

caps appeared everywhere and our little canoe scudded before the gale with wonderful speed. It proved itself a right good craft and we landed safely at the head of Snake rapids where we camped for a day and a half until a series of storms abated.

Near by was a camp of Crees which our canoemen early visited. During our stay here the younger of my two canoemen came to my tent, and, after much beating about the bush and apologizing for troubling me, let me know that a "little game" was in progress at the Cree camp, that one Indian had eighty dollars and that if I would be so good as to advance him a few dollars on account of his wages he would be delighted to secure a slice of this Indian's pile. It was useless for me to caution him so I advanced him ten or twelve dollars and off he went in great glee. I knew on his return what had happened, but said nothing until after we were well on our way below Snake rapids when I asked him how he made out. "Lost everything," he muttered. "I suppose that Indian will have about one hundred dollars now," I remarked. "I suppose so," he admitted gloomily, while the cook rocked the canoe with peals of laughter.

Now we were on Snake lake, a beautiful body of water surrounded by high hills of red granite partly covered by groves of deep green jackpine and silver birch, and dotted with innumerable picturesque islands varying in size from mere points of rock to beautiful areas upwards of half a mile in length. The waters are clear and apparently very deep. Fish appear very plentiful everywhere along the route though we had seen but little game or waterfowl. Instead of following the Churchill, my guide now proposed that we strike across from Snake lake to Lac la Ronge by a route leading through a chain of large lakes, which he claimed was not only shorter but would avoid several long portages the rapids of the Churchill made necessary. I was glad of the change and accordingly we took this alternative.

Leaving Snake lake on the 14th we travelled for three days through as beautiful a lake country as the eye could wish to see and reached Lac la Ronge on the evening of the 16th. One old hunter describes this part of Saskatchewan as a "sea of islands" and I do not know of any better description. Once or twice I climbed to the top of a rocky prominence and with my glasses scanned the horizon in every direction and this was exactly what I saw. Sometimes our route followed winding streams through grassy valleys hemmed in by high cliffs of granite and waving trees, and where the sluggish waters were covered with myriads of golden water lilies. Sometimes we crossed lakes, winding in and out through countless islands, and we pictured the scene as it would be were these set off by summer cottages. Lazy pelicans slowly flapped their great wings and sailed away at our approach, loons screeched their weird cries on all sides and save for these notes of discord and the splashing of fish only the sighing of the wind through the tree tops broke the stillness of these solitudes.

On this mazy route, without a guide, one might lose his way and spend weeks in trying to get out, so intricate is the way. My guide had only travelled this route in winter time, and five years ago at that, so that it taxed his skill to the utmost in choosing the proper course. Even at that I doubt if he would not have made a few mistakes had not that veteran native fire ranger John Flett, whose patrol we were now following, marked out the way by a series of signs and signals which I was able to follow myself. Only a few short portages had to be made and all were well cleared out and beaten smooth. On one of these I measured spruce and balsam trees with diameters up to sixteen inches at four feet from the ground, though the amount of large timber noticed was not great. On another portage we found some ripe strawberries. Flowers were everywhere plentiful and the woods almost entirely green, very small burnt areas being noticed. This beautiful route culminated on the evening of July 16th when we reached the great Lac la Ronge, the most majestic of them all, beautiful beyond description and dotted with countless islands that fade away into the distance of the