

# THE ADIRONDACKS.

## MRS. HARRISON'S TEMPORARY HOME AT LOON LAKE.

Beauties of the Mountains at the Height of Summer—A Magnificent Health Resort.

1892

(SPECIAL TO THE PUBLIC LEDGER.)

LOON LAKE, August 6.—Loon Lake, as the summer home of Mrs. Harrison, is now a centre of interest to all. Much has been said and written concerning this lovely spot, yet few have mentioned its real beauties and chief attractions.

Loon Lake is about 54 miles from Plattsburgh, and nearly 18 miles from Saranac Lake, the mountain terminus of the Chateaugay Railroad. Leaving beautiful Chateaugay Lake, we pass through a wild, almost unknown, section of the Adirondack Wilderness, until we reach Inman—more commonly called Loon Lake Station. If there is a fascination in extreme barrenness, as some have asserted, they may surely find it here. Fire and the axe have conspired to devastate the mountains round about. Nature has kindly shown her sympathy in clothing these otherwise unsightly stretches with a thick growth of tall brakes (*Pteris aquilina*), a genus of fern known to thrive best in the poorest soil.

Inman. Inman consists of the station, a large supply store for Dr. Webb's Italians and a house or two. The station is the only pretentious building we remember as yet to have seen on the Chateaugay. It is a large frame structure with stained-glass windows and good sized unfurnished waiting-rooms.

A crowd of Italians, employed on the Webb road opposite, thronged to the station and store as the train approached. One might have thought a band of Bedlamites had broken loose. It must be confessed that the sons of Italy look more picturesque behind a banana-stand or a hand-organ than posing as mountain navvies.

Loon Lake extends south from the station. After a drive of nearly four miles over a wild, rough road, catching every now and

then a delightful glimpse of the lake and the

thick woods into the beautiful grounds of Chase's well-known summer home.

The Loon Lake House.

There is a pleasant combination of cultivation and wildness in the scene before us. The hotel, partly surrounded by smooth lawns, pretty cottages, casino and tennis courts, stands on the broad table-top of the high ridge which encircles the southern end of the lake. It is built so that the windows from three sides of the house command a lovely view of the waters beneath. The rooms are large, airy and well furnished. The tasteful arrangements and decorations are rustic and unique.

The history of the place shows rapid strides in modern improvements. Steam heat, perforated sanitary drainage, President's cottage and second dining room are of this year's list. Thirteen years ago Mrs. Chase occupied a small house (24 by 30 feet) on this same spot; to-day the hotel and its adjacent cottages have capacity for about 800 guests. Many of the guests are the families and friends of the "old timers," who have known the place in the days of its small beginnings, and who have experienced Mrs. Chase's kindly care at one time or other.

Unlike the majority of Adirondack resorts, we find here very few invalids, although Mrs. Chase assures us that at one time she kept a perfect hospital. It would seem almost impossible to remain ill in the presence of this wonderfully bright, busy little woman. We doubt if the President could have found a better friend for Mrs. Harrison in her present convalescent state. The very atmosphere inspires cheerfulness and encouragement.

The President's Cottage. Of the cottages attached to the Loon Lake House, the President's cottage is, at present, the most interesting. It is a two-story frame building, located not very far from the hotel. A huge natural mound, covered with wild rose bushes, separates it from the neighboring cottage and insures a privacy much desired by Mrs. Harrison at present. A cozy corner has been arranged for the invalid in this side of the piazza—a perfect little bower, lined with balsam boughs.

On entering one finds the cottage much more roomy than the exterior would lead one to suppose. It contains five generous sized bedrooms and a comfortable parlor. The furnishings are simple and dainty, in harmony with the white finish of the wood-work. The soft browns of the carpets blend with brocade furniture and silken hangings. Boughs of balsam fir furnish lambrequins for the windows, while long sprays of ground-pine entwine the curtain poles and trail daintily down over the lace curtains. From over every door and dressing case great bunches of fragrant fir send forth their sweet odors. One of the loveliest views of the lake may be seen from the bay windows in the rear.

The Other Cottages are, for the most part, occupied by New Yorkers.

The Winter cottage is the largest, and has, perhaps, the pleasantest location. Mr. W. H. Phillips and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Haydock, Miss Corliss, of New York, and Mr. and Mrs. Dana, of Brooklyn, are its privileged occupants.

An attractive little nest nearest the hotel is the home of Mrs. Stovenson and family.

Providence is represented by Mrs. C. E. Longly and family in the Wayside, and Mr. and Mrs. John Shepard in Cottage C.

Furthest from the hotel, built in the woods at the end of the stage road, is the rustic home of Mr. Clinton Ogilvie, of New York. This cottage is a dream of rustic peace and solitude, thoroughly in keeping with its woody surroundings. A broad veranda encircles the entire building, to which the woods seem to have loaned a representative from all they produce; even the fish are contented to thrive in their birch-bound tubs. In every nook and corner boxes of many shapes, covered with the silvery, ragged bark of the yellow birch—*Betula lutea*—are filled with native plants and ferns. Baskets of moss and creepers here

and there suggest the presence of the

"Pine Girl" is indeed the home of an artist.

Prospect Hill.

On leaving "Pine Girl" we are bidden to seek Prospect Hill and enjoy from there the finest mountain view the neighborhood affords. A short walk through field and woods and we enter the grove of birches which crown the brow of the hill. What a magnificent sight! Away beyond the deep valley of the Saranac rises a long wave of dark mountains, outlined sharp and clear against the billowy sky. To the right McKenzie frowns over Moose Pond Mount. Before us, in the midst of the range bearing his name, is dear old White Face, thrusting his pallid brow far above the blue crests of his companions. The gloomy pyramid on the left is Catamount—the desolate—beautiful only during the winter months, after the snow has spread its soft, white folds over the bare and rocky sides.

As our eyes wander down the rapidly descending valley beneath we remember that White Face is at a distance of thirty miles and that our scope of vision must include a range of mountains fully forty miles in extent.

Redford Springs.

Not far from the hill a trail strikes into the thick woods. We follow, striking now and then a portion of the old Corduroy road until we reach Redford Springs—a place whose history is almost as closely allied to the Indian war, as that of Corduroy road itself. A charming picture it makes—chaos and solitude reign supreme.

Long ago some terrible storm has overthrown three mighty forest giants that guarded the spot in times past. Still true to their trust, the huge, prostrate trunks—overgrown with delicate moss and lichens—form a protecting triangle around their precious charge. The waters are icy cold and wonderfully clear. Fain would we linger, but the deepening shadows of the dark forest indicate the day's decline and remind us of the anticipated pleasures of a boat ride over the rippling waters of

Loon Lake. The lake is about three miles long, with shores so irregular as to render description almost impossible. The shore line measures more than 15 miles. High bluffs and points, separating a congress of gulfs and bays, are well adapted for camp sites. Swiftly the boat glides, by the pretty little summer-houses that dot the east shore, past two small islands, into Washburne Bay—so named for one of the oldest guides in this region. A small inlet feeds the lake at the lower angle of this bay. Loon Lake, however, is not dependent upon inlets, possessing, as it does, several living springs.

A broad, high bluff, forming the upper shore of the bay, juts far into the lake, almost meeting the sharp point of the opposite shore.

The channel that connects the waters of the lake so divided is called "the Narrows," and is, on a breezy day, about the roughest portion. The choppy, spattering waves appear to be quarrelling with the current, an effect probably due to the elevations and depressions of the shores at this point.

"Pine Crest," Mrs. Fargo's lovely camp, is situated on this bluff. It consists of three pretty cottages, connected by broad verandas, overlooking both lakes. The tents are placed in the rear. Between two of the cottages both floor and roof of piazza have been built around the trunk of a large tree—making it the centre of a delightful summer bower.

The next large point is called "Horse Head," so styled from the likeness of its peculiar outlines to the head of that animal. Webb's new road sweeps around the great curves on the north; in the back ground rise Loon Lake Mountains. Mountains and lake receive their name from a class of water birds that at one time abode here in great numbers. The Loon, or Diver, flies well, but is scarcely capable of walking on land, hence the name, which is said to mean lame.

On the western shore the waters of Loon Lake find a broad outlet which flows almost south until met by the waters of the Raft's bow system. Here they combine, flowing east from the North Branch of the Saranac river. Near "the Narrows," on the west shore, stands Wolcott's Camp, while beyond the bay, on a curious little point, is the Newton day camp. Day camps are distinctly a feature of Loon Lake. They consist

of buildings, built after the most unique fashion along the nook-shotten shores of the lower lake. Every conceivable design is used in their construction. Considerable ingenuity has been displayed in their rustic adornments.

Above Howe's Landing are the "Edgar," the "Vanderbeck" and the "Rainsford." Nearer the hotel we find the "Vanderhooff," the "Worthington" and the "Johnston." Among the "old-timers" are Mr. George McKibbin and daughter, Mrs. M. S. Rodgers, of New York. Their camp is nearest the hotel, and may be reached by land as quickly as by boat.

Pleasant Drives.

Few mountain houses lay claim to as many beautiful drives as those surrounding Loon Lake. Through Mr. Chase's untiring

efforts roads have been cut in the prettiest parts of the forest, skirting lake and river. The eyes feast upon some new and pleasing scene every few minutes. Like Dr. Graebner, in Alaska, one runs "the who-garant of wilderness scenery."

Most beautifully beautiful is the spot where the Loon and Rainbow waters unite with silver fish, and flow on together.

The bridge leading into the river drive the only indication of man's presence amid this strange, wild beauty.

Wide spreading branches of tall tree fringe the river's side and mingle with those of the forest, forming a thick arch over the road and affording a delicious shade from the sun's hot rays. In appreciation of the beauty and value of this feature of Loon Lake, Mr. W. H. Phillips has built near it hotel a neat stable. A visit to Loon Lake is incomplete without a sight of Mr. Phillips handsome break and fine horses. They are indeed, noble creatures, so strong and yet so gentle that the smallest child may feed them with sugar from its hand.

Few horses in the Adirondack region excite one's admiration. The heavy Canadian are more fitted to endure the hardship mountain wear and require less care than the Southern animals. Owing to this fact "King" and his glossy companions are a unlooked-for pleasure, and a source of great enjoyment to their owner's many friend. Obligated, for health's sake, to remain in the mountains throughout the year, Mr. Phillips has become interested in all the improvements and protection of this great natural sanitarium. Faithful and untiring are the efforts of this noble Christian gentleman to forward every good work.