

A WOMAN'S TRIP TO THE LAURENTIDES.

By Mary Harvey Drummond.

A tropical night had dropped from the skies into the midst of a northern city and kept us tossing on our scorching beds till the small hours of the morning, when a light wind arose



End of the Portage to Sandy Inlet, Lake Temagaming, Ontario

and coming through the open windows, fanned us to sleep. We did not rest long, however, and dressed and breakfasted in time to catch the 8.45 train at the Canadian Pacific Railway station. At Three Rivers we made the only change in our railroad journey, and were soon whirled by the "loca" within sight of the round white brick ovens of Les Piles, with the turbulent St. Maurice river rushing by. On the platform, Cyprien, the mail carrier, met and escorted us to the river bank, where a heavily laden raft waited to take us over. The crossing was slow work, but just then time was of little consequence, and the scenery of unsurpassed grandeur, so it was with something like regret that we felt the raft touch the landing, and saw Cyprien jump nimbly ashore, "working with hands and tongue alike, he soon had his cargo safely on terra firma. We walked up a steep hill to a small house, where we sat down and waited, though for what, I, at any rate, did not know. "Tiens! Arrête done!" It was the voice of Cyprien ushering in the next feature of the programme, a mud-spattered buckboard drawn by a big Canadian horse of ancient and honorable lineage. We scrambled into the back seat of the wondrous vehicle, and began the most memorable drive I ever took in my life. Through ruts, over trunks of fallen trees

and corduroy bridges for nine immortal miles, till we were black and blue. Any caution to our jehu only made his face expand in a wonderful smile; he was too busy jumping now up to his seat in front, now down again as we came to a gentle rising, like a playful kitten. At last we stopped with a sudden jerk, which threw me up against the front seat and added some new tints to my colour collection. "Where are we now?" I asked anxiously, seeing only a small shed standing by the shores of a large lake, and hoping I wasn't expected to share its straw-thatched roof with jehu and his steed. "Voilà le Club House over dere?" Cyprien volunteered, and to my immense relief I saw on the other side of the lake a small red house standing alone, with suggestions of others through the trees. After making his horse comfortable for the night, Cyprien stowed us and our luggage away in a flat-bottomed boat. This time I had nothing to say against the mode of travelling; it was simply delightful to sit there quietly and be rowed over this beautiful sheet of water, calm as the proverbial mill pond, and made picturesque beyond description by the lofty mountains rising sheer out of its depth on our left, and on our right the pretty group of houses owned by the club. All too soon we pulled up at the wharf, where the genial manager stood with outstretched hand to greet us. Dinner would not be ready for an hour, he said, so we were shown to our room at the top of a little red house on a hill, and proceeded to get out a change of apparel, made more than necessary by the mail carrier's reckless drive. Short skirts were the rule in camp, and I felt as I donned mine that the new woman was after all no curiosity of mushroom growth, but a clear glimpse of the true woman yet to come. Our toilets completed, we made our way over to the dining-room, which stood alone in the middle of the camp, and was by way of variation painted green. Taking the only two vacant seats at the table, we did full justice to a delicious dinner of boiled lake trout. I never enjoyed anything more, unless it was the big nine pounder that fell a victim to my skill later on. After breakfasting next morning, fishing parties were organized, any of which I felt too tired to join, and sitting down in a quiet nook by the lake shore gave myself up to restful dreaming. What a silence rules over woods and water alike! Those grey clouds stand before Sol's genial face like a semi-transparent screen through a hole in which he every now and then peeps to wink his wicked old eye at the nodding world below. Then the wind wakes up with a start, sending a long shiver through the gentle silver birches, and making the stately pine trees wave their dark heads to and fro; then rustling over the placid waters, disappears through the narrow opening over yonder where the big lake passes to join her little sister. Close to shore two tame black ducks are paddling lazily by, and the wild goose on the wharf is too weary to move; but is it possible that the morning has slipped by, and that I hear the clang of the luncheon bell? Yes, sure enough, that brazen tongue does not lend itself to dreamland, and I must leave my nook to mingle with the stream which flows towards the dining room. All meals at the Club were sans ceremony, and each one got up as he or she had finished and walked off in whatever direction the spirit led them. I elected with one or two others to feed the bear, and watch her gambols with Pratique, one of the guides, who played with Brunhilda like a child with a kitten. She thoroughly enjoyed the sport, which never grew too rough for her, and once or twice Pratique was forced to damp her spirits with a stick, which made the lady beat a speedy retreat. But she was forgiving, and easily induced to leave her wooden hut for some more play. Just at dusk the fishers returned. "What luck?" some one shouted,