



Camp in Mount Robson Park. G.T.P. Ry.

The Woods of Rock Lake

Written for the Western Home Monthly by J. D. A. Evans.

The beauty places of Manitoba are numerous. They comprise various forms of nature, which may be justly considered as fitting recipients of such title, hence admirably adapted to the many inclinations of the people.

The areas of provincial waterways afford a feature of such to multitudinous residents. Lake Winnipeg, its scattered inland sea, furnishes recreation and delight to the crowds who patronise its resorts, or tour upon its waters away into the northland.

To many Manitobans, the woodlands in days of summer are paradisiacal. The size of the forest monarchs within these glades, for it is erroneous to characterise this province as deficient in tree growth but of size miniature alone. To the contrary, there can be located the wooded places in which the oak, elm, maple are of prodigious dimensions. As corroborative of this assertion, Rock Lake in Southern Manitoba, scattered amongst the ferns, amidst the bushes, even in the shade of the huge boulders upon the hillsides, a wealth of gay blossom can be discovered.

The banks of little streamlets winding their circuitous route lakeward are the favored places of the hartstongue, with other members of the fern family; there are mossy hollows wherein these lovely growths attain perfection in height and foliage. The fungi of many species are

noticeable, of which the edible variety, the mushroom, abundantly thrive.

The feathered architects of every variety indigenous to Manitoba clime abound in Rock Lake's woods. In early morning hours the sweet thrills of tree vocalists vibrate through the groves, flitting denizens of the forest piping their joyous lays, and continue in such strain until snows of winter cover the scene—then silence is in possession of the woodlands until halcyon days of spring appear, when the voices of the bird will resound once again. In close proximity to the tree covered banks of the lake the weir is a fitting example.

Upon the hillsides surrounding this lagoon of the pembina water chainlet, the trio of tree varieties alluded to attain huge proportions. The stumps of many victims to decay or woodman's axe are proof positive, and may be noticed in profusion; by no means is it a rarity to find specimens excessive of three feet in diametrical measurement, whilst living examples of these monarchs of equivalent dimension are numerically large.

A walk through the woods is otherwise a ramble amidst nature in undisturbed raiment. Soaring skyward, a tree veteran in radiant coloring is a creation befitting to the visitor as he gazes upward at its towering height, or views amongst the grassy carpet at its base the wild flower world with its wealth of representatives. Amidst the woods of

Rock Lake the growth of nature's floral world is amazing; he of botanical inclination would reap rich harvest of his interesting study. It would be difficult to enumerate a tithe of the many varieties peeping forth in shady dells, grassy patches, cry of the bittern may be heard, the flap of the mallard's wing upon the water, with the squeaking voice of the sandpiper as he scans the lakeside for his prey.

What a glorious assemblage within Rock Lake's woods and upon her waters in days of summer! A rest for weary eyes to gaze upon, recuperative moments for the toiler.

And, as we stroll through these sylvan scenes, perhaps 'tis little we realize that beneath the sod of Rock Lake's hillsides are many interred, who when the smoke of the Indians' teepee in the long ago curled over the ground upon which the great city of Winnipeg stands to-day, hunted the huge game within the thick-nesses of Pembina Valley, for there are many Indian graves upon its wooded banks; whilst upon the slope of a hill not far away a blood-thirsty battle was fought in the early years of the sixties, and as resultant issue nearly one hundred of its participants are buried in the vicinity of this place.

MONTH'S BRIGHT SAYINGS

W. W. Buchanan: Outside of merely material considerations, many parents seem to think their responsibility ends in bringing children into the world. They seem to have no idea that there is a responsibility in training and character forming.

Prof. Brander Matthews: Alfred Russel Wallace says that man has made no gain in mind or morals in 7,000 years. It is too bad to live 90 years and still come to such a crazy conclusion.

Rev. Dr. Hillis: Men are led away from threatening destruction; a hand is put into theirs, which leads them forth gently toward a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's.

Hall Caine: Every man should have some avocation, some hobby. He should never neglect it, for some day it may mean life and happiness to him. To develop a hobby is not an instantaneous accomplishment. It takes years—filched from the daily grind. One may love his work, indeed, to be successful one must love it; but the moment the work begins to own us, to command every waking hour, that moment we are miserable slaves, turning ambition into a taskmaster and baring our backs for the whip.

A neighbor of mine has a boy 4 years old who remained in the room where I was visiting his mother recently. We were discussing diseases of children, especially whooping cough, which was epidemic just then. This little fellow manifested much interest in the conversation.

Noticing his deep interest I said to him: "Albert, did you ever have whooping cough?"

To which he replied: "I've had every kind of disease but sickness."