

known to us, the rain which had been falling persistently for the past twenty-four hours around Quebec at the St. Lawrence Valley, had, in the higher regions of the Laurentian Mountains and the Lakes beyond, been descending in torrents for the last three days, with a violence never before known; changing trickling streams into dashing rivelets, and rivers into mighty resistless floods, carrying all before them. But I am anticipating. Our idea had been to travel by rail to Lake St. John, stay a day at the Hotel Roberval there, continuing our journey by rail to Chicoutimi, thence descending the Sanguenay by boat to Quebec; but on inquiry at the Q. & L. St. John Station at Quebec, on the morning before mentioned, we were informed that the Chicoutimi branch line, only recently opened, was rendered entirely unfit for traffic owing to the recent rains, and that there were a good many washouts on the main line, but that the train was going to start for Roberval, and we could have tickets for that place. There were but two courses open to us—to go, or to stay. It is difficult to estimate accurately the weight of prospective public opinion in determining decisions of this character. Suffice it to say that our minds were made up at once; the train was going, why should not we? At any rate we could go as far as it went, and have something to tell on our return. Our Chicoutimi trip had, owing to various causes, passed into a sort of bye-word among our friends, so with the spirit of "Excelsior" animating our minds . . . and countenances, we determined if it were humanly possible to reach that point also. With therefore few misgivings, and, owing to the almost criminal negligence of one of the party, a very scanty supply of food for lunch, or emergencies, we took our seats in the rear car and at 8.30 A.M. were off. It is almost impossible adequately to describe scenery of whatever kind, depending as it does so much on atmospheric conditions, if not for its intrinsic beauty, at least, for its effect upon those beholding it. You sketch a hasty outline as the train rushes past some beautiful spot, or pauses at the shanty-like depot of some picturesque village, and add a few words of description; you think you will be able to carry away a true idea of your immediate surroundings, when lo! a passing cloud, a misty rain sweeping across the landscape, the beams of the sun suddenly flooding all the valley, causing the ripples of the hitherto dark, sullen river to sparkle and dance, and all is changed. Your word picture, true a moment ago, is so no longer; it is a different scene you are looking at—different, yet the same, and in despair of being able to give anyone else a correct idea of it, you are fain to fall back upon the somewhat unsatisfactory recommendation—"If you want to know what it is like, you had better go and see it"—and this is what should be said to anyone who wishes to know what the scenery between Quebec and Lake St. John is like. I do not think they are likely to have a correct idea in any other way.