

AUGUST 12, 1909

with which you may help yourself, if you are put to it. The other day, for instance, one of our geologists lost his pencil, but he came cheerfully in at night with his notes written, quite legibly, with charcoal. "Fortunately," he said, "he had been travelling through burnt country."

On coming up through Nest Lake, we met a canoe, the first since leaving Stony Creek, although the woods gave evidence enough of the presence of prospectors earlier in the season. It was still cold, and Mrs. C. and I had our coats buttoned to the throat, collars up, and hats pulled down over our ears. The men in the passing canoe eyed us curiously, and as they drifted to the stern, we heard one exclaim, "What's them in that canoe?—Two sports from New York?"—a question which gave our party some amusement, besides affording an interesting side-light on the idea held by these sinewy North-country men in regard to the tenderfoot from the big cities. Numbers of the city men, to be sure, take to the woods and its ways as a duck takes to the water, but there are always a few of the other kind in evidence. We saw some of them a little later, immaculately-groomed fellows, swathed in cheese-cloth to keep off the black flies, while U. M. T. C. (United Mining and Transportation Company) men did the paddling. Once a canoe touched camp in which were two men who had ventured to take charge of the craft themselves. One wore a cork jacket, and the other had a rope fastened around himself and then to the end of the canoe.

A few miles farther to the southward we came to the point at which the Gowganda trail, which cuts across via Stony Creek and Lake, again joins the Montreal. Here a very high bluff forms a difficult, though short, portage, and here an almost continuous line of men may be seen carrying freight and canoes across, the canoes on their heads, the freight (by means of tump-lines passing over the forehead) on their backs. The most bulky-looking baggage is by no means the most difficult. We saw men, great strong, muscular fellows, here transporting boxes, which seemed to tax them to the uttermost, and were most certainly bringing out streams of perspiration on the bronzed faces. We asked them how much the boxes weighed. They said, "Nearly two hundred pounds." For such work, \$3.00 a day, with board, is the usual wage.

From this point, the river was alive with canoes, going and coming; and, when we finally reached "home," the camp of the Dominion Geological Survey, on Obushkong Lake, at the close of that busy Sunday of travelling, we felt that we were very much in the heart of things. The canoes en route to Gowganda go directly past the place which formed our landing, and a gasoline launch passes twice a day. Right across from our camp, which consisted of five tents and a cook-shed, a doctor from Boston, and two others, were encamped on an island. A little farther up, two Queen's students were installed as fire-rangers, and upon the opposite shore a large encampment marked the claims on which the Haileybury hockey club were busily doing prospectors' work.

We enjoyed our stay at Obushkong—"Narrow Grass Lake," as the word signifies in Indian. It is 12 miles in length, with bold bluffs, veritable hotbeds of black flies, here and there, and the usual rocky, wooded hills elsewhere. A few shallow and reedy spots afford harborage to numbers of fish, and during our ten days' stay our table was seldom lacking in deliciously-fresh pickerel pike and perch. In the evenings, the doctor's party used to sally out in their canoe with a mandolin, and the Queen's students with a banjo, so musical concerts from the water were no rarity.

But even the presence of all these

people—these tangible people, with their atmosphere of civilization almost de luxe—did not seem as strange to us, in the midst of these great forests as the constant sensation that we were in the midst of unseen throngs, trekking everywhere through the woods. From morning to night we could hear the sound of blasts, the constant cannonade of the rocks, which might too often

is always the chance of losing time and money, and making nothing. It is a great game of chance.

A few words regarding Gowganda itself may not here come amiss. The word Gowganda, with its curious suggestion of Central African nomenclature, is a corruption of the Ojibway "Gowgandah," or "Gowgandach," signifying silver or big pickerel, hence gives no clue to the char-

packing-box structures, which indicate the more pretentious business places. The main street is narrow and crooked, and thronged with people—engineers, speculators, and prospectors, in khaki. At its foot, upon the day on which we visited it, about fifty canoes were tied, and others were constantly coming or going. Two or three gasoline launches also ply back and forth from the various landings.

On referring to the report issued by Mr. A. G. Burrows, of the Ontario Bureau of Mines, I find that attention was first directed especially to the Gowganda district in 1907, in which year a belt of diabase was found west of Bloom Lake. In the following year, native silver was found in the same vicinity, also near Leroy and Miller Lakes, and claims were soon staked. The first important discoveries were made on the Gates, Blackburn and Bonsall properties, and not long afterwards valuable deposits were also found on the Mann, Reeve-Dobie, Boyd-Gordon, and McIntosh-McLaughlin claims. Of these, the Reeve-Dobie was sold last winter for \$500,000.

Following these discoveries, of course, came a rush. Hundreds of claims were staked, and at one time during last winter 650 teams were employed on the Charlton road, and 200 on the Sellwood road, hauling in provisions and mining apparatus. At that time, the freight charges were at first \$2.50 per 100 pounds, and, immediately before the break-up of the roads, \$100 per load.

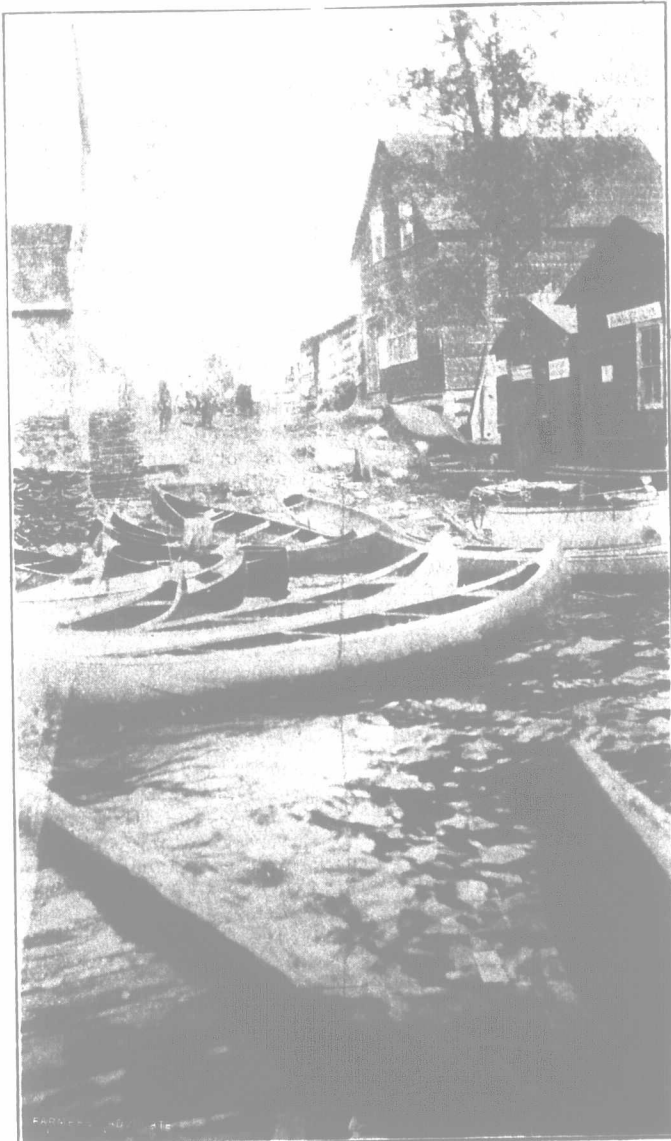
At present, four ways of reaching Gowganda are either planned, or under construction. The Charlton road, the wagon-and-sleigh road above referred to, runs from Charlton on the T. & N. O. railway to Elk Lake, and, barring a fiasco, will be put through all the way to Gowganda by September. This road, when completed, will open up the Miller Lake and Everett Lake camps. In summer, the distance from Elk Lake and Gowganda may be covered by canoe, via the Montreal River and Stony Creek.

Plans to make surveys for railway construction from Charlton to Gowganda are now under way, and if the region continues promising, will no doubt be pushed through by the T. & N. O. at an early date.

There are also some prospects of continuing the C. N. R. from Sellwood, a few miles north of Sudbury, to Gowganda, and the C. P. R. propose and have partly constructed a line of transportation to connect Gowganda with Biscotasing. In winter, the Sellwood road, before referred to, affords convenient transportation across this portion.

At present, the chief mining properties center about Miller Lake and Gowganda. The Boyd-Gordon, Mann, Bartlett, O'Kelly and Silvers have all begun mining operations with financial backing, and most of them have already got in mining machinery, and are busily engaged in sinking shafts, constructing log camps, and stripping veins. So far as results are concerned, little can as yet be said. Everything is in preliminary stages, and, although some small quantities of very rich ore have been sent out from the Bartlett, Boyd-Gordon and other claims, practically all of the money that has changed hands has been by speculation, as, for example, in the case of the Bartlett property, or the Mann holding, which sold for a quarter of a million.

We have been told that diabase claims (40 acres) have frequently been sold for \$5,000, but that is not saying that all a prospector has to do is to stake a claim anywhere, and dispose of it at will. The trouble is that a considerable proportion of prospectors are working almost entirely in the dark, squandering both time and money through sheer ignorance of the kind of rock in which minerals may be found. For instance, yesterday, one of the geologists of our camp ran across a place in which preparations for sinking a shaft were apparently in prog-



The Main Street of Gowganda.

Fifty canoes and a gasoline launch were lying at the foot of this street on the day of our visit.



Camp of the Dominion Geological Survey on the Montreal River.

Three other tents and a cook-shed are hidden among the trees. The white tree-trunks are those of birches and poplars.

mean, though not loss of life, yet of hope. Nevertheless, silver is being found, with indications that may point to great future wealth in this vicinity, and very substantial prices are being paid for some of the claims. In Gowganda, the manager of the Bank of Commerce told us that the number of mere boys who had realized as much as \$50,000 or \$60,000 since coming to the vicinity was surprising. On the other hand, there

acter of the surrounding country, which is literally a mass of high, rocky bluffs, bleak and desolate enough where cleared for mining operations, yet rich in fascination to those upon whom the lure of the hidden mineral has taken hold. The location of the town itself, however, is rather attractive. As yet, it straggles around the whole northern end of Lake Gowganda, in a thin, ragged line of log cabins, tents, and