

THE LAKE OF THE WOODS AS A SUMMER RESORT.

People living in northern latitudes too frequently search for summer pleasure in places further south, and with more sweltering heat and other discomforts than are to be met with in their own homes. The search for more northern and cooler and pleasanter resorts has never been as keen as it ought to be, although within the last twenty years, the growth of common sense in selecting holiday resorts has made rapid progress, and the north is every year more sought after for a time of cool rest in the summer months, than it formerly was.

The New England sea shore is much more popular than it was twenty years ago, and the Thousand Islands on the river Saint Lawrence are yearly bringing an increased number of pleasure hunters. The far distant Rocky Mountains and the Northern Pacific coast are also attracting year after year a larger influx of visitors, as are many other less notable localities of northern latitudes. Each has its own attractions, so varied are the tastes of pleasure seekers as to scenery and other matters. For instance the placid beauty of the Thousand Islands cannot be measured for attraction against the rugged and awe-inspiring grandeur of the Rocky and Seikirk ranges of mountains penetrated by the Canadian Pacific railway. But we can make comparisons between lake and river scenery in different localities, and in doing so we are forced to the conclusion that in the Lake of the Woods can be found more fairy-land beauty, more real isolation from the bustle of life, and more roaming over nature in her primitive beauty, untouched by hand of man, with less trouble and inconvenience, than can be found in any other locality in North America, and we might say in this world at large.

Five hours travel by rail from the city of Winnipeg, and about ten hours travel from Port Arthur or Fort William, on Lake Superior, will bring the pleasure seeker to Rat Portage, the key to the most beautiful portion of the Lake of the Woods. Here he is on the margin of a lake containing many thousands of islands, varying in size from the one containing a dozen or more square miles of land to the little timber crowned islet of two or three acres in area. Each has its

own peculiarity of beauty in form, and each channel or sound that penetrates this archipelagic maze, its characteristics, yet all are alike beautiful; softly so, for there are no harsh features in all the attractions of the lake.

For instance, starting from the busy little town of Rat Portage, one can in one hour's row or sail in a light boat find himself in a seemingly land-locked sheet of beautiful clear water, surrounded by high, rising lands, covered with spruce and pine, without the first evidence of civilization or the appearance of humanity in sight. He can move on in his boat and pass through channels and bays as varied in scenic beauty as they are tantalizing and bewildering in their windings.

gravings illustrating this work show only a few among thousands of views equally and even more attractive in beauty. Why pleasure seekers do not swarm here in thousands during the summer season, instead of to resorts where the hotel bill of fare is the main attraction, is a matter hard to understand. But then there is no accounting for taste, even in selecting a place of resort for the summer months.

Before starting out upon the lake the visitor will do well to do some walking around the town of Rat Portage and the villages of Norman and Keewatin. A walk to the east end of the first will bring him to a trail leading through the brush and timber,



"ALL THE COMFORTS OF A HOME."

Assuredly there is no place on this continent, where men can so quickly glide, so to speak, from the rush and bustle of life into solitude and communion with nature in her most untutored, and yet her most attractive state. Here are to be found islands by the thousand and in their recesses people could be more effectually hidden from the world than ever were the hunted Douglas and his friends in the Isle of Loch Katrine. Yet this hidden retreat one can leave and in one hour or so be travelling by express train for either Atlantic or Pacific coasts.

It is simply impossible to give in print anything like a clear idea of the natural beauty of this lake and its islands, bays and channels, and the en-

which if he follows for half a mile through a beautiful glen, from which he views every few rods a bay of the lake gradually getting narrower, until it reaches the first falls, over which the water from the lake thunders down to the Winnipeg river below. The illustration of these falls given in this number conveys but a faint idea of the beauty of the scene, which has to be visited to be appreciated. Above and below them splendid pickerel and jack fishing can be had by all who delight in piscatorial sport.

Returning over this trail to the main road again, the pleasure seeker can follow on a primitive kind of road in the direction of the village of Norman, near to which he can again step aside and view another beautiful