

SUMMER CAMPS ON THE BARGAIN COUNTER

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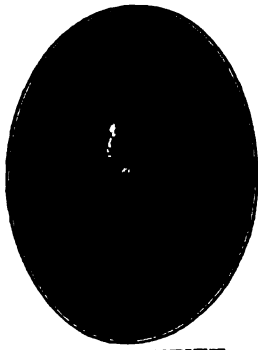


A Private Camp in the Wisconsin Forest Reserve

Summer Camps on the Bargain Counter

Wisconsin's Unique Forestry Policy

By MARY BURCHARD ORVIS



E. M. GRIFFITH
Wisconsin's State Forester, who has developed a plan whereby the beautiful sites for summer camps on the Forest Reserve may be leased at small cost.

WISCONSIN was first to gain political freedom, in her direct primary; first to have real regulation of public utilities, by means of her Railroad Rate Commission; and first to bring to all the people of the state an opportunity for a University education, through her wonderful Extension work.

Now, having established these important instruments of democracy, Wisconsin can turn her attention more aggressively to conservation. She has been doing many things in this direction, that are similar to the work of other states; but one of her policies is decidedly unique. She has gone into the SUMMER RESORT BUSINESS.

This undertaking, so unusual for a state, is to be carried on under the State Board of Forestry, by the State Forester, Edward Merriam Griffith, the author of the plan, which is to lease beautiful sites within the state forest reserves for summer homes.

The state has pursued a very definite and wise policy in buying her reserve lands, for she has secured a maximum of *shore line*. Her reservations have been made for reasons explained later, mainly at the headwaters of the Wisconsin and Chippewa rivers. These are the finest lake regions in the land, with thousands of small bodies of water scattered through dense forests. One county, Vilas, contains a greater area of water than of land, and with Oneida County, has 1,200 lakes. In these two counties alone, the state owns 140,266 acres, partly virgin forest and partly cut and burned over land.

Summer Camps for Everybody

WHEN IT is remembered that the climate here is fine and bracing and that good hunting and fishing abound it can easily be seen that Wisconsin has a natural resource of enormous value, if it is properly used. To the State Forester, however, the proper use of the land does not mean merely conserving it for generations to come. It means getting the *most out of it* for the people, *as we go along*.

The policy of the state in granting leases of this land is as follows. Lots are leased, no more than five acres to one person, for periods of twenty years, with the privilege of renewal at the end of that time. The rental varies from five to fifty dollars per annum, according to the size and location of the lot and the amount of timber on it. This makes practically free ownership, for the restrictions upon the lease are very few. He may cut only such trees as are marked by the Forester, he must pay the market price for them, must use all possible care in building fires, and agree not to sell liquor upon the premises or to sublet without the consent of the forestry board. These restrictions are well over-balanced by the low rental, protection from fire and molestation, and freedom to enjoy the use of the whole reserve.

Here there is no high cost of living, for the family in search of a cheap place to spend its summer vacations. Fresh fish, berries, and **game in season**, add quite materially to a larder that can be easily and cheaply stocked from some of the large wholesale houses. With rent practically *nil*, the "resorter" who cares to take the trouble can have a most healthful and economical summer vacation, that gives the change generally conceded to be necessary to the best human development. Perhaps the most complete change can be had by camping in a tent; which is, incidentally, the cheapest and the easiest shelter to take care of.

A Profitable Enterprise

THE PERSON desiring to take advantage of the generosity of the state, can have his pick of the land and all possible

assistance is given him by the State Board of Forestry, in making his selection from the many tempting sites.

For instance, the state has bought large tracts of land on the shores of Trout Lake, which is considered one of the most beautiful because it has a heavily wooded point which runs far out from the land. In order to protect the beauty of the shore line, a narrow strip has been reserved, that runs between a logging railroad and the lake. Thus, the region will be easily accessible, yet none of its scenic beauty will be impaired by a railroad that is hidden from the lake.

Not only is the liberal offer of land open to the citizens of the state, but to the whole country. For years people have been coming into Wisconsin woods for recreation and health, and the Forester means to encourage them all he can. Of course, it can readily be seen that the state is not entirely disinterested in so doing. Her financial gains are obvious.

Mr. Griffith has pointed out that the influx of tourists will bring large returns indirectly to the state, and directly to the people of the districts. The railroads, boarding-houses and hotel keepers, guides and boatmen, will all profit by it and agricultural commodities will have a ready market. He urges "the utmost protection of the lake regions in order that they may be attractive, as it will mean lasting prosperity for all the residents of that section."

The states of New York, New Hampshire and Maine each take in from \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000 a year from their summer resort business, and they have no policies such as Wisconsin has inaugurated.

Why the Railroads Favor It

THE RAILROADS recognize the importance of this traffic in Wisconsin, which has more daily passenger trains through its forest region than has either Michigan or Minnesota. Mr. R. H. Aishton, Vice-President of the Chicago and Northwestern R. R. said at the Lake States' Conference in 1910, "the Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin and Michigan forest country is to-day the most attractive fishing, hunting and summer resort territory left in this great country of ours and is tributary to the greatest centers of population in the country with the single exception of the Atlantic seaboard." He further points out that the railroads should, therefore, be first to appreciate the possibilities of the conservation, care, and development of these areas so that where they are now carrying hundreds they will soon be carrying thousands to enjoy the benefits of the lake districts.

Thus by appealing to the selfish interests of the railroads, the state is lining them up for conservation. In spite of some very drastic laws passed for the prevention of fires along their right of way, laws that cause them a great deal of extra expense, the railroads are coming into hearty co-operation with the State Forester.

A Business Policy

OF COURSE, the purchase of these large areas of forest reserve is expensive for the state. About 125,000 acres have been bought up to date, at an average cost of \$3.03 per acre. But Mr. Griffith has enumerated four distinct ways in which that money will come back: (1) the state will receive a direct and increasing revenue from the sale of its mature timber; (2) it will gain even a greater revenue indirectly by making it possible for the large wood using industries to remain in the state after private forests are exhausted; (3) a direct revenue will come from the preservation and improvement of its water powers, that will be assured by extensive forests at the headwaters; (4) preserving the forests in the lake regions will both protect and greatly enhance its present attractiveness as a summer resort region.

So it seems, looked upon as an investment, the state's policy is a good one, for it will bring back its full return in actual

(Continued on page 15.)

But with countenances alight with confidence in his leadership we shall march along the great highway of truth into that new Republic wherein "are justice and happiness and joy in widest commonalty spread,"—wherein each man is the "full heir of all the ages in full enjoyment of the long results of time." His inspired eye unobscured by the mist of personal ambition, first caught the vision of that glorious realm and his thought and influence, whether in public office or out, whether this Convention vote him up or down, will re-make this nation in the light of that vision,—will re-dedicate her government to humanity.

Name him your candidate and in November next the American people will acclaim him theirs by the mightiest majority in history and the twenty-eighth President of the United States will be Robert Marion La Follette of Wisconsin.

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Summer Camps on the Bargain Counter

(Continued from page 7.)

dollars and cents. In addition, it guarantees to the people a large and beautiful recreation ground, the enjoyment of which is sure to bring added health and vigor to all who make use of their opportunity. A wonderful opportunity it is, to "return to nature." To behold the beauties of Northern Wisconsin, is to be tempted to pessimism regarding the superiority of a civilization that herds men in cities. One gains respect for the Indian who knew how to enjoy what nature gave him.

One Feature of a Big Plan

LEST the impression be conveyed that Wisconsin's Forestry is in any way one-sided, let it be said that it is quite the opposite. Probably no state in the union has a better rounded policy of conservation.

Special emphasis is now being laid on the water power aspect of forestry here. By establishing these great reservations at the headwaters of the Wisconsin and Chippewa rivers, she guarantees immunity from the evils that are universally recognized as the result of deforestation. Gifford Pinchot has pointed out that the relation of forest cover to stream flow is double: first, it reduces the difference between high and low water and maintains a steady flow during the different seasons of the year; second, it prevents surface erosion of the soil, which is not only wasteful but injures the channels of rivers. The former effect of the forest is probably less commonly understood than the latter. But any one who has been in a forest just after a rain, can readily see how the sponge-like floor acts to hold the water instead of allowing it to run off the surface in torrents that cause floods. The tops of the trees, moreover, allow the rain to drop *gradually* to the ground where it can be absorbed and given back to the streams.

The necessity for this even flow of streams is evident. If our mills and power plants are to be run their full time, a uniform flow of water is demanded. The preserving of the forests at their headwaters, guarantees it to a large extent. The United States government recognizes this necessity by co-operating with the states whose waters are tributary to its navigable rivers, in their forestry work. Thus, Wisconsin gets the benefit of Federal aid in protecting her reservations by locating them on the Chippewa and Wisconsin rivers. For every state ranger in that region, there is a man sent by the government. At present the state and nation each furnish twelve men whose duty it is to patrol the 1,000,000 acres of public and private forest land, so valuable to the state and nation.

Wisconsin has an additional means of regulating the flow of her main rivers, in the nineteen reservoirs operated under the control of the State Board of Forestry, by the Wisconsin Valley Improvement Company. These reservoirs have been formed by means of dams at the outlets of lakes and have been most satisfactory to the state, whose Railroad Rate Commission fixes tolls, and settles disputes as to water levels.

They have a direct bearing upon the summer resort question for the reason that a lake can easily be ruined for practical use if its water level is not constant. Great damage has been done in the past, both by impoverished sources and by dams that were not properly controlled. Fine cottages and boat-houses have been left high and dry above mud flats, a most discouraging thing for investors. But by guaranteeing a fairly uniform flow of water in the rivers and a correspondingly constant water level in the lakes, the state holds out to prospective owners a great incentive for building and beautifying summer homes.

Surely Wisconsin and the entire Middle West are to be congratulated upon the broad, far-sighted policy that takes into consideration something quite as important as the economic aspects of conservation—the enjoyment of the people who seek the forests in search of recreation and health.

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Our Judicial Oligarchy

By GILBERT E. ROE

Introduction by Senator Robert M. La Follette

THE ARTICLES by Mr. Roe, entitled "Our Judicial Oligarchy," which appeared in *La Follette's Weekly Magazine* during the year 1911, have been rewritten, brought down to date, and are published in this book. This is the only work that points out the causes for the existing dissatisfaction with the Courts, and suggests a rational remedy. It cites authorities, legal and otherwise, upon the subject, and puts the reader in possession of all the facts in the briefest possible space. It has all the accuracy of a law book, but is in no sense technical. You can do no better service to the progressive cause, than to read this book yourself, and send it to your friends.

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