

is a perfect labyrinth of lakes and islands and so well deserves the name. The morning was hazy and the islands at first but dimly visible. But the sun after a time forced its way through and lighted up the beautiful scene. Here and there were expectant Indians come out to meet us in their frail bark canoes, and paddling up alongside, they joined the cluster at our stern. A strange and impressive sight was it when we at length hove in sight of the "Height of Land," a huge rocky eminence like an upturned basin, literally swarming all over with Indians, in every position and every imaginable costume. One solitary wigwam stood at the top of the eminence, and the tops of others could just be seen betraying a considerable village at the rear. A large Union Jack also floated from a mast planted in the rock. There they sat and crouched and smoked, or stood, or leaned with that majestic composure peculiar to the Indian

race, while below, on the slippery sides of the rock, tumbled and rolled about their dirty children, or prowled their grim and wolfish looking dogs. It was a gay holiday time for them all. For three days and three nights pork and flour and tobacco would be flowing freely into their laps from their great and good Mother the Queen, and to every individual, man woman and child, yea to even the papoose of a day old would be given a five dollar bill to spend as they pleased. This was what had brought the jolly-faced traders with their packages; \$2,300 of Government money was to be distributed on the morrow, and \$2,300 was bound to be expended, as money to those poor people in their wilderness homes—wandering about hundreds of miles further into the deep bush—would be utterly useless, and they were bound to spend it within the next forty-eight hours.

(To be Continued.)

## Muskoka and the Free Grant Lands.

BY REV. W. CROMPTON.

**T**HEN there are many people who have made up their minds that Muskoka is bad. They think so therefore it must be so. To such you may talk until Doomsday, but you cannot convince them that they *might possibly* be in error. Some of these professed themselves to be lumber-men. I doubt it much, for all the real lumber men I have met with (and that is no small number) were men of ability and intelligence. But even lumber-men who go well over the country are not the best judges as to this country, for, taking it generally, our best lands are where there is the least pine.

The third class of misrepresentors could be divided into many heads. There are men who come as far as Gravenhurst, Bracebridge, Rosseau, or even to Huntsville; they see rock here and rock there as they go along the Government road, and jump hastily to the conclusion that there must be rock everywhere. The fact of the matter is, such people do not *see* the country at all, although there are (I care not for such folks' sneers) good farms on and around the roads and lakes appearances notwithstanding. Those who confine their attention thus, only are, as it were, looking on the picture frame, they see little or nothing of the picture itself.

Then there are men who have come in

with a bit of money—about as fit for bush as a cow is for playing on the violin. These men come with certain ideas floating in their minds as to what farming is. They buy and read books on farming at home, and without trying to find out what are the capabilities of the country they are adopting—will ye, nill ye, a farm is *this*, therefore my free grant land must be *this*—they spend their money and the fresh energy born of hope in working out their ideas. The plan does not answer, their money is gone, and they go too; but as they go and wherever they dwell, they blame the *country* for what, after all, was their own folly and wilful blindness. When in Toronto, one of these men was mentioned to me. I know his place well, holding service near it every fortnight, and I can vouch for what all his old neighbors will back me up in saying, it is a standing memento of his extreme stupidity and folly. So long as his money lasted there was no place like Muskoka; now he writes Muskoka down, an ass! That I should not care much for but it unfortunately happens he is a good writer, well educated, and has been put into such a situation as enables him to send his lucubrations broadcast over the country. Some days his proprietors will find out how much they are really suffering for allowing him to belie the country, and they will find that truth