

THE OTTAWA.



HIS noble river, known to the old *voyageurs* and early settlers as the "Grand River," is upwards of six hundred miles long and has twenty tributaries of large size, besides numerous smaller ones. Beautiful, wonderful, lovely, are not extravagant or ridiculous adjectives when used to express the delight of those who, for the first time, enjoy a trip on the steamers of the Ottawa River Navigation Company.

The Ottawa is broader two hundred and eighty miles from its mouth than it is between Ottawa city and the Lake of Two Mountains, and flows with such a strong and deep flood that the green waters of the St. Lawrence, for many miles below the confluence of the two rivers, are pressed against the southern shores.

Coming from the Far North, from regions comparatively little known, even at the present day, there is a certain mystery about this "Grand" river which awakens our curiosity and engenders a spirit of romance, and, as we ascend its current, the beautiful islands and the picturesque scenery of its banks command our admiration.

The Ottawa was the highway of the early French explorers, missionaries and fur traders in their journeys from Montreal to the great lakes Huron and Superior, and the Far West. It was traversed by the red man as well as the *coureurs des bois*. It was ascended by Champlain, in 1613—who was the first explorer—on his voyage to discover what he had been led to suppose was the North Sea. During this voyage up the Ottawa, with two canoes, he experienced much hardship and many difficulties; continually menaced by wandering bands of Indians, he was at last forced to abandon his provisions and to trust entirely to hunting and fishing to provide him with the necessaries of life. Champlain finally reached the country of Nipissing nation, on the shores of Lake Nipissing, and, finding that the Ottawa as a route to the North Sea was a mistake, he resolved to return to Quebec, which he reached, after great hardships and privations, and he soon afterwards sailed for France.