

T H E " I C E - B O A T . "

THE scene which is here represented, an "ice-boat," on the smooth and icy bosom of the majestic St. Lawrence, opposite the city of Quebec, is one which is only to be witnessed occasionally, even in these hyperborean regions, when the river is spanned over by "a bridge" of polished ice.

The St. Lawrence does not freeze over every winter opposite Quebec ; but still less frequently does it do so in a smooth sheet. When this happens, however, innumerable vehicles, such as the one represented in the foreground, may be seen fearlessly traversing the frozen deep in every direction, with inconceivable rapidity.

The "ice-boat" consists of a deck, or floor, of rough boards, joined together, and placed upon a pair of iron runners, or "skates." A bowsprit, and mast, with sails, and a rudder, iron shod, with a tiller, complete the rig. The boat is propelled by the action of the wind upon the sails, and is steered by the rudder, like an ordinary boat, and is almost as manageable when the ice is smooth. The passengers, who may be as many as the deck will contain, have occasionally to get out upon the ice, to alter the course of the boat, when the ice is uneven, or impeded by snow ; but, if it be perfectly smooth, the machine may be tacked and propelled in any direction, except against the wind, and at a speed under favorable circumstances, equal to the best railroad time.

The background is occupied by "Cape Diamond ;" on the summit of which is situated, the far-famed citadel of Quebec ; the "Gibraltar" of North America, the eastern face of which, with the Officers' barracks, and the flag-staff battery are seen.