

THE ALGONKIAN INDIANS OF BAPTISTE LAKE.

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During the month of September, 1890, the writer (in company with David Boyle, Esq., Ph. D. and Dr. Beament of Bancroft) paid a visit to the northern portions of the county of Hastings, in the Province of Ontario. Among the places visited was Baptiste Lake, situated about ten miles from the village of Bancroft. On the islands and shores of that body of water reside some twenty Indians, of Algonkian stock. They are Catholics, and a priest comes to them from time to time to dispense the comforts of religion. Formerly the Indians roamed over the region in question to a very great extent, but now, excepting the settlement on Baptiste Lake, there are few Indians residing in it. At another part of the lake there is an isolated settlement of Mohawks.

On the island visited, dwell, besides other Indians, Panā'sawa Ekwo'satsh and his family. François (which Indianised becomes Panā'sawa) speaks English (fairly well), Indian, and French-Canadian. His wife speaks Indian and very little English. Their son John, about twenty-five years of age, speaks English best, having forgotten some of his mother-tongue. François' little boy (about 7) speaks Indian only.

The art of making birch-bark canoes is known only to a very few Indians in the settlement, besides Ekwo'satsh himself. Not the least interesting portion of the time spent at his house was passed in watching the construction, by himself and wife, of one of these canoes. Some of these vessels are still made without any of the additions due to the superior civilization of the white man, such as leather, nails, etc., but very many of them contain these articles to such an extent as to be of little value as specimens of aboriginal workmanship. The mode of constructing a birch-bark canoe is after this fashion: First, the bark (tchimā'n tch'igwē) is selected from the best tree in large pieces, as free from knots and blemishes as possible. The mould or form (ndeskōdjigān), around which the shell of the boat is to be built, is then set up. The piece, of bark in approximately fixed positions are then steamed by filling the canoes (in process of building) with water and throwing heated stones into it. The bark then being forced into proper shape and position is sewed with the spruce-rook fibre (wā'tāp), and the little interstices and seams are covered with a sort of pitch procured from the pine or some like tree. The various strengtheners, side-pieces, and thwarts are added from time to time as the construction progresses. The names of the various parts of the canoe are as follows:

ENGLISH.

INDIAN.

Bow	Ekwā djawā'nuknī'tamō'nanī'guk.
Stern	[ō'] takā'ning.
Thwarts	Mī'tasóg.
Lisses	Pī'mikwā'nik.
Ribs	Wā'ginā'k.
Laths along top of sides	Pī'tibī'gē'gun.
Pegs	Kizikatāskwān.
Mould	Ndeskō'djigān.
Paddle	Abwī.
Bark	Tchimā'n tch'igwē.
Stones used to steam bark	Assī'nin.