

MEANDERINGS AMONG A

# Thousand \* Islands

BY THE "WANDERER."



THE St. Lawrence is a very monarch of rivers. The rainfalls of half a continent, gathered into the largest reservoirs of fresh water upon the earth's surface, constitute its sources of supply. The course of its stream for more than seven hundred miles, from Lake Ontario to the Gulf, where its vast volume mingles with the ocean,

lies between shores, and over soils and rocks whose character changes with almost every geological formation known. Scattered along its whole length are numerous islands, whose varied aspects and formations, as well as the constantly changing appearance of its banks, present every variety of natural scenery to the voyager upon the waters.

That portion of the river which extends from Lake Ontario down the course of its stream for about fifty miles, and which is irregularly filled up with islands, of which the entire number is probably near two thousand,\* varying in size from a few feet in diameter to many miles in extent, was originally termed by the old French and Canadian voyagers, "The Lake of a Thousand Islands."

It has a breadth from Kingston, in Canada, to Cape Vincent, on the American shore, the direct line being across Long or Wolfe Island, which is about where the waters, in common parlance, begin to be designated as "the River," of about ten miles, from which it gradually, though irregularly, diminishes to less than one mile, where a ferry now connects the termini of

\*NOTE.—The number of islands is often asked. They are commonly said to be about eighteen hundred. Mr. Hough, the historian of several of the counties of Northern New York, in a very interesting and exhaustive work on the Thousand Islands published in 1880, while I notice he does not himself vouch for their accuracy, quotes two English writers who visited the islands about 1822 and 1826, as saying that the number as ascertained by the commissioners for running the boundary between Canada and the United States was 1692, counting every projecting rock having but a single tree. Another, about the same time, writes, that "the number according to the latest surveys was 1,700." The fact is that not only the limit of what are known as the Thousand Islands is very imperfectly defined, and perhaps differently by different individuals, but the actual number is constantly varying from the varying height of water in different years.