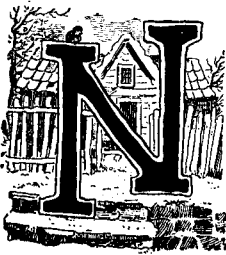


## THE GEORGIAN BAY.\*

By Very Rev. *Æneus McDonnell Dawson, V.G., LL.D., Etc.*



NOW that the idea of a great ship canal connecting Montreal and the lower St. Lawrence with the lakes of western Ontario has been reviewed, it will not be considered inappropriate to say a few words concerning the Georgian Bay, which must be the connecting link in the west between the chain of waters that require to be made navigable, and the vast lakes which are as open to shipping as either the Atlantic or the Pacific ocean. The Georgian Bay, considering its extent would certainly be called a lake if it were not for its position as part of, or, a Bay of lake Huron, which might well be called an inland sea. What a country for a great canal! The fertile lands around Lake Nipissing are alone sufficient to encourage such a work. But in addition there are Muskoka and Parry Sound districts, Haliburton, the regions along the Mattawa and thence the wide countries on each side of the Grand River Ottawa, all the way to its junction with the great St. Lawrence. Westward lies the vast region of Algoma, so much of which is still open to settlement, inviting by its genial climate and fertile soil the labours of the agriculturist. The regions connected with the Georgian Bay, possess a soil and climate highly favourable to vegetation. Hence, wherever there are settlements the best crops of wheat, barley, oats, &c., are largely produced. Forests also abound. But they are in danger of perishing. The Provincial Government, however, is doing its best to preserve them. Forest rangers have been appointed,

whose duty it is to guard against wanton fire-raising which hitherto has been the chief cause of destruction together with the ravages of depredators. It is understood also that the lumber merchants who derive their fortunes from the forests have resolved that their employees shall fell only the riper trees and leave such as have not attained their maturity for use at a later period. This will cause only a thinning of the forests which will promote their growth, especially if had recourse to every other year, when a sufficient number of marketable trees may be obtained. In the event of this system being strictly adhered to, the forests will not decrease, but all in maintaining a healthy growth, will be a source of profit to the lumber merchant. They will also serve the agriculturist as they will promote a salutary rainfall all over the country.

Measures are also wisely taken by the Government for the preservation of game which is as yet so abundant in the regions about which we are writing. As settlement advances, wild animals recede. It is, no doubt, pleasing to the industrious husbandmen that the wolf and the bear should disappear. But it is not so gratifying that the more common deer and the stately cariboo should pass away. In order to prevent so great a loss, the Government of Ontario has set apart a large tract of country, south of lake Nipissing as a Public Park, where cariboo and other game can breed and feed undisturbed. This Park is pretty extensive, comprising nineteen townships, but nothing to compare with the United States public park on Yellowstone river. There may be reason some day, to regret that it has not been made larger, when it will be impossible to enlarge it.

The fisheries of the Georgian Bay afford extraordinary profits to the fishermen who engage in them. There is great variety of fish:—white fish, salmon trout, lake trout, bass, herring, pickerel, (doré),

\**The Georgian Bay*, by James C. Hamilton, M.A. LL.B., chairman of the Historical Society, &c., &c.

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