

## THE CANOE ISLANDS

They are found only on the latest local map of Lake George, these isles of the best that to say of the American Canoe Association. Some five miles northward from Crosby side they rest; three of them—blue in the haze, green in the sunshine on the waters of the most enchanting of American lakes. The second week of August saw them the centre of the canoeing interest. Thitherward under sail and paddle came sun-browned, blue-shirted ones, from as far west as Wisconsin, and as far east as Maine. Most of them had been some days or weeks on the way, taking their vacations in the open air; cruising in their canoes by day, and sleeping in them or in tents beside them by night. There were clergymen, lawyers, doctors, journalists, manufacturers, foundrymen, merchants, students, and all the other trades and professions. Of the A. C. A. is eminently Catholic in its scope, and says "no" to a candidate for admission to its ranks only on the most obviously objectionable grounds.

Gradually the main island assumed the appearance of a considerable camp, while the second in size was appropriated by the Cincinnati club, which sent the largest single delegation, and was in itself the centre of a life and enthusiasm that were unknown upon the main island.

Among the most notable of the arrivals early in the week was that of the Canadian contingent, hailing from Peterborough and Ottawa. They arrived in the midst of a heavy blow from the northward, the sea running quite high and the lake covered with whitecaps. The Canadians use the open hunting canoe, built on the general lines of the aboriginal "birch," but beautifully finished in bass, cedar and other woods, and polished like highly finished cabinet work. The voyageurs had come down the Dominion rivers and Lake Champlain, bringing their camp equipment with them, and in the eyes of canoeists from lower latitudes the dainty craft were watched down perilously low in the water. It seemed like harnessing a high-spirited racer to a lumber wagon, this loading a light and graceful creature with five or six times its weight of men and material. On they came, however, risk, cork like over the seas, the long-bladed paddles flashing, and lithe, muscular forms of the Canadians bending to the work as it became necessary to veer to one side or the other in order to avoid an unusually threatening series of waves. Presently they swept round into the lee of the island, saluted gracefully with their paddles in answer to the cheers from the shore, then landed, and in an hour or so had their tents pitched, and the Union Jack of England flying at their landing.

These Canadians carry home with them the hearty admiration of their American brethren. With two centuries of canoeing behind them they came down to Lake George as modestly as if they expected to learn something from neophytes; and when the leader, Mr. Edwards, of Peterborough, was unanimously chosen Vice Commodore of the association for the ensuing year, he actually protested against it as too great an honor.

Wednesday was announced by the local press and on the hotel bulletins as "ladies' day," and the camps and canoes were prepared for inspection. The canoes, with all sail set, were taken out of water and arranged in line along the main path of the island, everything being ship-shape and man-of-war fashion so far as practical. By the middle of the forenoon visitors began to arrive with their escorts from the various hotels on the mainland, and presently the wooded island was gay with bright dresses and parasols, which went from boat to boat and from tent to tent, full of interested curiosity about every detail of camp life. The ingenious contrivances in the way of portable stoves, compact cooking kits, and all the appliances to which canoeists resort to increase comfort while taking up but little room, were fully explained.

Thursday, the opening day of the races, saw the prettiest night of the week. The wind was favorable, and nearly half a hundred fairy craft ran down to Crosby side under sail. Every style of rig, standing, balance and Chinese lug, lateen like those of the Italian felucca, beam-tufted, plain boom, gaff and sprit sails, all were filled by the northerly breeze, and the lower reaches of the lake were thickly sprinkled with white sails and the flashing blades of paddles. One upset

occurred, successfully and safely performed by a member of the New York club, who subsequently distinguished himself by winning every sailing race in which he started, and presently all hands were at Crosby side making ready to participate in the three days' regatta which followed.

Of these I will say nothing save that, as was appropriate, a Western son of Anak carried off the two principal prizes assigned for the muscular paddle, while salt-water seamanship secured the two which were assigned for the sailing races.

The ceremonies ended on Saturday night with a supper tendered by Mr. Crosby, of the Crosby-side Hotel, and on Monday the canoeists departed for their respective homes, or for the conclusion of cruises interrupted by the programme of regatta week.

The Association may now be regarded as an accomplished fact. Its membership is about 150, and its composition is as unexceptional, its purposes as healthful and health-giving as can readily be in any such organization. Sporting characters, in the objectionable sense of the term, are unknown upon its rolls, and it seems destined to fulfill its mission of developing a spirit of good fellowship and camaraderie which can hardly be attained in like degree by any other athletic association in the land. The secretary is M. C. A. Neils, Slingerlands, N. Y.

Of the recreation in its general aspects, a word may perhaps be appropriately said in conclusion. The term does not properly describe the craft, and indeed the pundits of the guild are puzzled to find a terse definition of the word. The aboriginal canoe, "birch" or Kayak with its paddle is perhaps the purest type, but modern ingenuity turns out a boat which is in all essentials a little yacht. It is fitted with sails, lockers, water-tight life-saving compartments, is decked over, affords comfortable sleeping accommodations for its crew of one, and is in all respects a safe and convenient vessel in which to cruise on lakes and rivers, and along the sea coast. Long and in some cases adventurous voyages have been made with its aid, and the accidents have been remarkably few. The whole life of the canoeist indeed teaches self-reliance and readiness under all circumstances to act promptly and with judgment.

Eternal vigilance is the price of dry flannels in a canoe cruise, and readiness of resource is a characteristic of the canoeist as it is of the sailor. No out-of-door sport that is worthy the name is without its dangers, and anything that will within reasonable bounds foster a spirit of healthful adventure must tend to develop a finer quality in the manhood of the race. Base ball, cricket, rowing, tennis and the other stock of out-of-door gymnastics have their times and seasons, but the canoe takes rank in some respects, in many, as its disciples believe—above them all. It brings its devotee nearer to nature, and opens to him possibilities of pure and genuine recreation such as none of the others can afford. *By Charles Lydell Norton, in the Clinton Union.*

## The Timber Used For Matches.

Each hour and fifty five thousand hours of each year—no day is spent in by the inhabitants of Europe in striking lucifer matches upon the box and the wall. The computation is based upon the following curious statistics:—Europe consumes 1,100,000,000,000 matches annually. Assuming that each individual of Europe occupies the brief period of his sojourn on earth, and we have reason to believe that it is rarely performed in a shorter time—it will be obvious to every ready reckoner that the above mentioned amazing number of hours must be annually devoted to the production of artificial light by friction, in our quarter of the globe alone. This is food for much quaint speculation in the seemingly anomalous fact that Europeans dispose of nearly sixty-four per cent in sapwood sticks, tipped with some inflammable composition, upon sympathetic substances of various descriptions. It is also interesting to learn that four hundred thousand cubic yards of timber and four hundred and twenty thousand pounds weight of phosphorus are in annual requisition for the manufacture of the seven hundred and thirty thousand millions of matches used up by Europe in the course of every year.

## DRY ROT IN TIMBER.

This disease, if it may be so termed, is still a matter of doubt between naturalists who have sought to explain the production of the fungi. Some have maintained that the fungi producing dry rot are spontaneously developed; others that they are produced by seed taken up and supported in the air, until favorable conditions are presented. The fine powder which distinguishes dry rot is composed of myriads of reproductive spores of the fungus. From a mildew it assumes a delicate, white vegetation, and afterwards a leathery appearance. The fungi, over different materials, are of various colors, sometimes reddish, violet, brown, at others white or gray. It is well known that very damp situations are not favorable to the growth of the fungus. In dry situations it is found to spread rapidly, and we have seen the sides of a party-wall covered with its fibrous, cotton-like texture, the roots or filaments appearing to have extended from the basement. In this case the painting of the wall was in a pulverizing state, and the skirting and flooring covered by it. The situation was quite dry. Absolute wet prevents its growth, but damp combined with warmth appears to be favorable to decay. One of the principal naval builders of the Chatham, Eng., dockyard has said that the destruction of timber by dry rot cannot take place unless air, moisture and heat are all present, and that the entire exclusion of any of these three stays the mischief. Mr. Britton, in his work on "Dry Rot," who quotes this opinion, observes, "The admission of air has long been considered the only means of destroying the fungus, but as this has frequently proved ineffectual, it must not be always taken as a certain remedy." He also says the air admitted ought to be dry air, so as to absorb the moisture; it will then exhaust the fungus. But care should be taken to let the air escape, and not allow it to convey the seeds of the disease to other parts of the building. Hence, the value of free ventilation behind all skirtings, dados, wainscoting and floors in the first place. At eighty degrees Fahrenheit dry rot proceeds rapidly, but at from 100 to 120 it is arrested. At low temperatures it is also arrested. To prevent rot good seasoning and ventilation are essential. Charring after seasoning and coal-tar are recommended. To cure dry rot a solution of corrosive sublimate in water, an ounce to a gallon, used hot, or a solution of sulphate of copper, half a pound to a gallon of water, used hot, are good washes.—*Northwestern Lumberman.*

## To Make a Frame House Cool.

The New York Tribune in a recent issue recommends the following method for rendering an ordinary frame house dry, warm and cool:—"These conditions are obtained by the introduction of a mortar or concrete wall between the upright timbers or 'studding' of the ordinary balloon frame. The wall is very cheaply made, the mortar being simply filled in between boards loosely nailed on, and as soon as the first or lower filling has set, the boards are taken off and nailed on higher up, and the space again filled. In this way, the filling process and removal of the boards being repeated as often as necessary, the wall may be carried up as high as desired, whether to the roof, or only to the top of the first story, but the full height of the studding is best. The plaster may be put directly upon the interior surface of this wall, which of course will be of the same thickness as the width of the studding timbers, usually four inches, and will be flush with them on both sides. But to prevent the dampness which a solid wall without an interior air-space would be sure to produce, strips of lath must be nailed up and down on the outside of the house, and the siding nailed to and through these strips. There will now remain, when the siding is put on, a space of about one-third of an inch between the siding and the wall. This is not sufficient for a harbor for rats and mice, while it is quite enough to insure the retention of its warmth by the wall during the winter night, at least in a sufficient degree to prevent frost. On the other hand, the heated condition of the outer surface of the siding in summer will not be readily transmitted through the non-conducting material of the wall, which will therefore maintain nearly the same temperature day and night at all seasons."

## MORE BUSH FIRES.

A REPEITION OF THE LATE BURNINGS IN MICHIGAN.—SERIOUS CONFLAGRATION.

CARTHAGE, N. Y., Sept. 17.—The forest fires which broke out on Thursday a few miles south have been increasing ever since. Yesterday the wind blew a gale, and the fire spread so rapidly that many farmers were unable to remove their crops and stock, which with many buildings were burned. Hundreds of people have been employed for the past twenty four hours in removing their household goods and farming implements to places of safety. The people of the village responded to calls for help to fight the fire until the streets were deserted. Three men named Kelly, Getman and Flood went into the woods yesterday morning, and have not since been heard from. It is said that twenty houses in the Irish settlement were burned since Thursday night. The grass and seed burn like tinder, and the fire spreads with incredible rapidity if the wind blows. The fire is at present approaching the cemetery through a swamp, and the people are preparing to save it if possible. There are no signs of rain.

## Big Thing.

American journals have heretofore enjoyed the satisfaction of getting up the most monstrous and absurd things capable of being reduced to print, but they are fast losing ground and Europe is coming to the front. The last number of the *Journal of Forestry*, London, Eng., contains a most remarkable article translated from the *La Gaceta de la Industria*, of Spain; it reports:—"The Americans are projecting a work exceeding in magnitude any which have hitherto been dreamed of. They propose to unite America to Europe by a railway tunnel along the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. The tunnel will be formed of an iron tube 5,600 kilometers in length and 8 metres in diameter. To enable it to resist the pressure to which it will be subjected, the tube is to be 50 centimetres thick and in sections 50 metres in length. Detailed information is given in regard to the proposed operations of construction at the bottom of the ocean, with notices of the arrangements for securing telegraphic communication, electric light and ventilation. Mr. Edison, who is one of the commission of engineers to which the project has been submitted, has given assurance that by means of an electric locomotive of his invention the distance of 5,600 kilometres may be travelled in fifty hours, and the colossal undertaking, inclusive of rolling stock, is not to cost more than 2,000 millions of francs." The *Gaceta* gives also a summary of a projected extension of the Moscow and Novogorod railway by Orenburg and the river Ural to Orish, the European terminus and starting point of the Asiatic line toward Tashkent-Kohlan, through desert regions requiring the construction of numerous bridges, cuttings, tunnels and work-shops of corresponding magnitude, the final terminus being Peking. It is spoken of as being beyond doubt one of the greatest undertakings of which human activity can conceive.

## Blaze in a Lumber Yard.

BARRIE, Sept. 15.—The lumber in Mayor Ardagh's mill-yard, situated on the bay shore half way between here and Allandale, was discovered on fire about noon to-day, and the alarm quickly sounded, but on account of the extremely high wind blowing at the time, the flames had made considerable headway before the fire engine got over. The Northern Railway Company also sent their engine and a large number of men from Allandale to the firemen's assistance. They fought the battle well, and succeeded in keeping the fire within the lumber yard, although the mill and many of the surrounding houses had a narrow escape. The loss on lumber is estimated at from \$7,000 to \$8,000. On account of the absence of Mr. Ardagh in Toronto, it cannot be ascertained whether the lumber was insured or not. The origin of the fire is not known, but is supposed to have been caused by a spark from the mill or a passing train.

Were man to conform more to the laws of health and of nature, and be less addicted to the gratification of his passions, it would not be necessary to advertise Felt's Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites as a restorative for the power of the brain and nervous system, while the world's progress and enlightenment would indeed be marvellous.