

Lake Nipissing and the French River.

THIS is a picture of a country where men go canoeing and camping out on the edge of the unknown. There are no palatial steamers on the French River, and no Pullman cars swinging along the shaded shore. Better than these are here—the pickerel, the pike, the black bass and the maskinonge. On the shore the wild moose mothers her young, the red deer fondles her fawn, the gray grouse teaches her babies how to fly with the low wind singing in the wilderness.

Bound for Nipissing and the French River you first find the Grand Trunk Railway System, which will take you from Portland, Boston, New York, Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago; and, with its connections, from any civilized country on earth to North Bay, some two hundred miles north of Toronto, where you take to the water and the woods.

The joy of an outing is to be entirely out of doors, to canoe and portage, to make your bed of boughs and sleep the sleep of the careless.

There is joy, too, in the moist smell of the woods at dawn, in catching one's own breakfast, and the firm fish from the cool waters of these northern streams make a breakfast tempting even to a dainty appetite. And there is joy in paddling along the quiet shore just as the sun begins to tint the tree tops. The lake lies limpid like molten lead with never a ripple, save where a pickerel jumps and sends out a series of widening circles of tiny wimples. The lone loon lets out a melancholy cry that makes the echoes in the cliffs and ridges—a wild, weird, quavery cry, unlike the cry of any other bird. The bull moose, browsing in the lily-pads, lifts his head, standing so near that you can see the water dropping from his great nose and hear the drops falling into the lake.

O, the peace and perfume of it all! After breakfast you go forth to find the hiding place of the black bass, and by noon you are hungry as a bear and light a camp fire on a tiny isle and fry more fish, or perhaps broil a bit of bacon.

There is joy in the morning, at noon and at night—best of all at night.

After a wholesome supper, a pipe or a good cigar, the camp-fire flickering among the trees, the low wind bringing to you the

balsam of the bush-land, you lie down with the sweet smell of your pine pillow permeating your tent and the low lips of lapping waves lulling you to rest.

Eleven days of this elixir of life out of doors will make you young and fit you for another eleven months of daily toil.

Before you reach this happy land there is a sail of 25 miles across Lake Nipissing, but every hour of it enjoyable. Then you reach the French River.

The ordinary railway guide map, or the geography, represents the French River as a single straight line running west from Nipissing to Georgian Bay. No map has ever been drawn to represent it as it is. For 12 miles from the lake to the head of Okikendwat Island there is, indeed, but one broad channel. From this point to the Georgian Bay, over 50 miles, there are two main channels, and almost countless minor ones, embracing innumerable islands. There are hundreds of rapids, most of which can be run by canoeists of ordinary skill.

This part of Ontario is as famous for its shooting as for fishing. Twelve miles from North Bay station lies South Bay, where the best duck shooting to be found in the Highlands may be had. In season there are deer, and a little further north, moose in abundance.

The best pen pictures of the wild are made by men who love it and have lived in it, and not by professional word-painters. Here's a picture of dawn:

"The primeval forests close at hand, the receding ridges and the island-dotted river formed a panorama indescribably beautiful. The delicate tints of dawn gradually gave place to the more pronounced colors of sunrise in a clear sky. Every dew-covered rock, shrub and flower shone resplendent in the reflected glory. A flock of ducks wheeled into the bay, alighting almost within reach of a paddle before they discovered that their favorite feeding grounds had been pre-empted. Overhead an eagle was soaring, disdainful of the intruders below. A sharp-eyed hunter discovered a deer that had come down for his morning's drink on a sandy beach in a sheltered nook across the stream. Around the lily-pads the bass were leaping, while the trembling weeds further out indicated that the pike were hustling after their breakfast."

In a wide, open bay the Woolsey River empties into the French and affords good fishing.