

CANOEING FOR WOMEN.

FIRST learn to swim. Do not go in a canoe unless you can swim or there are four men waiting around to rescue you. Next secure a river or a small lake, see that your canoe is a reliable make, arrange that a loose blouse forms part of your costume, get a paddle the right length for your arms, bid an affectionate farewell to your relatives, place your foot carefully in the centre of the canoe and get in. Kneel on that cushion in the bow—if this is your first attempt there is probably a man in the stern—and lean back against the cross-bar.

Now you are ready. The man will show you how to hold your paddle, dip it, bring it back and dip it again. You will likewise be expected to look straight ahead—don't dare to turn your head or the canoe will go over—and at the same time watch just how he manipulates his paddle. It is not easy at first. But bye and bye you struggle into the right way of giving the stroke and the paddle in your hands becomes less dangerous for your companion. He has ceased shaking water off his head and shoulders, and making frantic efforts to balance the canoe. He can now steer with comfort even with pleasure for you have ceased jerking and splashing. It has likewise dawned upon you that your paddling may have some connection with his, and that it is not absolutely necessary for you to run the whole affair. Now also is conviction borne upon you that you may even hold the paddle less tightly and still remain comparatively in a safe position. You learn gradually to paddle more evenly and with longer strokes, to even shift your position occasionally, without endangering your companion's new flannels, to change readily from one side to the other without losing the stroke, to obey the word of command, to keep your costume fairly dry, to paddle long distances without tiring, in short, to be trusted in a canoe.

Would you like know to how I taught a girl to paddle? As a preliminary I endeavored to teach her to swim. My efforts were a failure, owing chiefly to her strong

determination not to get her bathing-suit wet. It was bright red, and we called this summer girl, Mephisto. She had cap, cape, pointed shoes and all. Altogether, she was a feature in the landscape when she stood on her toes on a log and waved her arms over the beach toward the sea. But dim all that brightness with water? Never! But learn to paddle? Yes. So I took her out in my canoe. I told her not to dare to say a word. She has a way of talking with her mouth, hands, and feet, that is not good for canoes. She promised not to even move her eyebrow. Somebody put a paddle in her hands and shoved us away from the wharf. The river stretched a be-diamonded living ribbon among the rushes and between the shadowed banks. I steered up stream and let Mephisto do her worst. She did it. True, she did not talk much, but I had to talk a great deal. She afterwards wrote out part of my conversation as a guide to young canoeists.

"Don't turn your head! I don't care if there are fifty 'Billy's' and 'Swapseys.'"

"Use both hands. Stop splashing."

"Now, mind, if you kick out again, I go home."

"If you splash another drop, I'll upset this affair."

"I put it to you as a man and a brother, what's the sense of making your tongue go the same way as the paddle? Keep it in your mouth."

"This is no time and place to admire yourself in the water."

"*Stop splashing!*!"

"That's the fourth log you have run us into."

"What particular spite have you against that shore?"

"That's the last time I'm going to go back after your paddle."

"Will you, or will you not stop wriggling around? Stop splashing."

"I'm going home to get some dry clothes on."

While I should like to report her remarks as a horrible example. She was the most absolutely helpless person in a canoe I ever saw. As an experiment I allowed her to steer—or, to do what she called steering. This was something the