest on the river, and many a sturdy raftsman has found in them a watery grave. The portage is about two miles, over a very excellent road. At the landing reside a most hospitable couple named French—the husband a farmer and blacksmith and right good fellow; the wife an excellent housekeeper, and possessing the same kindly disposition as her helpmate. Parties intending to camp at the trout lakes in this vicinity will find the French's ready to do all in their power to make things pleasant. Thanks to Capt. Prigg, of the *Kippewa*, I spent a day most enjoyably at Dixon's Lake—a beautiful sheet of water about a mile and a half off the portage road, and I shall not soon forget the delicious flavor of the fine speckled trout we brought back. The Captain is a jovial soul, a great traveller, been round the world, enjoys a joke and can tell a good story, ever thoughtful of the comfort of his passengers—in short, just the sort of man to make a pleasure route popular.

A LOVELY LAKE.

There are several fine lakes in the vicinity. The one I visited is approached by a lumber road, diversified by picturesque bits of woodland scenery such as Jacobi or Edson would delight to study. The lake is situated between two precipitous mountains, and is not visible until the visitor finds himself right upon its shores. It is about a mile and a half long and three-quarters broad. The water is so clear that a five cent piece can be distinctly seen at a depth of thirty or forty feet. It is said to be over one hundred feet deep in the centre. The trout are of a very beautiful species, most brilliantly marked, and, gastronomically speaking, they are as good as they look. The woods on the shores of this lake afford good partridge shooting, and if more exciting sport is desired, it is said to be quite easy to stir up a bear or two. Soon after getting on the *Kippewa* on the return trip, one of these monsters was pointed out by a passenger. Mr. Bear was close to the water's edge feeding on blueberries. He did not seem to notice the steamer until the Captain sounded the whistle. This quite upset his dignity, and he put for the dense bush in a most unceremonious fashion, nearly turning head over heels.

At the head of Roche Capitaine rapids there is a Post Office—not such as the average citizen would look for, but a neat little cottage by the roadside. The Postmistress is a tidy, civil little body, who seems to take pleasure in attending to the mails. At the landing, Capt. Hunt, with the neat little steamer *Deux Rivieres*, was in waiting to convey passengers to the next portage, about twelve miles distant, for which

HIS SATANIC MAJESTY

seems to have had an especial liking, judging from the prevailing nomenclature of the points of interest in the vicinity. For instance, I was shown "The Devil's Portage," a mountain gully of the roughest description, through which the winter road is made; also "The Devil's Chair," a circular hole in a rock high up on the mountain side. This hole is about three feet wide and five feet deep, perfectly round and beautifully

smooth. Similar holes are common along the Ottawa, having been caused, it is said, by the friction of stones propelled by whirlpools; indeed, at the bottom of the holes, a stone, quite smooth and round, is usually found. The peculiarity about the "Churn" is its height above the present water level and its great size.

At this point there is an hotel, kept by Mr. Thos. Murray, who is quite a notable character in his way. He owns and "runs" the portage to the head of the rapids, about four miles distant, and is likewise Postmaster and Montreal Telegraph agent. He does a considerable staging business, carrying raftsmen to the head of the rapids, where he owns another stopping place. In the year of high water—not the deluge—but the year when the Ottawa rose higher than the oldest inhabitant along its shores can remember ever having seen it before, Murray's hotel was nearly washed away. It is now built upon an artificial island, made of crib-work, filled in with boulders. Mr. Murray has already \$13,000 invested in his business, and is now engaged in erecting an hotel for the accommodation of travel by the waggon or Government road, which lies about a mile back from the river at this point.

The portage here is occasioned by three rapids known as the "Deux Rivieres," the "Trou" and the "Leveller." For some distance the road runs by the side of a pretty trout stream. In the vicinity there are lakes abounding with splendid fish. Between the head and foot of the rapids the River Magnassippi flows into the Ottawa. The scenery up this river is described as very picturesque. Three fine rafts were brought down the Magnassippi last season.

Deux Rivieres is the terminal point of the Union Forwarding Company's operations, the next stretch of twenty-four miles to Mattawa being traversed by a fast propeller owned by the Captain, B. J. Mulligan, and Mr. Timmins, both of Mattawa. These gentlemen deserve great credit for the plucky manner in which they went to work to supply a long-felt want. It is pleasing to be able to add that the speculation has proved quite a success. On her way up the "Mattawa" calls at "Klock's Depot"—the headquarters of an Aylmer lumbering firm. The river here is very prettily dotted with rocky islets, and indeed the whole route from Pembroke up is of a character to send the appreciative admirer of nature's varied beauties into raptures of delight.

MATTAWA

is situated upon a point formed by the junction of the river of the same name with the Ottawa. As a site for a town it is probably one of the most remarkable in Canada; indeed I question if anything like it is to be found the world over. It would seem that the river Mattawa at one time took a much shorter turn than it does at present, and consequently that where the town now stands was the bed of the stream. Except where earth has been brought to make a garden, there is not enough soil to fill a flower-pot. The whole area is one mass of boulders, many of enormous size. It is locally affirmed that here Noah discharged the ballast from the Ark. On the opposite point or shore of the Mattawa the Hudson Bay Company's post is situated. Two places more dissimilar can hardly be imagined. The one a sterile, stony tract; the other a very paradise by contrast—boasting meadow, farm and garden. The post commands most charming views both up and down the river—indeed it is invariably found that the Hudson Bay people in selecting sites for their posts displayed excellent taste and great wisdom, natural beauty and natural advantages of a more material order being generally blended in the happiest manner. The post is in charge of Mr. James Warnock, and embraces his residence, a store, well-stocked with every description of goods and provisions which are given in exchange for furs; several splendid warehouses for storing supplies intended for stations up the country, and the necessary barns, stables, &c. Attached to the post are about 150 acres of land, and a short distance up the river there is a farm of nearly 200 acres. These Hudson Bay posts remind one of the Coast Guard Stations along the British coast in so far as neatness and cleanliness are concerned. They are all pretty much after the same model; the buildings are always brilliantly whitewashed and the grounds are kept in a style indicative of "Rules and Regulations." The officers I have always found to be thorough gentlemen in every sense of the term, and when I say this I only echo what has been affirmed repeatedly by travellers who have had a much wider experience than I can boast. Of the Company and its operations I shall have something to say later on.

Mattawa village is an outgrowth of the lumber trade, though the Hudson Bay Company were the first settlers—the original post being on the Quebec side of the Ottawa. It is the last village on the river; the head of steamboat navigation and the pivot point as it were from whence supplies can be most conveniently procured for those sections of country where lumbering operations are now chiefly carried on. These advantages will be greatly enhanced when the railway extension from Pembroke (now building) is completed, as it is expected to pass within six or eight miles of the village, which will be connected with the line either by a branch or a good waggon road. At present Mattawa is "nowhere" so to speak; in maps of comparatively recent date it may be looked for in vain; its inhabitants are not enfranchised; it is somewhat like the settlements in the "territories" of the United States, a kind of "no

man's land," legally speaking, but to the uninitiated visitor it is as any full-fledged village enjoying all the benefits which an Act of Incorporation can confer. It is about forty-five miles from Lake Nipissing—the intervening country being represented as well fitted for settlement. A good waggon road to this lake is much wanted, and the Ontario Government might well expend a few thousand dollars upon the work, as it will open up a fine tract of land. I could not get the exact census of Mattawa, but should say it contains at least 400 souls, French and English speaking. There are several general stores, the chief being those of Messrs. Timmins, and Gorman, & Millar Bros. The former embodies, besides a general store, dress-making and tailoring departments. The warehouses are extensive, the firm dealing largely in lumberer's supplies and doing a considerable business in raw furs. The Montreal Telegraph Company have their office on the premises—a fact which parties intending to go on a sporting expedition should note, as Mr. Gorman is at all times willing to aid such folks in the matter of engaging Indian guides, &c. During the spring months the firm opens a branch at the mouth of the Kippewa and dispose of an immense quantity of goods in a short time to the shantymen who are then coming out of the wilds where they have been immured since the fall. The store is the oldest in Mattawa and enjoys a large patronage. I was present when a number of rafts arrived at the head of the Mattawa river and gained some idea of the sort of business done by these up-country stores. The store, roomy as it is, was literally crammed with raftsmen eager to purchase. Some wanted only a straw hat, others wanted a complete outfit. All were speedily accommodated. Some would go in for the cheapest and get a full suit of under and outer clothing for say \$9.50; others would act upon the motto that the best is the cheapest and expend perhaps \$20 upon the work of replenishing their wardrobe. Some were as hard to please as city belles; others took the first offered. A few paid cash; the majority were given credit—the bills being accepted the next day, probably, by the owners of the raft and the amounts deducted from the wages due the men. In an hour two or three hundred dollars' worth of goods will be thus disposed of. I saw three different crews served one evening. As fast as one lot were satisfied they left and the next came in. Messrs. Timmins & Gorman have recently started a brick yard which will soon work a great change in the look of the village. At present all the buildings are of wood.

The Millar Bros. are keen competitors, having stores also at Pembroke, at Des Joachims, and sending out a traveller with heavily laden teams to visit the shanties up country during the winter. There are five brothers—all sharp business men who have by dint of perseverance and foresight built up a large business. They will open a store at the Kippewa next spring. Their business is similar to that of the last mentioned firm, and the struggle for supremacy may be said to be "nip and tuck." Though only established at Mattawa twenty months they were already enlarging the store. The Pembroke store was established eighteen years ago.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION.

Among the several hotels at Mattawa that of which Mr. William McDonald is host must be given the palm as regards a desire to make the best of the situation and afford the best accommodation means will permit. Every year things are improving in this respect, but at present fresh meat may be placed among the almost unheard of luxuries along the Upper Ottawa. But in season there are to be had partridge, duck, moose and the various fresh water fish—and I have this to record of host McDonald: whatever spoils the sportsman may bring in will be promptly and skillfully cooked—and that is more than I can say of many so-called "hotels" where it has been my lot to sojourn. In these remote localities game laws are out of place; indeed are unknown. If anything is killed "out of season" it is not for mere wantonness, but because food or change of diet is really wanted. I feasted on moose-meat twice and thought it delicious, as it really was, after a month of everlasting pork *alias* ham; I also shot ducks whenever I could, because I thought that something should be done to mitigate the terrible consumption of dead pig. I always tried to have a supply of fresh fish for breakfast or dinner, and usually found no trouble in securing a good string. It is the rule, though, at all river-side places, for the inhabitants to ignore the supply of fresh food which Providence has placed at their feet. Of a large population it will be found that not one in one hundred ever thinks of putting a line in the water. They will eat pork, pork, morning, noon and night, from New Year's Day to Christmas, though the finest food that ever man tasted swarms at their very doors. As in any place not poisoned by mills, a man can catch enough fish after supper to serve a family for at least a day, I am prompted to say that laziness is at the bottom of this disregard for the wholesome food so lavishly provided by nature. But, as I have said, Mr. McDonald does the best he can; he gives you a good clean bed-room, and his table is furnished with whatever the place affords, while personally he is very obliging and anxious to contribute to the enjoyment of his guests.

RELIGION'S.

As at most of the settlements along the Ottawa, the missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church have been industriously at work at Mat-