

Manitou, the great evil spirit, and while they have no form of regular worship of the former, they still retain their superstitious dread of the evil work and influences of the latter. In their own line of life they display considerable industry, but in the pursuits of the white man, like all other Indians east of the Rocky mountains, they are indolent, shiftless, and to a great extent helpless. They are all wards of the Dominion Government and receive regular bounty in money and provisions through the Indian Department.

Although the war dance and other pageants of the barbarous days are discarded, it is astonishing how these people cling to some of the forms and ceremonies handed down from their forefathers.

Quite a number of the social rights and ceremonies are observed about the time of treaty payment, when a large gathering can be secured. Religious rights or ceremonies of a pagan nature are not to be seen, and indeed it is difficult to discover any form of religion amongst them, or anything more than their hazy superstition about their good and evil Deity. Quite a number nominally profess the Christian faith, but none have as yet proved enthusiasts. Among those who have adopted the names of white people, it is noticeable that the Scripture names such as John, James, David, and so forth are the favorite cognomens.

The best course to follow in furnishing an idea of the scenic beauty of the Lake of the Woods, and at the same time of the legendary lore of the Indians around, is to quote the following article written last fall for a special number of *The Colonist* by the writer. In that journal it appeared under the heading of

ANOTHER ROUTE.

It was from Keewatin we started, although Rat Portage could serve equally well as a starting point. The little tug "Cruiser" conveyed our small party; and after clearing the narrows at the entrance to Keewatin Bay, we shot away in a southerly direction, while a stiff westerly breeze lashed the white capped, short and choppy swell against the broadside of our little craft, causing her to heel over and pitch a little, but only enough to give a really enjoyable motion. We had selected the most boisterous day for weeks for our trip. One of those days made up of bright lights and severe shades with somewhat of a chill in the breeze when clouds hid the sun, but comfortable in temperature when the great orb again shone clearly.

We had not crossed the channel lying between the long neck of mainland on which Rat Portage, Norman and Keewatin are located, and the maze of islands to the south, before a squall with a shower of rain struck us and for a few minutes made us tighten our wraps around our forms. But it was of short duration and the sun soon dissipated all discomfort with his returning rays.

As already stated our course was southerly at first, but once this channel was crossed to give in detail the courses steered in our tortuous windings amid this archipelago would be a matter impossible. Once entered this maze of islands is almost as bewildering as it is beautiful. Around you can see islands large enough to be mistaken for portions of the mainland, others with an area of a score of acres or less, and some mere dots on the surface of the water; then some are covered with tall spruce, birch and white cedar with dense brush hanging down into the waters of the lake, others have been swept in past years by forest fires, and the tall trunks of former giant trees, black and charred in some instances, and bleached pale by exposure to storm in others, with the deep green undergrowth of brush around their bases, gave such islands a curious and somewhat weird appearance. Among the smaller islands were some which rose abruptly from the lake, the timber upon them being tall and verdant, giving them the appearance of a huge pile of some green matter. Look in any direction and islands met your view, all differing in the details of their outline, and yet all blending into one expansive view, as unique as it is beautiful, as enchanting as it is grand.

We have heard of fairyland in our childhood, the dream of the morning of life and here in the afternoon of life the reality is before us. It only requires the fairy queen wand in hand and her light-footed following to appear and we have in reality scenes as hazily beautiful as we ever feasted our eyes upon in the trans-

formation scenes of the pantomime of our childhood. We could wish we were children once more, that our impressions from the scene might be as pure as they then were.

Through this cluster of islands we steamed for the greater part of an hour, turning points, and in and out of narrow channels in the most tortuous manner, sometimes a wide bay would be opened up, where a two mile stretch across unbroken water met the view, then a sudden turn to right or left would shoot us into some narrow sound between two islands whose abrupt banks crowned by lofty spruce and other trees made our water channel dark and shadowy. Following this tortuous course we at length entered the Na-Mangoos-a-cawaing, or, as it is called in English, Trout Sound. Here we passed through a long, narrow and somewhat winding channel, with unusually high land on either side surmounted by tall trees and with dense green brush down to the water's edge in many places. About the middle of the course through this sound, the limited view shaded as we were from the sun's rays, was sombre, yet beautiful, while the feeling of isolation or loneliness would soon prove oppressive, had we to linger there, so thoroughly shut out did we seem from everything of life. And yet we were only a half dozen miles or so, by the crow's course from the busy town of Rat Portage, and the great Canadian Railway which links the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

Travellers differ widely in the impressions made upon them by scenery of different kinds. There are some sordid people, who could gaze on the great Niagara, and have in their minds only calculations as to how many turbine wheels, and how many horsepower could be harnessed down to industrial work by the waters of the great cataract. Others again can view such scenes only with romantic spectacles and see only inspiration for the poet or the painter. But it would be difficult to find man or woman so sordid and practical as to view Lake of the Woods scenery and think only of how many millions of feet of lumber could be sawn out of its forest covered islands, or how much precious metal could be crushed out of its gold-bearing rocks. These are calculations not to be overlooked entirely, but to almost any mind they must be matters for secondary consideration, when the fairy-like beauty of the ever changing scenery is viewed.

Some minds cannot view beautiful scenery such as this lake presents without hunting for historic associations, or, if the reliable chronicler has not given anything to the world, a hunt for legendary associations. This weakness the writer must confess, and in looking for historic matter around the Lake of the Woods the work is comparatively a fruitless one. The history of the lake and its thousands of islands is a blank until the past quarter of a century, which furnishes some common-place events scarcely worth recording. Even the accounts of the old voyageurs of the eighteenth century, so far as they can be reached are only records of the petty squabbles of rival fur traders of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Fur Company, before the interests of these two great pioneer corporations were united in 1826.

Even the Indians on the lake seem to have but few of the old legends of their tribe to furnish to the enquirer, and this seems strange, for the Indians are pure descendants of the Ojibewas, as they were at one time named, which name has been modernized into Chippewa, to suit the tongue of the white invader.

Any person who has read backwoods Indian tales in his or her teens, would naturally look for records of strife between the white invader and the red man, or between the tribes of the latter. As stated, even the legends of the Indians are few and not always romantic. There are some handed down, however, and the visitor will not be astonished, after visiting the Na-mangoos-a-cawaing, to know that it was the scene of one massacre of Sioux Indians by their hereditary enemies the Chippewas.

AN INDIAN TALE.

After the Chippewas had driven all opponents out of the lake country, and away into the yellow land of the western plains they enjoyed comparative peace in this land of their adoption and fished and hunted with impunity westward to the borders of the prairie land, into which bands of their tribe made occasional forays, plundering and murdering their old enemies the Sioux and the Sac and Fox tribes. Seldom did the Sioux venture into the lake country, as they were even less able to cope with the Chippewas through lake and brush, than the latter were to meet them openly on the plains, where the horses of the Sioux told so much to their advantage.

On the town site of Keewatin, quite close to the lumber mills of Messrs. Dick & Banning is the site of an old Chippewa camp, where a powerful chief ruled over some two hundred and fifty warriors with their squaws and papooses.

Isawash, as the chief was named, had gone through many a fierce fight with the Sioux, and had brought home from his many forays scores of scalps of his enemies. He was advancing in years, and while his forays into the yellow plains had been few of late