

Succa Lake.

One of the pleasantest features of Muskoka scenery to the rambler is the number of little lakes scattered here and there about the larger ones, miniatures of their big sisters, as it were, reproducing on a smaller scale the same formation of rocky or thickly wooded shore. One of the prettiest of these is Silver Lake, near Port Carling, but there was another I fancied still more in the neighbourhood of Rousseau, Succa Lake I think it was called, after something (was it fish or mollusk?) found in its waters. I came upon it unexpectedly one morning after a ramble in the woods along one of the paths so common to Muskoka, green and tangled, and just wild enough to make one feel the advisability of sticking to it and not straying either to the right or left. There is a charm more easily felt than defined in tracking a path and seeing where it leads to, if it be not too well beaten a one, and there was something of playful caprice, almost of moodishness about this one as it strayed hither and thither, now plunging into the heart of the wood, then emerging into a clearing, where one was sure to find raspberries, now skirting delicately round a marshy place, or jumping lightly a cross-path or road perhaps of the picturesque corduroy description. I sauntered on, stooping every now and then to gather a pretty fern, or cutting little fungus jutting from the side of a sunken tree or lingering to admire the mosses that grow in such beauty and variety in these Muskoka solitudes, when all at once the wood grew thinner and I came out on the shores of a solitary little lake. Something in its desolateness pleased me. There was not a sight or sound of anything human, not a habitation, or even lonely fisherman in boat or canoe. I sat down on a log and gazed round me with an air of possession, almost as if I were the original discoverer of the place. The shores were of the kind so common to Muskoka, never majestic or imposing, but with an irregular, unkempt beauty of their own, huge shoulder-like boulders of rock alternating with a confusion of pines and cedars growing down to the water's edge. Immediately before me stretched a flat expanse of wet sand, back of which big boulders were piled irregularly one on top of another, forming a sort of rude rampart, over the face of which gnarled and twisted cedars seemed literally to cling and crawl, thrusting their roots into the crannies and crevices for support. There was something almost human looking about the struggle and effort of their existence, and one could not help fancying that they must have more self-reliance and strength of character than their brethren growing in easier places. High up, peeping prettily out of one of the chinks where some earth had settled, I noticed a cluster of graceful little ferns. One is often surprised at the delicacy and beauty of forms of vegetation in Muskoka, not of the ferns only, but trailing wreaths and flowers. There is a shy wildness about some of the latter that makes one regret that spring, with its early blossoms is over long before the tourist season begins. On the shores of this same Succa Lake, shooting up fearlessly from the wet sand, with not even a blade of grass near, I gathered the tiniest of plants, a slender stalk not more than an inch and a half in height, destitute of leaves, and surmounted by pin-like heads of infinitesimal flowers, coloured something like lichen or gray moss. I bore it with me as a trophy of the lonely little lake hid in the woods, with its sombre-coloured water and picturesquely untidy shores.

J. E. SMITH.

Toronto Theatricals.

AGNES THOMSON.—An effort is being made to have this celebrated Canadian soprano give a concert in Montreal at an early date. She would certainly meet with an enthusiastic reception and a crowded house, particularly as her brilliant success in New York and other American cities has excited so much attention.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC.—We regret the action of Miss Mather in refusing to play at this house recently, on account of the equipments being insufficient. We shall not enter into the matter, as it has been fully ventilated by the newspapers; but our sympathies lie with the management of the Academy, as we feel they are blameless in the matter, and would have carried out their part of the contract in their usual business-like way.

Wedding Bells.

Mr. W. D. Lighthall, who has already made a name for himself in Canadian literature, was on the 1st inst. married, in Emmanuel Church, Montreal, to Miss Sybil C. Wilkes, daughter of the late Mr. John A. Wilkes. The ceremony was performed by the pastor of the church, Rev. W. H. Pulsford, and Mr. T. H. Lonsdale gave the bride away. The bridesmaids were Miss Isa Gibson, of Ottawa, Miss Gertrude Seymour and Miss Muriel Lonsdale. The groomsmen were Captain George Lighthall, while Mr. Fair and Mr. W. Birks acted as ushers. The presents were numerous and beautiful, among them being a china tea set of eighty-four pieces, given by the Chinese community of Montreal, whom Mr. Lighthall has befriended on many occasions. Mr. and Mrs. Lighthall left last evening for Boston. May they be happy. In an early issue we hope to present our readers with a portrait of Mr. Lighthall.

The Workers of the World—Past and Present.

Every man is bound to work in some way or other. If he does not procure employment for himself, the devil, according to the learned and pious Dr. Watts, is sure to furnish it for him. Labour is one of the conditions of strength. All slothful races are weak, physically, morally, and intellectually. Go to the intertropical regions, where nature, without culture, produces all that is necessary to supply the animal wants of man, and you will find the natives deficient alike in brain and brawn. Morality is at the lowest possible ebb among the lazy tribes of hot countries—a fact that demonstrates the truth of the theory so musically propounded by our old friend Dr. Watts. It ought to be a great consolation to the work day world to know that it could thrash the play day world in a fair fight without pulling off its jacket. And yet the stalwart toilers are sometimes foolish enough to envy the effeminate do-nothings. Silly fellows, they do not know that the most valuable of all jewels are the sweet beads that fall from their own pores—most valuable, because they purchase health, vigour, and sound repose; things which all the gems of Golconda cannot buy. There is no real enjoyment save that which is fairly earned either by hand-work or head-work, or both.

It is true that the human machine may be overtaken. It sometimes is. But in these days, when the roughest portion of the world's work is done by steam-driven iron, there is no necessity, in enlightened countries, for man to overstrain his strength. Let those who are inclined to grumble at their share of the wear and tear of life, glance back into antiquity and learn to be content with their lot. The miserable ancients—the toiling class we mean—had a hard time of it. Think how the steam-engineless Egyptians must have strained their unfortunate arms and spines while piling up the Pyramids and scooping out the Catacombs—how the comparatively screwless and leverless Chinese must have ruined their constitutions in building their "Great Wall" to keep out the Tartars—and at what a cost of broken backs and contracted sinews the immense masses of rock on Salisbury Plain were brought from distant quarries and arranged in circles for the mysterious uses of Nobody-knows-who. Possibly the poor wretches of the past had more mechanical helps than we know of, but certainly they had no steam-engines. Look at the gigantic results of Roman labour as seen in the mouldering remains of the noblest aqueducts, havens, roads, and public buildings that were ever constructed. It seems incredible that these were the achievements of mere muscle. The Romans conquered the world, though—we must remember that—and that it was only when they became lazy that they lost it.

After all, there is nothing like hard work; it is the parent of greatness. We have not a very high opinion of the Turks, but they have one admirable maxim, viz., that every boy, no matter what his degree, shall be taught some handicraft, whereby, under any circumstances, he may get a living. Sultan Mahmoud was a tolerable shoemaker, and other Sultans were compelled in their youth to learn mechanical trades. The worst of it is that your Ottoman is so confoundedly indolent that, after having been taught how to earn his bread, he would almost rather starve than labour. Upon the whole, modern toilers—in civilized and Christian lands at least—can well afford to pity the fate of their brethren of long ago. Modern toilers are not sightless Samsons working in the dark and treated with scorn. They work understandingly, and live in an age where exertion is honourable and idleness disgraceful. Furthermore, mechanical power, scientifically applied, is the slave that does most of the hard jobs, and saves muscle no end of lifting, pushing, striking, and hauling. It has been well said that no illustration could more aptly show the difference between the old times and the new than the picture of the ancient galley, urged onward with tiers of flashing oars wielded by the sinewy arms of unwilling servitors, and the modern steamer propelled by the fire and water that science has made the vassals of man. Still, all of us, if we would be happy, must perform fairly and squarely the work given us to do.—*New York Ledger*.

A New Cotton Plant.

According to the last British consular report from Alexandria the chief feature of the cotton trade of Egypt during the past year was the increased cultivation of a new variety of cotton plant known as Mitaife. This plant was discovered a few seasons ago at Benha, and this is the first occasion on which it has been planted on a large scale. Although its produce is not quite so good in quality as that of the Ashomouni plant, and is of short staple, it produces a much larger proportion of cotton to seed than any other variety. At the same time it has the advantage of being earlier and less susceptible to atmospheric influences. The result of last year's experiment was so encouraging that this year a still greater area has been planted with the Mitaife cotton. In the provinces of Sharkieh, Galioubeh and Menoufieh it had been almost exclusively sown, and throughout Lower Egypt, except in the province of Dakhalieh, where, probably owing to climatic conditions, it did not succeed last year, it has to a great extent taken the place of the Ashomouni and Bamia varieties, and has almost entirely supplanted the Gallini plant.

LITTLE Miss Avnoo: What is mammas for? Little Miss de Fashion: Why, they is to scold the nurses when we make a noise.

The Police of Paris.

For some time past the police authorities have found that the number of constables placed at their disposal for the preservation of public order is insufficient for the duties imposed upon them. The Municipal Council, therefore, resolved to increase the force by 300 men, and the Government has now formally sanctioned this step, and has agreed to pay half of the expenses out of the funds of the State. The police of Paris consists of 6,000 men, without counting the Inspectors, of whom there are not very many; but in reality only about half the number mentioned is employed in the work of watching the streets. A central brigade of 400 men devotes itself exclusively to the surveillance of theatres, balls, concerts, race courses, and such like; 800 are employed at the different cab stands, in the markets, at the slaughter houses, and in duties of a similar kind, while a large number is utilized for the duties of clerks in the various police stations scattered throughout the city. As a matter of fact, little more than 3,000 men are available for ordinary street duty. The city is supposed to be divided into 1,274 "beats," representing about 900 miles of streets, and as three constables are necessary for each of the twenty-four hours, it will be seen that either many of the "beats" have been neglected or the men overworked. Even with the addition of the 300 new men, the police force is regarded by its chiefs as insufficient for the growing needs of Paris, and it must be admitted that there is much room for improvement in the supervision of the exterior districts, where street robberies and assaults are not uncommon.

Preface to Meleager's Garland.

[SEE EDITOR'S TABLE.]

For whom the fruitage of this strain, my Muse?
And who among the bards hath made this wreath?
Meleager wove it, and his weaving gives
For keepsake to most noble Diocles.
Here many lilies are of Anyte,
And white lilies of Mæro, many an one,
And Sappho's flowers—so few, but roses all—
And daffodils of Melanippides
Heavy with ringing hymns—and thy young branch,
Vine of Simonides, and twisted in
Nossis, thine iris flower that breathes of myrrh,
And in its tablets are Love's stores of wax.
Herewith, Rhianus' scented marjoram,
And the sweet crocus of Erinna, too,
Clear as the girl's own skin—and hyacinth,
Alcæus' hyacinth that speaks to bards—
And a dark spray of Samius' laurel tree,
Fresh ivy-clusters of Leonidas,
And foliage of Mnascalus' needled pine.
And from the plane-tree song of Pamphilus
He cut a branch, and with the walnut boughs
Of Panocrates he twined it, and white leaves
Of Tymnes' poplar. Nicias' green mint
And sandwort of Euphemus from the shore;
And Damagetus' purple violet,
And the sweet myrtle of Callimachus
Full of sharp honey—with Euphorion's flower.
The lychnis and, therewith, his cyclamen,
The Muses call after the sons of Zeus.
And Hegesippus' maddening grape-cluster
He set therein, and Persus' scented flag
And a sweet apple from Diotimus' tree—
Pomegranate flowers of Menecrates,
And the myrrh branches of Nicanetus,
Phænnus' flax plant—Simmias' tall wild pear.
And a few leaves he pulled of Parthenis
Her delicate meadow-parsley, and—gleenings fair
Of the honey-dropping muses—golden ears
From the wheat-harvest of Bacchylides.
And old Anacreon—that sweet strain of his,
An unsown flowerage of his nectar songs;
And the rough-white thorn of Archilochus
He gathered from the pasture—as it were.
Only a few drops from a sea of bloom—
Young shoots of Alexander's olive grown
And Polycleitus' dark blue cornflower. There
He set Polystratus the amaracus,
The poets' flower, and from Antipater
A young Phœnician cypress; and therewith
Eared Syrian spikenard which he gathered him
Out of his singing they call Hermes' gift,*
And Poseidippus too, and Hædulus—
Flowers of the field—and windflowers springing glad
In airs Sicilian,† and the golden bough
Of sacred Plato, shining in its worth.
And he threw in Aratus learned in stars,
Cutting the first spires of his heaven-high pine,
Chæramon's leafy lotus, mixing it
With fox of Phædimus and chamomile—
The crinkled oxe—of Antagoras,
And fresh green thyme of Theodoridas—
The wine-cup's charm—and Phanius' beanflowers too,
With many shoots fresh sprung of other bards.
Adding thereto white early violets
Of his own muse. But to my friends I give
Thanks. And this gracious coronal of song
Be for all such as love these holy things.

* Hermodorus

† Possibly Asclepias.

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