

of Lake Ontario, and the point of embarkation for the trip on the Lakes is situated 112 miles from Toronto. The total area of the district covers a large tract of that portion of the country, and some idea of its extent may be had, when it is known that some 800 lakes and rivers are embedded within its boundaries.

This incomparable range of waters, studded over a vast area, like crystalline gems set with emeralds, in one of those gorgeous pictures of nature which defy the power of creative genius to depict, and baffles the skill of brightest imitation, is without doubt the tourist's Mecca *par excellence*.

The region is replete with historical interest, as being the home of the ill-fated Hurons. Now all is forgotten, the scene is changed, and it is only now and then, in a reflective mind, that the name of a village or lake will awaken the memory of some Indian legend, "dark with phantoms and shapes of wild enormity." The waters of this region which stand out in more prominence than the others are the Muskoka Lakes, composed of three bodies of beautiful, translucent water, their names being "Lake Muskoka," "Lake Rosseau" and "Lake Joseph," all three being connected, and giving a continuous steambat route of more than fifty miles. The bosoms of these sylvan gems are covered with innumerable islands, on which have been built cosy and comfortable cottages, and on the larger islands may be seen handsome and costly residences, the homes of the wealthy. To those in search of purely scenic beauty, there is no other spot in the universe to rival it, while those in search of health will find the purity of the air and the general surroundings most beneficial. Being at an altitude of 1,000 feet above the sea-level and 500 feet above the city of Toronto, it is the very spot to invigorate exhausted physical nature.

The shores of these lakes are thickly wooded with a variety of timber, principally balsam and pine, which is one of the accountable reasons for the benefits to be derived by those suffering from any pulmonary disease, catarrh, etc. You see all about you,

from the deck of the steamer, woods and forests that resemble bandlets of shrubbery, and from some height the landscape presents a beautiful vista, the waters encircling the numerous islands, appearing like ribbons of silver entwining in and out through various narrow spaces. You notice around you climbing heights and rock-bound islets, in a the sullenness of undisturbed nature, rich with every tree that grows, and echoing the shrill sounds of myriads of wild birds. Interesting to the tourist and lover of the beauties of nature, it is doubly so to the sportsman and disciple of rod and gun, as the whole country is nature's rich preserve for game, and the waters of the lakes and the many rivers and streams that empty into them teem with the gamiest of the finny kingdom.

There is nothing anywhere else quite like Muskoka. It stands alone in its particular individuality and beauty, and there is no other spot to be compared to it in loveliness. The old axiom of "See Rome and die" does not apply to Muskoka; a more appropriate saying might be suggested, "See Muskoka before you die," and the visit will probably prolong your life.

The Muskoka Lakes contain between four hundred and five hundred islands of every shape and size, ranging from one of over 1,100 acres, in Lake Rosseau, to those containing but a single tree, or a rock rising sheer from the water's edge. The most numerous, however, are densely covered with pine, balsam, cedar, birch, maple, oak and other varieties of tree life.

Many of the islands, on which have been erected handsome dwellings, are the private property of wealthy Americans and Canadians, but there are hundreds of choice little spots on which any party is at liberty to take up their abode for the season.

The radiant and ceaseless loveliness of Nature's everchanging panorama is seldom more appreciated than in the midst of these lakes,

'Countercharged
with diamond plots of dark and bright.'