

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE RIVER.

The Ottawa and its tributaries discharge the waters of an area which cannot fall much short of 80,000 square miles. The Hydrographical basin which contains them may be described in general terms as bounded on the east by a line commencing at the lower extremity of the Island of Montreal, and running about 230 miles in a nearly direct course, to a point about half a degree north of the intersection of the 48th parallel of North Latitude, and 76th meridian of West Longitude, constituting in this distance the water shed between the Ottawa streams and those of St. Maurice and Saguenay. From this point where the source of the river is to be found, the boundary turning to the westward, runs for 300 miles along the height of land dividing the waters of the Hudson Bay Territory from those of Canada, to the vicinity of the intersection of the 48th parallel of Latitude with the 82d meridian of Longitude. The western limit stretching from this corner to within a few miles of the most eastern part of Lake Nipissing, thence to the Townships of Tudor and Grimshrope, in the Midland District, and further on to the Township of Hinchinbrook, separates it from the streams tributary to Lakes Huron and Ontario; while the southern line, passing between North and South Crosby to Elizabeth Town, thence to the Township of Lochiel, in the Eastern District of Upper Canada, and forward to Vaudreuil in Lower Canada, leaves but a small space between it and the St. Lawrence.

The general shape of this area is that of an irregular rhomboid, with its long diagonal pointing northwesterly, and roughly parallel with three sides of the rhomboid, the north, the west, and the south; at a distance seldom exceeding twenty and sometimes not over eight leagues, the great artery of the region runs, presenting a length of between 600 and 700 miles. Taking its source in the north-eastern corner, it heads with the Saguenay and the St. Maurice, and, flowing in a general course a little to the south of west, it widens into several considerable lakes, and is fed by several tributaries from the north before it reaches Temiscamang, at a distance of about 250 miles. One of the intermediate sheets of water about equally removed from Temiscamang and the source, is called the Grand Lac, and it is represented on Messrs. Cameron and McKay's sketch as possessing a deeply indented form, divided into three long narrow transverse belts of water, the most eastward of which measures about forty miles in a north and south direction, with a breadth varying from one to ten miles, while the middle has a N. E. and S. W. length of fifty miles, by an average breadth of five or six miles; and the western, which is parallel to it, with a length of thirty, has a breadth varying from two to twelve miles. These belts are united with one another by straits, which connect the eastern and middle by their centres, and the middle and western towards their southwestern parts, while fifty miles in a S. E. and N. W. bearing would span across the whole three. On the north side of the lake, near the extremity of the tongue of land between the eastern and middle belts, the Grand Lac Post of the Hudson Bay Company is situated. Another of the expansions on this portion of the Ottawa, with an east and west length of forty-five miles, has a breadth of two to twelve miles. Its western extremity is removed from Temiscamang about fifteen miles, and in the eastern twelve of these there are no less than fifteen portages on the river, giving to this part of it and to the lake, the names of the Rivière and Lac des Quinze. The western end of the lake turns up into a twelve mile reach northwardly, which is the exit of a tributary coming about forty-five miles from the height of land, and constituting the main route to Abbittbe House, on Abbittbe Lake, which flows by Abbittbe

River into Hudson Bay, at Moose Fort, from Temiscamang the distance to the House being about 100 miles, and to the Fort about 250 more.

The foot of the lowest of the fifteen portages which have been mentioned, was the highest limit attained by our canoes. Three of the portages, however, were visited on foot. The second is about twenty chains from the first, and about thirty-five chains from the third. At each, the waters of the stream contracted to a space not exceeding forty to fifty yards, are precipitated over a step in the rock; and the first of these steps occasions a beautiful cascade, which falling obliquely across the channel into a considerable basin below, presents a face of about 100 yards, with a height of twelve feet. The average breadth of the stream between the rapids and below them is between 200 and 300 yards; but just at the entrance into Lake Temiscamang it attains a quarter of a mile, and the Quinze, splitting into two main channels, sends two smaller ones to unite with the waters of the Blanche joining the Lake two miles to the westward; while these various channels cut up the deltas of the two rivers into a multitude of low marshy islands. The upper extremity of the lake is divided into two deep bays, giving a rude resemblance to a high-heeled foot in an inverted position, with the toe turned eastwardly; from heel to point of which there is a distance of twelve miles, with a breadth of about five or six at that part presenting the angle. In addition to the Rivière des Quinze and the Blanche—which latter flowing from the north, is stated to be navigable for canoes for sixty miles without a portage, and in the six miles of it examined has an average breadth of 60 to 100 yards—the eastern bay is supplied with several smaller streams, one of which, called the Otter, comes about forty miles from the southeast, and all of them, presenting marshy land at their mouths, give the whole bay a fringe of this character. The western bay has one principal stream, which, flowing from the north-west, exhibits at its mouth a breadth of about thirty yards; a marshy fringe borders the upper part of this bay also.

Lake Temiscamang is an extensive strip of the Ottawa, which, with a length of sixty-seven miles gradually diminishes from the six miles breadth at the angle of the foot, to which the northern end has been compared, to a width of about 500 yards at the southern extremity. It is pinched in, however, to about one fourth of a mile at the Hudson Bay Company's Post, which is situated twenty miles down the lake, where two bold gravel hills, standing opposite to one another, run in upon the water; again, about thirty-five miles farther to a width of 200 yards, at a strait called La Galère, and a third time to the same breadth ten miles still further on, where an island occurs. At each of these narrow parts a current is perceptible, and at the Galère its strength is considerable. But the whole length of the lake offers an uninterrupted navigation, and the depth of the water appears to be sufficient for respectable sized craft. Two considerable islands, and a few smaller ones exist in the part above the fort; but any seen below, with the exception of that causing the lowest current, are too small to require notice. The general bearing of the upper portion of the lake, which has a comparatively straight and rocky shore on the west side, and displays many bays on the east side, to a point four miles below the fort, is about S. S. E. The succeeding eight miles bear rather to the west of south and from the elbow occurring at the end of this distance, the lake again assumes the bearing of the upper part, maintaining it, without attention to some minor curves, to the foot; and the river holds the same general course to the junction of the Mattawa, nearly thirty-five miles below. At the elbow mentioned two tributaries enter together on the right side of the lake, forming marshes at their mouths. The smaller is called