

of conveying merchandise between Kingston and Montreal before the Rideau and St. Lawrence canals were built is hardly credible to people of this day. Sir J. Murray stated in the House of Commons, in 1828, that the carriage of a twenty-four pound cannon cost between £150 and £200 sterling. In the early days of the Talbot Settlement (about 1817), Mr. Ermatinger states that eighteen bushels of wheat were required to pay for one barrel of salt, and that one bushel of wheat would no more than pay for one yard of cotton.

Our fathers did not travel much, and there was a good reason, as we have seen, why they did not. The lumbering stage which Mrs. Jamieson describes as a 'heavy lumbering vehicle, well calculated to live in roads where any decent carriage must needs founder.' Another kind used on rougher roads were 'large oblong wooden boxes, formed of a few planks nailed together, and placed on wheels, in which you enter by the window, there being no door to open or shut, and no springs.' On two or three wooden seats, suspended in leather straps, the passengers were perched. The behaviour of the better sort, in a journey from Niagara to Hamilton, is described by this writer as consisting of a 'rolling and tumbling along the detestable road, pitching like a scow among the breakers of a lake storm.' The road was knee-deep in mud, the 'forest on either side dark, grim, and impenetrable.' There were but three or four steam-boats in existence, and these were not much more expeditious. Fares were high. The rate from York to Montreal was about \$24. Nearly the only people who travelled were the merchants and officials, and they were not numerous. The former as often took passage on sailing vessels or batteaux, and if engaged in the lumber trade, as many of them were, they went down on board their rafts and returned in the batteaux. 'These boats were flat-bottomed, and made of pine boards, nar-

rowed at bow and stern, forty feet by six, with a crew of four men and a pilot, provided with oars, sails, and iron-shod poles for pushing, continued to carry, in cargoes of five tons, all the merchandise that passed to Upper Canada.* Sometimes these boats were provided with a makeshift upper cabin, which consisted of an awning of oil-cloth, supported on hoops like the roof of an American, Quaker, or gipsy waggon; provided with half a dozen chairs and a table, this cabin was deemed the height of primitive luxury. The batteaux went in brigades, which generally consisted of five boats. Against the swiftest currents and rapids the men poled their way up; and when the resisting element was too much for their strength, they fastened a rope to the bow and, plunging into the water, dragged her by main strength up the boiling cataract. From Lachine to Kingston, the average voyage was ten to twelve days, though it was occasionally made in seven; an average as long as a voyage across the Atlantic now. The Durham boat, also then doing duty on this route, was a flat-bottomed barge, but it differed from the batteaux in having a slip-keel and nearly twice its capacity.'

'This primitive mode of travelling had its poetic side. Amid all the hardships of their vocation, the French Canadian boatmen were ever light of spirit, and they enlivened the passage by carolling their boat songs; one of which inspired Moore to write his immortal ballad.'

The country squire if he had occasion to go from home mounted his horse, and with his saddle-bags strapped behind him, jogged along the highway or through the bush at the rate of forty or fifty miles a day. I remember my father going to New York in 1839. He crossed by steamboat from Kingston to Oswego; thence to Rome, in New York State, by canal-

* Trout's Railways of Canada, 1870-1.