JOURNAL

OF A

FOURTEEN DAYS'

RIDE THROUGH THE BUSH

FROM QUEBEC

TO LAKE ST. JOHN,

BY MRS. DAVENPORT.

PRICE 25 CENTS.

QUEBEC:
PRINTED AT THE "DAILY MERCURY" OFFICE.

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INTRODUCTION.

At the request of many friends both here and in England, I give to the public the following Diary. Before undertaking the journey, I was entirely unaware that the "Road" had been a subject of political discussion. The fact is, that I wished, having heard so much of it, to experience the sensation of "roughing it in the bush," but before starting I was under the mistaken impression that there really was a road, and a good road. Had I been aware of the truth, I would never, for a single moment, have entertained the idea of traversing such a country. So many asked me for an account of the novel and venturesome journey, that I decided on publishing my Diary, not that it contains anything very extraordinary, but that it recounts the history of the first journey made by a woman from Quebec to Lake St. John, for the most part on foot, through over a hundred miles of wild, untravelled, wooded and mountainous country. In it I have detailed the facts as they occurred, and in doing so I have not drawn on my imagination, but simply confined myself to their narration. The hardships we endured can easily be credited by those who have had occasion to pass through Canadian forests. In conclusion, I repeat that in making this Diary public, I do so without the slightest pretension or political feeling, at the request of my friends, who are anxious for its perusal. The general reader, I hope, will find in it something new and interesting.

N. D.

Quebec, March, 1872.

FIRST DAY.

TUESDAY, August 22nd, 1871.

Take Provender for the Journey—Arrival at the Shanty—First Night in the Woods.

This morning my husband (Malcolm) and I started from our residence, near Spencer Wood, Quebec, on a "pleasure trip" to Lake St. John, the head-waters of the Saguenay. We had engaged a man (Ryan), horse and cart, from the Village of St. Colomb de Sillery, to carry our provisions and fodder for our three horses. An Indian guide named Honoré was to join us at Stoneham, 15 miles from town. Our coachman, Johnson, rode one horse, and started with the cart about four A. M. Malcolm and I, following them on horseback, did not leave home till eight, and then found that many things had been forgotten, which we ourselves were obliged to carry. Imagine Malcolm with a pair of shoes poking out of one pocket, and a sponge, brush and comb out of another; I had numerous small parcels tied to my saddle, besides a basket of sandwiches and a small bag, which I carried on my arm. The day was intensely hot, and our parcels gave us any amount of trouble; my basket lost its handle from the shaking it received, the shoes fell from Malcolm's pocket, and I thought to myself, "This is not a pleasant beginning."

We passed through a lovely country the first eighteen miles, when we reached Stoneham and overtook the cart and our men. Here we remained a couple of hours to rest and feed our horses, and to buy hay for the journey. We also eat some sandwiches, though the broiling sun had not improved their taste. (A week later, how much we should have enjoyed them!) After we had taken in the hay, Ryan's horse refused to draw the cart, so we harnessed Johnson's horse in front of Ryan's, and after much trouble and many stoppages, we travelled nine miles from Stoneham. Malcolm and I were tired of keeping with the cart, so we rode on in advance and put up our horses at a shanty belonging to one Lachance, whose wife seemed astonished to see such a party. We waited more than two hours for the arrival of the cart, and Malcolm and I walked back to find out what had detained it so long; it was dusk when we were all assembled. We then went to find a good camping place for the night, and I was much struck with the rapidity with which the

Indian lighted the fire and pitched our tent, I meanwhile cooking our supper, which consisted of fried ham and biscuit. After supper I rolled myself in my blanket and was soon asleep, only roused now and then by the rustling of the leaves and the murmuring of the brook which ran close by.

SECOND DAY.

WEDNESDAY, August 23rd.

Good Road—Equestrianism Unusual—Report that "There is no Road" Rainy Night and Close Quarters.

Up at 4 a.m., and after breakfast and reloading the cart, we continued our journey through a most uninteresting country, though the road was very good and newly made. We met some Indians returning from Lac à L'Epaule, from whom we bought some fish. Katy (my mare) was rather fresh, and as we were passing over a very sandy piece of road she lay down and rolled. I had just time to slip off, else she would have crushed me. About noon we reached Les Boulangeries, where we asked about the road; some of the men said, "There was no road," but we replied that in Quebec it was reported there was a good road all the way. One old man told us he had been to Lake St. John in the winter, but none of them seemed certain, so we determined to push on. All afternoon the rain came down in torrents. We passed several lakes, some of them very pretty, but the rain compelled us to hurry on and find shelter. When we were thoroughly drenched we came to a shanty, and Mr. Lachance, who, with his horse and cart, was returning from the shanty at La Riviere Jacques Cartier, kindly made us a fire, as our cart and men did not come up for some time. At the back of the shanty was a lovely lake, Lac des Roches, and when the rain ceased we went out to try to catch some fish for supper; however, the fish were not hungry, though we were, so we caught none. As soon as the cart came up we had supper, and then considered how best to dispose of so large a party in such a small space for the night. Finally, Malcolm, my mare Katy and I shared one half of the shanty, and the three men and the three horses the other. I never passed such a night. Katy's heels were so near my head that each moment I expected a kick, and what with the mosquitoes, damp clothes and hard boards, I got very little sleep, and was thankful to see daylight once more.

THIRD DAY.

THURSDAY, August 24th.

Splendid Road—Beautiful Lake—No Bridge—Our Troubles Commence—Road Unknown—Stones, Stumps and Swamps—Cart Breaks Down—We carry our Baggage—Horses knee-deep in Mud—Workmen astonished to see Travellers—No Supper—The Indians lagging behind—Workmen Intoxicated—Mosquitoes, and no Sleep.

Awoke this morning perfectly stiff, and for some time could not move, but after a desperate effort got up and made breakfast; then Malcolm and I went to look at the Lake, which, though small, was very beautiful. We were both struck at the amount of labor and money it must have cost to make such a good road through such a country. Fortunately the day was fine, so we soon became warm, and travelled on very well for about 12 miles, meeting several parties of men working on the road. At one place we were delayed on account of there being no bridge over a deep ravine, but the men on the road soon made a temporary way for us. Two miles further on, our troubles commenced; here a number of men were making the road, clearing away large stones and stumps. We asked them if the road was like that the whole way. They did not seem to know anything about it, but said that carts constantly passed on to the shanty at the River Jacques-Cartier. So we went on, over stumps, large stones and swamps, till at last the cart broke down, and, after unloading it, we had to decide what to do. Finally we sent Honoré back to the men working on the road, to see if he could get two more Indians to carry our baggage. We then had dinner, fed the horses, and made up our luggage into packs to be carried by the men and horses. My horse carried the two buffalo robes, horse-rugs and blankets, and I had to keep on as well as I could, though the path was over a swamp, and the only apology for a road was trees laid across the swamp. In many places the horses sank up to their knees, and the poor animals seemed almost afraid to put their feet to the ground. We could only go one at a time; and we very foolishly had left all the men behind, to bring on the rest of our baggage: therefore when Malcolm's horse lost its load several times, we had no one to help us to put it on again. I thought we should never reach the river and the shanty. At last we came to some men working on the road, who told us the shanty was close at hand, and in a very short

time we reached it. There were plenty of men about, but only two or three seemed working, at a bridge, just commenced, to cross the river. They seemed much astonished to see us, and all being French we had some difficulty in making them understand that we intended staying there all night, and that the rest of our party would be with us presently. Johnson and Ryan soon came up, with their two horses and the tents and food for the horses, but we found all our provisions had been left for the Indians to bring on, so there was no prospect of any supper till they should arrive. The horses were well fed and comfortably housed for the night. Malcolm and I then took our rods and fished in a lake about a mile from the shanty, called Le Petit Lac Jacques-Cartier; here we caught some very fine fish, and did not leave the lake till quite dark. When we returned to the shanty we found that a man had just arrived from Quebec, bringing a cart-load of provisions for the men in the shanty. He had passed our Indians, but they were so heavily laden that they would not be with us till late. We then asked about the road to Lake St. John, and the men told us that for eighteen miles the road was merely a "blazed" track, but if we could manage to get our horses over it we should then find a good road. Having travelled so far, we determined to continue our journey on the following day, as the men told us we could take our baggage by boat up the Jacques-Cartier River and across Le Grand Lac Jacques-Cartier, at the end of which lake the good road again commenced. In this way the horses would have nothing to carry, as we (Malcolm and I) could also go by boat. About 10.30 p.m. the Indians Charles and Félix, whose services Honoré had succeeded in obtaining, came up, and we all had supper. We did not get much sleep, as all night the men in the shanty were shouting and singing; we were afterwards told that a man had brought up whiskey from Quebec, which fully accounted for the noise we heard. The mosquitoes were again most troublesome, they seemed to penetrate everywhere, our tent was filled with them, and we were nearly driven mad by their stings.

FOURTH DAY.

FRIDAY, August 25th.

Active Road-making—One-man power—Half of our Party go by Water—First Portage—A mile through the Bush—Chilling Snow-storm on the Lake—Hard Road Ashore—Stumps and Bogs—Fishing—Mink traps and Mosquitoes—One Servant Disabled.

Up at day-break, and again questioned the men as to the road, and our chance of ever reaching Lake St. John. The "Boss" was anything but sober, still he repeated what he had told us yesterday about the road being bad for 18 miles, but that when we reached the end of Lac Jacques-Cartier, we should get on well. The "Boss" said he and another man would take us up the river and across the lake. We first saw Johnson, Ryan, the three horses and the Indians safely over the river, which was shallow; Ryan's horse we left at the shanty, as it was of no further use to us. We did not start until nine, two hours after the horses, but I noticed that only one man made any attempt to work at the road. It might have been that we had astonished them all too much by our sudden arrival. I remarked to Malcolm that the "Boss" did not pay much attention to making the men work, and that the bridge would take some time to finish if only one man worked at a time.

After some trouble we got all our baggage into the boat; the water in the river was very black, and seemed deep. We saw quantities of large fish, and some wild duck. For about two miles we went on very well, then the river became shallow. Finally Malcolm and I had to get out of the boat, and the two men dragged it along as well as they could, a mile of rapids rendering their task still more difficult, and I thought we should never reach the lake. Our walk through the bush was anything but enjoyable. In some places the trees grew so closely together that we had to fight our way through. I was constantly falling into holes, or getting fast in swamps; the flies bit without mercy, and the sun was broiling. I wanted to walk in the river, but the current was too strong and the water too deep. At last we came to a bend in the river, where we sat down and waited for the boat, lighting a fire to keep off the flies. The men had worked very hard to get the boat on at all, so we had to let them rest a little before we re-embarked and continued our journey, there being now water enough to proceed in the boat. We

had a long and tedious row across the lake; fortunately I had a book. When crossing the lake we encountered a heavy downfall of snow and hail, and having no coats available, we felt very cold, and the boat was so small that we scarcely dared to move for fear of upsetting it. The lake is bounded on one side by high mountains, and on all sides shut in by trees. About half way we put in shore to see if the horses were in front, and were glad to see they were, so far, safe, as the path was very narrow, and had stumps all over it. We then continued our course, and about six p.m. came to the end of the lake, where we saw our men and horses, and also three men who had been sent from the shanty after Johnson to help to make a road, if needful; however, they did not overtake the horses. Johnson and Ryan said they had had a dreadful journey with the horses, and laughed at the idea of such a track being called a road; they had to make three bridges, and to swim the horses over a river, (which Malcolm had the curiosity to walk about a mile back to see.) Our bay mare, Jeannie, in jumping out of a bog, stepped on Johnson's foot, and he could not wear his boot. It was now almost impossible to get the horses along, in fact, Johnson gave such a disheartening account of the road (?) that had we not seen a cart at the lake, and the "Boss" saying, "certainly, the road was good further on," we should have retraced our steps, though Johnson said he would not, and could not, take the horses back, as he had only brought them so far by a miracle. Fortunately I had some arnica, with which Johnson bathed his foot, and obtained much relief. The men left us after supper to return to the shanty, and Malcolm and I went fishing for next morning's breakfast. We caught several large trout. The Indian Charles set a mink trap, but caught nothing. About 9 p.m. we pitched our tent, and the mosquitoes not being quite so annoying, we slept soundly.

FIFTH DAY.

SATURDAY, August 26th.

Horseback leaps through Fallen Trees—Road now Impassable—Again driven to the Canoe Route—Dangerous fording—Horses Stuck fast—Exploring amid Rocks and Stumps—Fall into the River—Indians delay our baggage—Lots of Fish—Guides in Trouble—Deep and broad river, but cranky canoe—Lose our servants and horses—Anxious night.

As usual, up early. Johnson was so lame that he could hardly walk. However, after a delay in getting breakfast and in collecting and packing our baggage, (which the Indians found they could not carry in one load,) we started, Malcolm and I riding, Johnson riding and walking by turns. The road was certainly much better for about five miles; I say "about," as we generally trusted to the Indians for the distance we travelled, and Honoré's mile was usually a very long one. We were now and then stopped by a tree across the path, which our horses jumped. We had to look very well to our heads, as sometimes the trees had fallen so close together that unless we almost lay flat in our saddles our heads would strike against another tree fallen a little higher from the ground. At the end of five miles we came to a deep river, which I believe was the Riviere Chicoutimi, where we found an old camp and a canoe. As this river ran parallel to the "path,"—it no longer deserved the name of road,—we decided to put all the baggage into the canoe, whilst we and the Indians proceeded with it as far as the river and road continued alongside each other. Our first difficulty was to get the horses across a small river running into the large one, and which, though not deep, was broad and very muddy. The approach to this was through a bog, and I was very much alarmed when Johnson led my horse across, as every moment the horse was up to his knees in the bog, and even when we reached the other side of the river there was no firm footing for the poor animal, who twice got stuck fast; and as Johnson had returned to bring the other horses over I was left alone to manage as best I could to extricate him; finally, all were safely over, and Johnson lighted immense fires to keep away the flies. While waiting for the Indians, I walked on to explore, but had so many falls over rocks and stumps, and had so much trouble in getting out of the swamp, that I returned, telling Malcolm I was quite sure we had taken a wrong road. Re-crossing the river, I fell in, but Johnson

helped me out, and the water was not deep enough to cause any fear of drowning. We waited a long time for the Indians and Ryan, and when they joined us we found they had only brought half of our baggage; so we sent on Johnson, Honoré and Ryan with the horses, whilst Charles and Felix returned for the remainder of the baggage. Having seen Johnson and the others off, Malcolm and I went fishing in the canoe; the number of fish we caught was extraordinary, far more than we wanted, and where the two rivers joined, the water there being very shallow, we could see the fish lying a black mass at the bottom. Finding we had caught enough, we came on shore, and after waiting till 4.30 p.m., the Indians returned, but could not go on till they had eaten some pork and biscuit. The canoe was a most fragile thing for so large a party, and the Indians would scarcely allow us to speak, they were so much afraid of upsetting in this deep and, in many places, broad river. We progressed very well till we reached an old camp at the head of some rapids. (We had agreed to meet Johnson where the road and river separated.) We expected to find Johnson and party here, but in spite of repeated calls, shots fired, and even sending one of the Indians to look for them, we could neither hear nor see anything of them, except that there were fresh marks of horses' feet for several miles further up. We were much alarmed, as Johnson, relying on our meeting, had taken no food with him; but as it was now quite dark, we were obliged to land, as all further search that night was impossible. It was after 11 p.m. when we had everything ready for supper. Our camping place was entirely shut in by trees, and being within a few yards of the river, we were much troubled by the flies; we could also hear the roar of the rapids in the distance. Before going to sleep we had told the old Indian Charles that at the first streak of daylight he must get up and look for Johnson. Coming down the river we saw beautiful grass, and were much disappointed that the horses could not have some for supper. We were all too anxious to sleep, and our camping-ground was most uncomfortable.

SIXTH DAY.

SUNDAY, August 27th.

Journey Resumed—Two miles fighting with Brushwood—Find our Famished Servants 15 miles astray—Take again to the Boat—Food Runs Short—Would rather Drown than Walk the Bush again—Indian Bravery and Skill—Another Mile of "Portage"—Absolute Wilderness—Clothes Torn—Malcolm Tired and Desponding—Dragged through miserable Shallows—Falls and Boiling Rapids ahead—Carry our Packs up hill and down—Indians urge a Halt—We push on till Dark—Tent for the Night—Our horses Eight Miles off—All Disfigured and Tormented by the Flies—Habit Torn to Rags.

Sent Charles at 3 a.m. to look for Johnson. Malcolm, Félix and I had breakfast, and then, after packing our baggage and waiting till 9 a.m. for news of Johnson, started to walk after Charles, each carrying a heavy load. As the so-called "Government road" was a little distance from our camp, we had to walk through the bush till we reached it, and for about two miles we fought our way, almost torn to pieces by the trees and brushwood, there being neither path nor blaze to guide us, only marks showing that Charles had taken the same route. At every step I stumbled, and Malcolm did not get on much better. We were thankful at last to see Charles returning with Honoré, (the latter had gone with Johnson,) who was nearly famished, Charles being too idle to take any food with him when he left us in the morning. Honoré told us that Johnson was still fifteen miles away from us, and that he had nothing but leaves for the horses to eat! Charles also said we could go about four miles more by river, so we retraced our steps; as soon as we reached the river we made Félix take a bag of corn for the horses, and food for Johnson and Ryan, by land, for we knew it was uncertain when we might reach him, on account of the rapids we had to encounter. Charles was in anything but an amiable frame of mind at having had such a long walk after Johnson, and Honoré told us he had tried to persuade Johnson to stop where the road left the river, but that his remonstrances were unavailing. I was rather glad than otherwise that the horses were further on than we expected, and as there are always two versions to a story, I waited to hear what Johnson had to say for himself. After some delay

to let Charles and Honoré rest, and the latter eat, we put all our baggage back into the boat, (commenting on the shortness of our present supply of food, and how many days it would take us to reach Lake St. John,) and after proceeding about a mile we came to some rapids. Here we had to stop, the Indians expressing doubts whether they could get the boat over them safely. Malcolm and I (much against my will, for I fancied I would rather run the risk of being drowned than have again to walk through the bush,) left the boat to the Indians, and made our way by the river side. We walked for two or three hours, sometimes sitting down to watch the progress made by the Indians, every moment expecting to see the boats whirling round and all our belongings gone! But the Indians exerted themselves in a most praiseworthy manner, till they came within a quarter of a mile of a Fall, over which the only way to get the boat was to carry it round by land "portage." This delayed us several hours, as there were only two men to carry both boat and baggage, and they had about a mile to go. Malcolm and I lighted a fire, though the sun was scorching, to drive away the flies which were biting, and had bitten us most dreadfully. Nothing was to be seen but the Fall and the trees, neither flowers, birds, nor insects, save flies and mosquitoes; my habit was torn to pieces, my boots soaking wet, and Malcolm very tired and desponding. When at last we had once more embarked, and the rapids and Fall were behind us, there was not enough water to float the canoe. When the river had become deep and broad for about a mile, we could hear in the distance such a roar and rush that we knew we were again approaching some rapids, and seeing a tremendous Fall, and boiling rapids, in which no boat had any chance of safety, we again, and finally, left the boat with the intention of walking on till we met Johnson. Each carrying a pack, we scrambled on, over stumps and trees, up hill and down, till I thought we would never stop. At last the Indians said we must camp for the night, as it was quite dusk; at this I entirely lost my temper, as I thought they were keeping me back on purpose. I told them that if they did not go on, I would. Of course they said they were as anxious to get on as we, and, in spite of Malcolm's remonstrances, we went on till we could no longer see, and were compelled to stop. I felt certain we had not been going in the right direction, or that we were further from Johnson, and the road than the Indians had told us. We lighted the fire, and whilst I looked after the tea and Honoré searched for water, Malcolm and Charles went a little distance, shouting to discover if by any chance we were near the horses.

They soon returned with Félix and Ryan, who said they had been looking for us for some time, and that we could not reach Johnson that night, (it was now 9 p.m.,) we being still six or eight miles away. We then wanted one of the men to return so that Johnson would not be left all night alone with the horses. This they declared (and I felt that it was only too true) they could never do, as it was almost impossible to travel through the bush by the blazed road in day-time, and how much less could they do it at night. Johnson had also told them he should not mind being alone, and now there was no help for it. We all looked perfectly hideous from the fly bites, besides feeling great pain, my head and neck were so swollen that I could not lie down, but had to remain in a sitting position, and Malcolm was stone deaf, the blood running from his face and ears; my habit was in rags, but fortunately I had brought needles and thread, so, tired though I was, I managed to stitch it together. The night was cold, but we had our tent, and a roaring fire, which was generally kept up all night.

SEVENTH DAY.

MONDAY, August 28th.

Hours through Swamps and Underwood—Treacherous Paths—All Astray.—Indians say the Horses walk "like Moose"—"Good Road to Lake St. John" a Delusion—We Stumble on—Our Horses Pushed into the River—Back again—Two miles of Swamp—Four hours up hill—A night without Food or Standing Room—Boots Worn Out—Feet Cut and Blistered—Horses getting used to the Stumps—Wait for our Supper till 11 p.m., and then a Scanty Meal—Annoying Delays of the Indians.

The Indians were up very early to fetch our baggage from the river, and we had to wait till they returned, so it was not till 10 a.m. that we could continue our journey. We walked for several hours through swamps, high grass and underwood. I had to walk with outstretched arms to keep my face from being torn by the branches of trees; a kind of willow grew in some of the swamps, through which it was almost impossible to pass, and the ground being very treacherous, we had to look well to our steps for fear of falling into holes. The Indians seemed quite at a loss which way to go, till, finally, Malcolm and I took the lead, trusting entirely to our compass, and being careful to keep due west. (The road runs

north and south, and as we knew we were on the eastern side of the track, it required very little experience to know that we must steer due west in order to strike it.) After a weary walk we came to a blazed track; the trees were cut down, it is true, but the path was covered with a forest of logs and stumps, with holes and rocks innumerable. I asked Félix how far we were from the road. Judge of my disgust when Félix replied that this path was "the Road!" "How did the horses get over without breaking their legs?" was my next question, and indeed it looked impassable for either man or beast. The Indians said they walked "like moose deer," not horses. We sat down to rest for a time, and then the two Indians returned to our last night's camp to bring away the baggage they had been obliged to leave, it being almost impossible to carry anything and at the same time walk in the bush we had just traversed. Honoré accompanied us in our renewed search for Johnson this morning, carrying oats for the horses; and in spite of the burning sun, Malcolm and I were quite cold and almost unable to walk. We went along a track that made us more and more astonished at the extraordinary delusion under which the Quebec people labored if they thought there was a "good road to Lake St. John." We stumbled on (I cannot say we walked) for about four miles, till we saw in the distance the smoke from Johnson's camp. When we reached him we were shocked to see how bad both he and the horses looked, from want of food and rest. When he left us on Saturday, the 26th, he found the road almost impassable; he followed the river for some hours, passing through swamp the whole time. He then turned to the left, and returned and crossed the river to the right; they had great difficulty in getting the horses over, but there was a tree which had fallen across the river, and on which Johnson walked, balancing himself with a pole. Honoré and Ryan pushed the horses safely down the bank, Johnson caught them by the bridle and then swam across, making them leap up the bank when they reached the other side. They then had to return to "the Government Road," (having left it to find a good place to cross the river,) which was not done without great toil and difficulty, and it was one continued swamp for about a mile. They then left the swamp and travelled to the left of a high hill, leaving the river to the right. Here Honoré and Ryan wanted to remain till we came up, but Johnson determined to push on, so the two men were obliged to follow, and they continued walking up hill for four hours, and then came down hill till dark. When near the bottom

of this hill they were stopped by a river or brook, over which it was then too dark and late to cross, it being necessary to make some kind of a bridge for the horses; so they lighted a fire and remained all night, without food and with scarcely standing room for the horses, on account of the holes and stumps with which they were hemmed in on every side. Johnson sat up all night, watching them for fear they should get staked when lying down, there being only space for one at a time, and the poor animals being too tired to stand. On Sunday, 27th, Johnson sent Honoré back to look for us, and bring food; he also lighted large fires and fired his gun to attract our attention in case we were lost in the swamp, and he gathered some leaves for the horses to eat. Felix did not reach Johnson till 4 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, though he left us about 10 a.m., (Charles had not seen Johnson, but had met Honoré returning to find us), so that Ryan and Johnson were very anxious and hungry. When Félix arrived on Sunday, Johnson immediately sent Ryan back with him to help us, if possible, to reach the horses that night, so that we should be all together, ready for an early start on Monday morning. Meanwhile, Johnson got the horses over the river, then made fires to keep them warm (the nights were very cold), and remained all night watching the horses. One time Jerry was very restless, and Johnson thought he saw a wildcat sitting on his back; on going up to him he saw his leg was entangled in the chain used to fasten him to the stumps at night. Having released Jerry's leg, and returned to his place, thought he saw a bear, but found out it was only the stump of a tree; however, he remained all night with his gun in hand, ready to fire. When we reached him on Tuesday (to-day), we found he had never expected to see us again. After hearing Johnson's story, we determined to continue our journey till we could find a better place for the horses, and after a little persuasion Malcolm agreed to go on. My boots were entirely worn out, and my feet were cut and blistered by the stumps. I shall never forget the way the poor horses travelled (the first time we had been with them on such a disgraceful road); Johnson walked first to test the ground, and the exactness with which they followed his steps, with nothing but their instinct to guide them, was admirable. They seemed perfectly to understand that they must help themselves, it being quite impossible for anyone else to do so; sometimes Johnson and the horse leading would fall down, then instantly all would stop till the word was given to go on. In this way we proceeded for some miles, till we came to a new shanty, when (the Indians and Ryan not

having come up) we were again stopped by a brook, where the few sticks intended to form a bridge had fallen in, and it would take us some time to re-build. Honoré fortunately had brought a bag of oats, so we gave the horses a good feed, which they well deserved. We could have no supper till Charles, Félix and Ryan arrived; so, after looking for grass, which was not to be found, I sat down to mend my rags, and wonder at the safety of the horses. I had tried hard to keep out of sight on hearing of their struggles to get on, but Malcolm was afraid of my being left behind, so I had to see all, without any power to alleviate their sufferings. It was not till 11 p.m. (a lovely moonlight night) that we were all assembled and could have supper. Our provisions were getting alarmingly short, so we had a very scanty meal, besides finding that, as usual, the Indians had left some baggage on the road, and consequently we were obliged to wait till they fetched it in the morning. I was very angry, as in this way we could never make much progress.

EIGHTH DAY.

TUESDAY, August 29th.

Done up with fatigue.—Thought each moment our last.—Move on to graze the poor Horses.—Indians also give in and declare they can walk no further.—Supplies running out, yet the guides are feasting.—Travelling "in the Andes" all afternoon.—The road lost.—Darkness coming on.—Tent left behind.—Rain falling in torrents.

Woke very early and found the men had gone back for a load. My first feeling was that I had broken my back, as I could not raise myself from the floor on which I had slept. Malcolm and Johnson tried to raise me, and after a little time I managed to sit up, though I could not stand. Johnson was most indefatigable; he and Ryan first made a bridge over the rivulet, and then Johnson made breakfast. We waited sometime for the Indians, and at last I proposed that I should start and walk on slowly with Johnson and the horses, to see if we could find some grass for the poor animals. I shall never forget this walk, Johnson went first as usual, and I, scarcely able to move, walked behind in case the horses did not keep together, to urge them on. Each moment I thought would be our last, the horses were falling and struggling at every

step, and all Johnson could reply to my repeated entreaties to stop, was, "We must not stop, there is no safe ground for the horses to stand on." At last we reached an open space covered with moss and thick coarse grass and rushes; here we remained and fed the horses. The ground under our feet was like a sponge, however the horses seemed to enjoy their food, though two or three times Johnson had to rush and extricate them from the swamp, in which they were sinking. We sat and waited till 2 p.m., when Malcolm arrived alone, saying Ryan was following; but the Indians refused to stir from the shanty, as they had already done a hard day's work, and could walk no further; no threats could prevail on them to come on, so Malcolm left them eating their dinner. We then sent Johnson back to the shanty to see after Ryan and bring some provisions, fully determined to go on alone, as too much time had already been lost. In about an hour Johnson returned with provisions for us, and oats for the horses; he had found Ryan fast asleep and the Indians having a regular feast, though they already had eaten two breakfasts, and our provisions were not increasing, *au contraire* we had finished all the biscuits and nothing remained but a little pork and flour. We were obliged to fasten the pack on Jerry's saddle, having no men to carry it, and so we started, over the same kind of ground, all afternoon following a river. As the road (?) ran along the side of a mountain sloping down to the river, we expected each moment our horses would slip or roll over into it. When we had walked about an hour Honoré overtook us with a heavy load; he certainly behaved very well, and we never heard a complaint from him, whilst Charles was continually grumbling at the long day's journey we had made, or something equally unavoidable. About 6 p.m. we came to an old summer camp, where we lessened Honoré's load by giving the horses a feed of oats, and, as it was not yet dusk we walked on till we came to a small river running into the large one, which we crossed with some difficulty. On reaching the other side no road was to be found, the original one being entirely overgrown with high grass and bog willows. Darkness had now overtaken us, and, finding the path ran alongside the river, and that it was not safe to go on in the dark, we stopped at the first tolerable place and made two large fires; presently Felix came up and reported that Ryan and Charles were near, but that they had been compelled to leave our tent, as they had found the road so bad that it was almost impossible to carry anything. This was about midnight, and the rain came down in torrents.

Honoré tried to make a wigwam, but could get no birch bark, and, as the blanket he covered it in with soon became wet through, the rain came dripping in on our heads, rendering sleep out of the question. The horses were close to me, and I spent the night thinking of and watching them.

NINTH DAY.

WEDNESDAY, August 30th.

Boots worn out—Lost the use of my limbs—"The Road" worse than before—We ride a mile in the river—Will never ride again—Mare failing—Indians try to carry me, and let me fall—Hope the good road is not far off—Drenched and exhausted—Houseless and supperless—Cooking without salt or kettles—Birch bark basins—Devoured by flies—Alone awake in the moonlit woods—Wake Malcolm, thinking him dead.

The day commenced with heavy rain, but we were all too tired to care for the weather. I had quite lost the use of my limbs, and it was two hours before I could stand. Malcolm was not very much better off, except that he had boots and I none. The Indian, Honoré, lent me a spare pair of his moccasins, and Malcolm wrapped handkerchiefs round my feet to protect them in some measure from the stumps. The first mile, Malcolm half dragged me along, and the moccasins being very large for me, I fell oftener than usual. The road was worse, if possible, than any we had before passed over. We therefore thought we should get along better by taking the horses into the river, which was only shallow, so, after some trouble, we got them in, and I was mounted on Jennie. We tried the river for a mile, but as the horses had each lost one or two shoes, we were afraid the rough stones would do them more harm than their walking over the "Road," however much more swampy and, in many places, dangerous it might be. As for me, I determined never again to ride, on land or in water, till we met with some kind of road. We had great difficulty in finding the path again, and Katy was very nearly killed. However, when we did reach the "road" we went on for two or three hours. Twice the Indians tried to carry me, but they let me fall, which I found less agreeable than falling on my own account. At last Malcolm could walk no further, and I had long ago felt as if every

step I took would be my last. We were also sure that Lake St. John, or the good road, could not be far distant, and concluded that Johnson had better go on with the horses, taking Charles and Félix and half our small portion of provisions, whilst we remained till they could return with help and food. Katy had fallen on Ryan's foot, so that he was quite *hors de combat;* Honoré was also very tired, as he always carried the largest pack and did the most work. The rain again came down in torrents, and I sat for half an hour in a regular shower bath, till a fire could be made. Fortunately there was plenty of birch bark, and Honoré made a capital waterproof wigwam, where I was only too glad to remain, whilst Malcolm and Honoré went to the river to fish for our supper. After a little time I wrote in my diary, but found I could only give a very faint and imperfect description of all we had suffered, and the abominable misrepresentations made in regard to the "Road to Lake St. John," on which I was told so much money had been spent. How a road can ever be made over such a barren and mountainous country is a puzzle; and what there can be to induce people ever to settle in a region, where nothing seems to flourish but stunted spruce trees and rocks, is wondrous. However, "time and money work wonders," and both will be required to make a road like the one already made to within five miles of La Rivière Jacques Cartier. Malcolm and Honoré returned with only a very scanty supply of fish, and, when we came to cook them, we found we had used up all our salt, consequently we did not relish our supper; Johnson had taken on our two kettles, so we had only the teapot in which to boil the water for our tea, and I had to wash my hands in a basin made of birch bark: by this time I was not too particular, and was glad of anything to cool my face and hands after the flies, who never ceased devouring us either by day or night. We did not stay up late, and at 8 p.m. Malcolm and the men were fast asleep, I as usual listening to the numberless noises that ever disturbed me in this infertile place, and watching the moon shining on Malcolm's face, making me imagine he was dead, though when I woke him I was soon satisfied that he was not only alive, but also not too grateful to me for my arousing him.

TENTH DAY.

THURSDAY, August 31st.

Nine days out—Nothing left to eat—Resume our weary march—All afternoon climbing a mountain in the rain—Reach a rotten Shanty—Prefer remaining in the rain—Thrice lost in fern and brambles—No water nor bed—No supper nor sleep—Sleep on bare ground, without covering—Raining in torrents all night.

This morning we were up at daybreak, looking most anxiously for the return of the Indians. Had breakfast, and then found that nothing now was left us to live upon but a little flour. Having waited for the Indians till noon, we found we must continue our journey, if we did not want to starve; so, leaving everything save a blanket each and my extra habit, we again commenced our weary march, uphill all the afternoon, till I thought we should never never see the top, the rain beating down upon us till our clothes were so saturated we could hardly climb up the interminable hill. The rest yesterday had done me a great deal of good, and I was able to walk on. Towards evening we came to a shanty in a very tumble-down condition, one of the huge beams across the roof having split, the whole structure was likely, at any moment, to fall on our heads. So, in spite of the rain, we remained outside. Johnson had evidently made a bridge over the brook which ran across the road in front of the shanty, and from the remains of leaves we saw, the horses must have rested here all night. Malcolm found the skeleton of a horse, which made us thankful it was not one of ours; indeed we had often looked for fear we should find one lying dead on the road. We made some tea, and then continued our uphill journey. Two or three times we lost our way, as the path was overgrown with fern and brambles, and the blazed marks, being made only on very small silver birch trees, were most difficult to find. Here, however, the horses seemed to have had an easier time, as the ground was somewhat firmer and the stumps were cut down much closer to the ground. Honoré and Ryan, on account of their loads, were some distance behind us, so that when we at last arrived at what we hoped was the top of the hill (or rather mountain), we sat down to rest. When the men came up, both said they could go no further, but, as there was no water near, I persuaded them to go on till we came to some; and as *we now had no supper to cook*, we need not mind walking a little later than usual. In about half an hour we came to another

swamp, where we found water, and made a fire for the night. There were no branches to lie on, and we had only one blanket each; however, a good fire soon warmed us, and Honoré made some of the flour into cakes, which he and Ryan managed to eat. The rain continued nearly all night, but Honoré and Ryan seemed to sleep as soundly as if they were at home. I don't think I could ever sleep out of doors, especially on a moonlight night, when the trees cast so many shadows round, that a person with very little power of imagination would be astonished at the queer fancies and shapes presented to his view.

ELEVENTH DAY.

FRIDAY, September 1st.

Flour running out—A lovely lily-covered lake—Lots of fish, but no tackle with us—The flies furious—Eagles overhead—Partridges in view—Track getting, if possible, worse—Agony of travel indescribable—More partridge—Powder all gone—The end yet 30 miles off—Malcolm unable to walk further—Ryan afraid of the bears—We make a bridge and halt for the tenth night—Lots of nice branches.

A very cold morning, but we had, as usual, to start early on our way, especially as we found our flour would last only until to-morrow. We walked down hill for some distance, along the same sort of track, till we came suddenly on a lovely lake covered with yellow and white water lilies, and over which a large eagle was hovering; as we were almost without ammunition we dared not waste a shot on this bird. There were also plenty of fish in the lake, but unfortunately all our fishing tackle and flies had been left behind. Numberless dragon flies were to be seen, indeed the largest living specimens I have ever beheld. We sat down for a little rest, first making a fire to moderate the fury of the flies, then continued our journey; in about ten minutes after we left the lake we saw a covey of partridges, which reminded us that this was the first day of the partridge shooting season. Malcolm fortunately shot three, but they were only "spruce," therefore not very good eating. After this the track became, if possible, worse, the exertion of mounting from stump to stone, or extricating one's-self from the swamp is indescribable. Malcolm and I walked on in advance, every fallen tree looking to me like the body of a horse lying across the road, till at last I

could stand it no longer, but made Malcolm walk first for a short distance. When we had nearly reached the top of the hill we saw more partridges. Malcolm returned to Honoré for his gun and killed three more birds. Our spirits were somewhat raised at the prospect of having a little supper, but we found our last cartridge had been fired. We were now walking down-hill, and a stream ran alongside the path, and which stream we knew must fall into some river. We could hear one in the distance, which we hoped would prove to be the much wished for Rivière-aux-Ecosses, and 30 miles (so we were told by the men at Rivière Jacques-Cartier,) from Lake St. John. Malcolm was very tired and could scarcely walk. I was too anxious to reach this river to feel fatigued, so I kept continually asking Malcolm to come on at least till we reached the river; finally he sat down unable to walk any further, so I left him waiting for Honoré and Ryan to join him, knowing he would follow, as he was very much afraid of my getting hurt or lost. Our man Ryan was very much terrified of bears, having a firm belief in their partiality for human flesh, and therefore took care neither to walk first nor last. We went on till the moon rose, and at last reached a river, wider than we expected, but shallow. I felt therefore sure that this could not be La Rivière-aux-Ecosses. We crossed the river, Honoré felling a large tree to make a bridge, and determined to remain here all night. First we lighted two large fires and cooked the partridges, but as we had no salt they were very tasteless food. We had plenty of tea, without which we could never have had strength to walk, for after drinking a cup-full I used to feel perfectly refreshed. I spent the night as usual in watching the stars and moonlight, and listening to the river, which made a most unearthly moaning. Honoré kept up the fire all night, and we had plenty of nice branches to lie on.

TWELFTH DAY.

SATURDAY, September 2nd.

Reach a river—We are carried across—See marks of a cart!—On we walk—Too tired to talk—New shanty, with a stove!—Stay gladly for the night—Feet sore from the moccasins—Too tired to eat—Find a fly and extemporize a thread line—Catch two small fish.

Our first words and thoughts naturally were, "Shall we see Johnson to-day?" We had no breakfast save tea, and the first part of our journey was through a regular "Slough of Despond." Once or twice I fell through into deep holes, and we could see how fearfully the horses must have suffered, the ground being torn up in their efforts to get out of the swamp. After a little time we came to some lakes, separated by green swamps like small fields, the road unmarked except by small spruce trees, few and far apart. Our progress became slower and slower, and when we came to the foot of a hill we sat down to rest. In the swamp I saw a few flowers and red berries, the first I had seen since we left La Rivière Jacques-Cartier. We then walked up-hill for some distance, and found the road one degree better, as the trees were cut closer to the ground. We also found some blueberries, which were very acceptable; but Ryan made a mistake and eat some poisonous berries instead, and Honoré warned him after he had tasted a few, and nearly frightened him into a fit. About noon we reached a small river, across which Honoré carried us. Here we rested and had some tea, and saw what looked like the marks of cart wheels, but how a cart ever had passed there we were at a loss to discover. We still saw marks showing us that the horses were on in front, and we hoped they were now safe at Lake St. John. All afternoon we walked, carrying very little, Malcolm helping me on as much as he could, for it was impossible for two persons to walk abreast. After we left the river we found the trees were cut down, so that when the road is made it will be a very broad one; but no one will be able to fill up some of the swamps, which seemed interminable. About dark we came to a new shanty, with a good stove in it; I was only too thankful to remain here all night, as walking in Honoré's moccasins had made my feet in a frightful state. Honoré cooked our last grain of flour, but I was too tired to eat. He found a fishing fly in his pocket, and made a line out of some cotton I gave him, and, with Malcolm, went

to fish in a deep black river running close behind the shanty. They only caught two or three very small trout, which they cooked and ate without salt. It was a lovely moonlight night, although cold, and I walked about to cool my feet, having taken off the moccasins.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

SUNDAY, September 3rd.

Nothing left to eat—See three skeleton horses ahead—Find they are our own—Horses and men starved and irrecognizable—Our equipage tell their own adventures—Horses starving—Swamp sixteen feet deep—Provisions and aid—On a raft, with our horses in tow—I am starving, and have to be carried on a chair—Blueberries—Poor Jennie failing—Large camp and Plenty of food.

We *had no breakfast* this morning, and started in a very desponding state. The track was somewhat better, but we were too tired to notice what the country was like. About noon we decided to send Honoré on to look for the others; when, turning a corner, we saw below us a broad, deep river and three miserable skeleton horses standing by it. There were several men standing about, and when we hastened up to them, recognized Johnson and our own poor horses. The latter were covered with cuts and sores, Jennie's off hind leg one festering sore, on which the flies were feasting. I shall never forget what I felt. Johnson, I hardly knew, so much changed was he from the man who left Quebec such a short time ago. He looked almost starved, and was so weak he could scarcely stand. Charles was loud in his complaints, and said Johnson had forced them along when half dead from fatigue and hunger. Johnson then told us how he and the horses fared.

He said when he left us on Wednesday, 30th August, they travelled for some time through a swamp till he came to a lake, where he fed the horses on some grass growing in a flat, marchy swamp adjoining it. Then returned to the bush track, walked up-hill for a short distance, till he came out on a series of lakes connected by dismal swamps, in which both men and horses struggled and sank. They afterwards ascended a hill, overlooking a lake, and encamped on its side. Charles did nothing but grumble. On Thursday, the 31st, they started at day-break, and Johnson sent on Felix to Lake St. John, telling him to bring men and provisions, and if too

tired not to return with them. Charles and Johnson were now left alone with the horses, but Charles was too frightened to be of any use, so Johnson tied Jerry to the saddle of the first horse, because the horses constantly stumbled or strayed from the path to eat a bit of grass or a leaf, and Johnson could not catch them when on in front. The Indian did nothing but bring up the rear and showing Johnson where the horses fell, especially as he had often to leave all the horses to the Indian (Charles) whilst he went on to test the footing, and if he found the track impassable he struck into the bush, away from the blazed path. Many of the swamps were too dangerous for Johnson to walk over, let alone horses. He several times said to Charles, 'What made them fix on such swamps over which to make a road?' Charles constantly stopped to set mink-traps. In one place, while the horses grazed, Johnson had the curiosity to cut a long pole and try to find the depth of the swamp. *He easily ran the pole sixteen feet into the mud.* All the afternoon they followed a river, and towards evening came to a place where it crossed the track or road. It took some time to make a bridge to cross the horses, and, notwithstanding every available care, Katie fell through the bridge, and lay on her side with the water running over the saddle. Fortunately she had the sagacity to remain quiet till Johnson and Charles released her from the debris, and then the former got her safely up the bank. All next day, Friday, they went on as usual over rocks, stumps and stones, to the imminent peril of life and limb. They passed a shanty, but did not stop there. They saw a mile post, and about five p.m. came to a broad, deep river, which Charles said was La Rivière-aux-Ecosses, though Johnson rather doubted it, Charles having told him two days ago that they had crossed that river. However, they found it would be impossible to reach the other side till more men arrived, so Johnson fastened the horses to some stumps, and then proceeded to make out whether Felix had crossed. He found his foot-marks and saw a kind of raft moored on the other side of the river. He then returned, and, after lighting a fire, went to the left of the road and found a little grass. He and Charles fished, but caught only six small fish. However, they found more grass for the horses, and after cooking the fish they rested for the night.

On Saturday they spent the morning in looking at the river. Johnson with Charles made a small raft in order to cross the river, and see how Félix had landed, as he had gone along the track all right. They took the raft about a mile down the river, to the left of the road, where they saw rapids.

They then fished in a creek, where another river ran into Les Ecosses. Charles set mink-traps, and Johnson cut nice bundles of grass for the horses. In the afternoon they hewed down trees to be ready for a large raft, when more men would come to help them, as they found it impossible to move the heavy logs they cut. On Sunday Johnson determined to send Charles to find Felix, fearing the latter had broken his leg or was fast in a swamp. Charles delayed and grumbled for some time, but finally consented to go, when a "whoop" was heard on the opposite side of the river, and Félix, accompanied by three men, appeared in view, bringing provisions. The men set to work carrying the logs Johnson had cut, and when we arrived the raft was nearly completed. When Johnson had finished telling us the above, Malcolm and the men had some dinner, after which the horses were taken over the river one by one. The poor animals were so dreadfully emaciated that we were afraid they would not be able to swim, and it was not safe to put them on such an insecure raft, however, it was arranged that three men should go on the raft, two to paddle and one to hold the horses' noses above water, their heads resting on the raft. This plan was a great success, and the horses all crossed as quietly and easily as possible. The Indian Charles made a seat between two poles on which I could be carried by two men in turns, as I was so weak from want of food and rest that I could not stand. After he had manufactured this chair we all crossed the river, Johnson, Mr. Tremblay and another Frenchman going first with the horses. The track was nearly as bad as ever, and the two men who carried me staggered at every step. For about two miles we traversed a most desolate region, perfectly destitute of trees and covered only with rocks and swamps,—as far as the eye could reach, a perfect "Valley of Desolation." Félix said there were plenty of bears in the neighbourhood, as they were fond of blueberries. This fruit, though small, grew in this part of our journey in great abundance, and we all rested and eat some. Honoré proposed making *des confitures*, but found we had no sugar. After we had crossed a brook we found it getting so dark we were obliged to stop, and fixing on a good place we all rested for the night. Johnson had nothing to give the horses but grass, and Jennie was each hour growing weaker. During our journey this afternoon, if we stayed for a moment to throw logs over a bad place Jennie fell down from sheer exhaustion, and it took three or four men to raise her. Johnson made some balls of flour and water in his hat, the only available place, and forced them down her

throat, but I felt sure she would never recover, even if she managed to reach the Lake. This night we had a very large camp and plenty of food, with bread and salt pork. I had some tea without milk or sugar, but I thought it nectar. In a short time everything was quiet in our camp, though now and then I saw Johnson get up and look at the horses, and, after staying awake till daylight, I fell asleep.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

MONDAY, September 4th.

Terrific bush fires—Indians make a "cachè" for the return—Horses prostrated—Arrived at Mr. Tremblay's—Astonishment of the Lake St. John people—Gales—Forests on fire—Tried to Cross the River Metabetchouan.

Awoke this morning and found the horses had started on in front to find some fresh grass. We did not follow for a little time. Found I must take off Honoré's moccasins, my feet were too sore to bear them, so, wearing only stockings, the men carried me along till we reached a lake so lovely as well to deserve its name, "Lac de la Belle Rivière." Alongside this lake ran the road, where for some distance the bush had been set on fire, evidently for the purpose of clearing the land for farming, and was still burning. It was a grand sight to see the flames starting hither and thither, leaping from tree to tree, leaving nothing but blackened trunks. At the end of the lake we crossed a river, over which was a bridge in a tolerable state of preservation. Here we left the "Government Road" and turned into one made by Mr. Price, and which, with few exceptions, though narrow, was not so difficult nor dangerous to traverse. Here the Indians deposited all the provisions, (thinking we were close to Lake St. John,) hiding them to be ready to take back with them to Quebec on their return from the Lake; and soon after the pole on which my "carriage" was fixed broke, and I was thrown to the ground. Charles soon cut a new one, and we proceeded till we came to a swamp with some nice grass; here Johnson let the horses rest, and tried to persuade them to eat, but they were unable to do anything but sink down on the grass, till we continued our journey, when whilst the men raised one horse the other two fell down, so that it was some time before they could get them all on their feet. Poor Jerry fell through one piece of bog, and all the men

had to dig him out with their hands. There were numerous bridges to make and swamps to cross, so we travelled but slowly; in some places tall grass flourished high above our heads, and raspberries of immense size and delicious flavor abounded everywhere. We also saw some very fine trees, far different from the miserable specimens we had previously encountered. Toward 6 p.m. we saw corn, &c., growing, so knew we must soon arrive at our destination, and presently we left the bush and saw houses (log huts) and fields before us. Arrived at Mr. Tremblay's, his wife welcomed us most hospitably, and after enjoying the luxury of plenty of hot water, and putting on a fresh habit, (fortunately I had brought two with me,) we had some supper. By this time the house was crowded with people, asking questions and expressing amazement at the journey we had made. Madame Tremblay requested information as to the fashions, wished to know if crinoline was worn, and "if my riding habit was the costume now adopted by ladies?" The conversation being all carried on in French, it would be nonsense my attempting to describe her expressions of astonishment. She had been educated in a convent at Baie St. Paul, and seemed to think she had lowered herself greatly in coming to live at Lake St. John. Mr. Tremblay told us that *we were the third party he had rescued from starvation in trying to reach the lake by that road.* He said that last winter he came from Quebec with eight horses and eight men, and that for two days and two nights they had been obliged to travel without stopping, having no food for either man or beast; they barely reached the lake alive. Our horses were now comfortably housed, but poor Jennie looked very bad and would eat nothing. About 8 p.m. Malcolm and I made Mr. Tremblay take out his horse and "buck-board" to drive us across the River Metabetchouan to Mr. Charlton's, where we hoped to find letters from England awaiting us. A regular gale was blowing, and the log hut trembled with the violence of the storm. The whole country seemed on fire, and the wind but fanned the flames. However, I determined to set out, but we could get only about two miles, the wind blowing the fire across the road, and the dense smoke almost suffocating us. Several people on the road warned us back, saying it was not safe to proceed. Most thankful would I have been to have found myself out of this frightful place. I could not help remarking to Malcolm, that it was very like what one would imagine the "infernal regions" to be; the groaning, creaking trees, and sighing, moaning wind sounding like the lamentations which

would proceed from that abode of tortured and evil spirits. It was too dark to see anything but the glare of the flames, and I was glad to return to Mr. Tremblay's, where we passed the night. Malcolm tried to get some boots for me and stockings for himself, but I was glad to remain quietly in the house. He returned about midnight, bringing a pair of boots for me, and thus ended our first evening at Lake St. John.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

TUESDAY, September 5th.

Sumptuous Breakfast—Jennie in a Dying State—Good Roads—Cross the Metabetchouan—A Steamboat—Arrival at Mr. Charlton's—Hospitality—Return to Mr. Tremblay's—Start for Grande Baie—Arrival at a beautiful, clean home—Good Supper—We drive on—All asleep on the road.

A lovely day; up at six a.m. Malcolm had a sumptuous breakfast of tea and mutton fried in fat; notwithstanding our long fast I was not Sybarite enough to appreciate such delicate fare at such an early hour; and the bread, though newly baked, was of a very dusky hue. A screaming child enchanted us with its shrill voice, and the flies had not yet taken leave of us. After breakfast we went out to see the horses, who looked most wretched, although very well cared for, with plenty of clean straw and good hay. Jennie looked in a dying state, and we are much afraid she will not live. Our Indians and Ryan were lying on the ground fast asleep, too stiff and sore to move. Johnson, the only man awake, was complaining bitterly, and was scarcely able to stand. On our return from the stable we found Mr. Tremblay with his horse and "Buckboard" waiting to drive us to Mr. Charlton's, and to show us the lake and surrounding country. Malcolm's boots having been sent to be mended, he, being unable to procure others, was obliged to wear a pair of Mr. Tremblay's white woolen stockings, which gave his legs a comical look, though I don't think he thought it a joke to wear such warm stockings without boots on a broiling hot day. The roads we drove over were in excellent order, and many men were still at work on them. We ascended and descended many steep though short hills. The bush in many places being still on fire showed only too plainly the danger we should have been in from

suffocation had we pursued our journey last night. Mr. Tremblay gave us much information respecting the Saguenay fire, how his house was one of the few left standing, and that as many as seventy-six persons had taken refuge there from the fury of the flames, that had destroyed their homes. Mr. Tremblay also told us that he had not spoken nor heard a word of English for ten years, but, on hearing us converse for a short time, his former knowledge of our language returned to him. We learned from him that only nine miles of the "road" from Lake St. John to Quebec had been completed, after which the road becomes a blazed track, (as we knew from sad experience), and that he believed the work of continuing the road would be abandoned. We passed a very dilapidated wooden church, that of St. Jerome; a more miserable looking sacred edifice I certainly never saw, but Mr. Tremblay said the building was seldom used. We also saw the remains of an Indian camp very beautifully situated on the summit of a hill, overlooking the river Metabetchouan, which river we presently reached and crossed in a scow. Whilst crossing, we observed a pretty little cottage, picturesquely placed at the junction of the river and the lake, the property of the Hudson Bay Company, and occupied by their agent, Mr. Ross.

We saw an unexpected object in this desolate looking country, viz.: a steamer, called the *Pocahontas*, belonging to Messrs. Price Brothers, of Quebec, and used by them to navigate the lake. From the river to Mr. Charlton's our attention was much attracted by the vast extent of burnt and charred trees scattered at intervals over the land, looking like a collection of telegraph posts, minus the wires. This phenomenon was caused by the Saguenay fire, and Malcolm agreed with me that this was a most weird and unnatural looking country. When near our destination, we had a view of the lake, more like a sea in extent than our idea of a lake, the other side only appearing in the distance like a faint silver line. Presently we saw a splendid crop of wheat, with several men hard at work reaping. I also espied a most comfortable English-looking stable, which Mr. Tremblay informed us belonged to Mr. Charlton, and immediately afterwards we arrived at his house, but on enquiry found its owner absent. Mrs. and Miss Charlton, however, were at home, and received us most kindly, though our arrival was quite unexpected. I felt almost ashamed to accept their hospitality, as both Malcolm and I looked perfect objects from the fly bites and ragged state of our garments, indeed we might easily be taken for vagrants, so wretched did we look, and

Malcolm being without boots, completed the picture. After presenting our letter of introduction, and explaining our woebegone and sudden appearance, Mrs. Charlton gave us a good substantial dinner, which we much needed and enjoyed. After a little more conversation, we re-entered our "carriage" and retraced our steps to Mr. Tremblay's. I tried all my powers of persuasion to induce Malcolm to continue our journey to Quebec without delay, he feeling inclined to remain at Mr. Tremblay's for a few day's rest, though I felt no inclination to rest anywhere but in our own house at Quebec. Our return drive was an intensely hot one, the trees affording no protection from the sun, whose rays came pouring down on our heads. During our drive (I having persuaded Malcolm to start for Grande Baie that evening,) we questioned Mr. Tremblay as to the possibility of procuring a fresh horse to take us and our unpretending baggage on to Grande Baie. After a little demur, he agreed to drive us there himself, and if unable to procure a fresh horse, to drive his own, (the poor animal had already done a fair day's work,) however, we were fortunate enough to find a man willing to let his horse take the journey, so I hoped all would go well. About five p.m. we reached Mr. Tremblay's house, and whilst he got ready his horse and vehicle we had some tea. A more vicious horse to catch I never saw, and three men spent nearly an hour endeavoring to secure and harness the animal, which was accomplished with much difficulty. Malcolm was now quite anxious to start, as both Johnson and the three horses were too ill to travel, and it was imperative that some one should go to Quebec to buy liniment, &c., for the horses.

It was nearly dark when we left Hébertville, a small village about four miles from Mr. Tremblay's, and boasting of a church, a post office and two very good stores. Here I bought some biscuits and a pair of cotton gloves, in which to hide my hands on board the steamer at Ha! Ha! Bay. We also invested twenty-five cents in a sack of hard nuts. After leaving Hébertville it was too dark to see anything of the country. We crossed a floating bridge, which is all I can remember, except that the road ran alongside Lakes Kenogamichiche and Kenogami. The former, Mr. Tremblay informed us, was nine miles long, the latter twenty-seven. About one hundred yards of land separated the two Lakes, therefore we drove by them for thirty-six miles. About ten p.m. we arrived at a small house, where Mr. Tremblay got out to feed his horse, and, after rousing the mistress of the "mansion," we were glad to accept her offer of rest and food, which we much

needed after our long journey in such a conveyance, which, having neither springs nor anything to rest our backs against, was a very fatiguing mode of travelling. Whilst our hostess prepared supper Malcolm fell asleep, and I soon followed his example. Supper being announced we partook of an excellent repast, and I remarked how beautifully clean and nice everything was belonging to the old lady's abode. Immediately after supper we continued our journey, feeling much refreshed by our short rest. It was a beautiful night and the moon shone brightly. We crossed several bridges, and sometimes both Malcolm and I feel asleep, till some hole in the road caused us to wake with a start. Mr. Tremblay also slept for some time, leaving his horse to find its own way, which, fortunately, was the right one.

SIXTEENTH DAY.

WEDNESDAY, September 6th.

Arrival at Ha! Ha! Bay—On Board Steamer—U. S. Tourists think we are Savages—Very Sleepy.

When day dawned nothing was to be seen but the barren hills and rocks of the Saguenay. We did not see Chicoutimi, but drove direct to Ha! Ha! Bay, where, about seven a m., we saw a welcome sight,—the steamer "Union" anchored at the wharf. We were anxious to get on board unseen, as both were tired and dirty after our night's journey, so we made a rush for a stateroom, and as the captain and purser knew Malcolm we were able at once to procure one, though not without being observed by numerous "American" (U. S.) tourists, who seemed to think we were savages. After making as much change as our limited resources would allow, we were quite ready for breakfast when the bell rang. Having seen the River Saguenay previously, I did not remain on deck, though Malcolm was talking to several gentlemen about our trip; several ladies also questioned me, and gave me an account of sundry adventures, and I spent a very pleasant day. Towards evening I became so sleepy that I could not keep my eyes open, and Malcolm tells me I presented a comical appearance at the table, with my head thrown back and my mouth wide open, causing much amusement to the passengers.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

THURSDAY, September 7th.

Arrival at Quebec—'Twill be long before I go again into the Canadian Bush.

The boat remained most of the night at Murray Bay, a lovely little village, where we had spent a month just before starting on our trip to Lake St. John. The rest of our journey was performed by daylight. We passed many pretty places which last summer had made us well acquainted with. We did not reach Quebec till the afternoon, and drove out immediately to our house, where we found our arrival quite unlooked for. It will be some time before I go again into the Canadian bush.

CONCLUSION.

Malcolm returns to Lake St. John—Return, overland, of our Indian Guides to Quebec.

Malcolm returned to Lake St. John Saturday, 9th September, when he found Jennie dead, and the other two horses recovering. Johnson took them down to the Honorable Mr. Price's, at Chicoutimi, and after three weeks (Malcolm having gone to England on business) brought them back to Quebec, though it was sometime before they could be shod or exercised, and even now (March 1872) Katie's legs have not lost the marks of the cuts and bruises she received on the so-called Lake St. John Road. The Indians returned to Quebec safely in about ten days after we left them, but had some difficulty in getting down. We did not ask them for details, being too glad to recover all our belongings (which had been left on the road) and to find all our party safe and sound.