THE STORY OF MY CAMP: BY
GRANT FITCH

My friends have always accused me of wanting to buy scenery. In purchasing my property at Fish Creek I certainly did yield to the temptation—for when a discriminating cousin told me that the country was as beautiful as the Riviera, with air like the Austrian Tyrol, I fell a victim at once and bought some shore frontage on Green Bay without even seeing it. The inducement was also held out to me, that I would be free from hay fever.

A few years later I saw my land and found it all that I had hoped it would be—a strip about 250 feet wide, densely wooded with cedar, balsam, hemlock, birch, with some maple, dogwood and beech, extending from the water to a sheer bluff of limestone 215 feet high.

The accompanying photographs give only a faint idea of the charm of the place, which is twenty-five miles from the railroad and so restful and peaceful that one almost feels as if he were in Clovelly—the whole atmosphere being so different from that of the usual small American village.

The purchase by the State of
were so good, and the silver gray of the logs so beautiful, that I decided at once to purchase it—take the building down—move it the four miles to my property and re-erect it log for log. This was in the summer of 1911. The result has been most satisfactory.

THE ORIGINAL LOG HAY BARN THAT WAS CONVERTED INTO THE PICTURESQUE CAMP.

connected with the kitchen wing is the woodshed, storeroom, etc. Water is pumped from the lake by a gasoline pump to a large tank located on the slope above the house. Drinking water of wonderful purity is supplied by a well. The main house is 53 by 26 feet—some of the logs running the full length of the house. They are mostly of basswood hewed to a thickness of about seven inches. All the work of remodeling was done by local carpenters. I was my own architect.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

Perhaps this was one reason why the work was so successful, for probably few architects would have cared to undertake the reconstruction of so simple a rustic dwelling. To them it would have been more or less a bit of architectural patchwork; but to Mr. Fitch it was different. This was his own camp, a woodland retreat where he could live, not merely next door.

KITCHEN WING OF THE CAMP AFTER ITS COMPLETION.

The plan of the house is very simple. On one side of the open space through the center—which is 14 by 26 feet and was originally the threshing floor—there are two floors with two bedrooms and a bathroom on each floor. On the other side is the living room—19 by 26 feet—open to the rafters. The walls are stained a soft gray—the fireplace is of gray limestone taken from the bluff and the stones are laid so that no mortar shows—the fireplace opening is large enough for cord-wood. The doorway at the side of the fireplace opens into the kitchen wing, containing butler's pantry, kitchen and entry-way, with space for large ice-box and storage for supplies. Opening off the entry are three maids' rooms, and

A FRONT VIEW OF THE NEAT REMODELED BARN.
to Nature, but within the depths of her vast tree-covered estate. And how fascinating must have been every step of the process by which the gray logs of that old barn were gradually converted into a forest home!

There is always a sense of primitive ownership about such an undertaking. One can sympathize with those men of the past who hollowed out their own caves, built crude huts and cabins among the mountains or forests of a younger world for protection against the storms, the wild beasts or some warlike neighboring tribe. One feels the adventurous spirit of the pioneer who felled the trees for his clearing, hewed them into logs and built with his own hands a simple home among the woodlands of a strange new land. Moreover, as such work takes on a definite form, and bit by bit begins to approach one's completed mental vision—especially in a case of remodeling such as the foregoing article describes—the reincarnation of practically raw materials into useful and lovely form reminds one that nothing is ever wasted, and that all matter and energy is conserved and changed from time to time into some new expression.

There is a certain inspiration, too, in working among picturesque surroundings. The approach to Mr. Fitch's camp, for instance, is enough to transform even the most indifferent or care-worn city mood into one of rural contentment and enthusiasm. The white flash of the birches among the darker background of the other trees; the rustic steps leading from the landing through the woods up to the camp; the cool fragrance of the place, and the play of sunlight and shadow on foliage, branch and ground—all these are redolent of the happiness of the most wholesome outdoor living.

As for the Green Bay shore—the photograph gives one but a faint idea of its majestic beauty. One can imagine those steep limestone cliffs, rising perpendicular from the water, half hidden by the mass of trees and bushes growing at their feet, up the sheer sides and along the crest. And then there is the sunset view from the camp itself, seen through the dark, silhouetted foliage. Surely no camper could wish for a more delightful environment! Perhaps Mr. Fitch did, as his friends said, "buy scenery." But what could be more satisfying than such scenery as this?