HELPFUL FACTS IN BUILDING A SUMMER CAMP: BY A WOMAN CAMPER WHO KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT

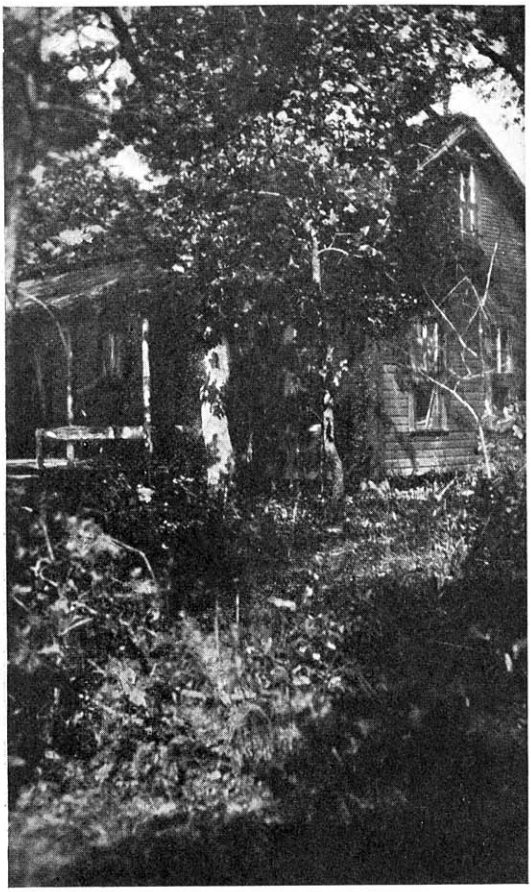
WE call it Camp Dogwood, from the high-piled drifts of white, which, in late March and early April, make it seem a lodge in fairyland; but we might just as appropriately call it by any other of a hundred fragrant and suggestive names. For every month has its symbol, its herald to the ear and eye; and to us who know it well, our Haunt in the Woods changes its aspect with every moon.

Its inception, as so often happens, was somewhat in the nature of an accident. When we were married, Peter owned stock in a small artificial lake about seven miles from town, which—in default of beaches, mountains, or navigable rivers in the vicinity—furnished about the only outlet for our longing for "all outdoors." At first this met all our needs, and we used often to come down with our guns and minnows and bird-glasses, sleep at night in the plain little club-house, and have an early morning fish; or spend a quiet Sunday reading and bird-gazing in the woods. But with the advent of Peterkin our outings took on a more complicated and less distinctively "sporting" character. It was mutually uncomfortable and embarrassing for us to run into a party of young men taking their ease with pipe and tackle. Often the howls of our month's-old Peterkin would throw a whole party into consternation. We began to wish for, presently to speculate about, a camp of our own. One other member of the club had obtained permission to build him a little cabin on a pleasant wooded point; and it occurred to us that we might do the same. The Bachelor Uncle became interested. Before we knew it we were sketching rough plans; our wistful debates as to whether we could properly afford the outlay grew more sanguine as imagination warmed to the project; and finally the little house was built. It was finished in "the month of dogwoods," the spring Peterkin was a year old.

Since economy was decidedly an object, and comfort—owing to Peterkin's tender years and my rather precarious health—indispensable, we put our whole investment into that, and held our æsthetic yearnings

UP THE TRAIL TO THE CAMP.

sternly in check. The result was a small frame house on the slope of one of the little wooded hills that rise from the lake. We made just enough of a clearing to minimize the danger of forest fires, leaving even the underbrush on the hillside, to avoid a "civilizing" effect. If you were fishing on the lake, a thread of blue smoke above the tree-tops, or a friendly beam at night, would be the only indication of its existence till you put your boat in at the ferny landing-place and followed the winding path up the hill to our steps. Peter and the Bachelor Uncle found a fine spring and sunk an eighteen-inch pipe, so that we have a supply of clear, sweet water that has never failed us. The house faces south, and consists of two well-built, weather-tight rooms, with a ten-foot hall between, and a porch the length of the front. Above the two main rooms are two attic-rooms, each with a window in the end, and the other end closed only by cretonne curtains. We put the ceiling in the two lower rooms above the rafters, thus making floors for the upper. These quaint upper chambers, looking out into the tree-tops, are especially dear



LOOKING INTO THE CAMP PORCH.

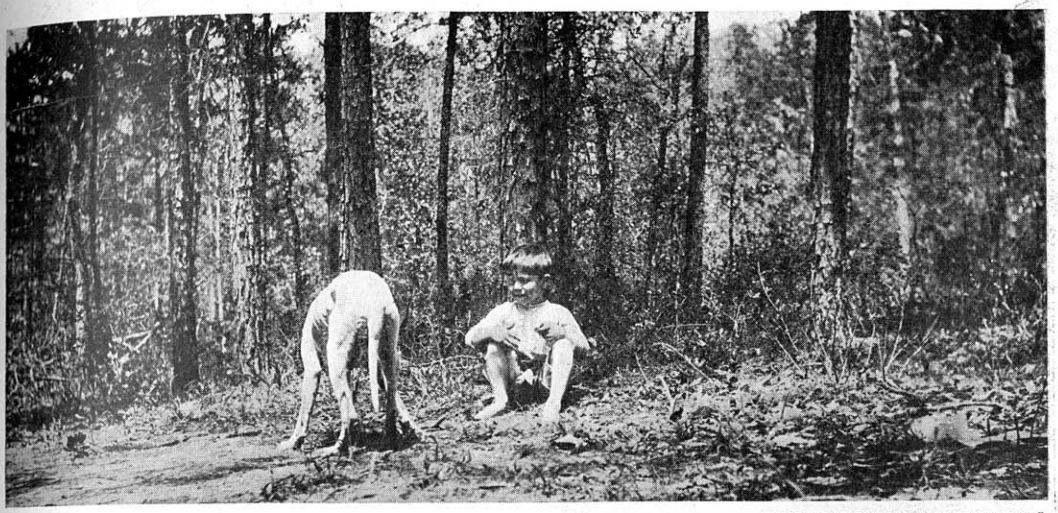
to my heart, and now and then an occasional guest shares my enthusiasm; but most people, it must be confessed, look somewhat askance at the ladder by which they are reached! As they are a utilization of space which would otherwise have been wasted, however, such advantages as they possess are clear gain.

As I have intimated, both the finishing and the furnishing of our establishment are sadly unæsthetic; but, as our pocketbook spoke in no uncertain tones, we console ourselves for the crudeness within by Nature's munificence without. The furniture is lamentably and frankly cast-off, or else the cheapest procurable. But there are plenty of cots and beds, and "stacks" of bedding; and the kitchen, with comparative lavishness, is equipped with everything which any reasonable camp-cook can desire. The rooms and hall are carefully screened, and all the demands of comfort and sanitation squarely met.

The original cost of this little establishment was less than three hundred dollars. Within the last year an automobile has been added to the family. The question then arose of a place to keep it; and Peter was inspired to add a strongly built back porch, ten feet wide, the entire length of the house in the back. This entrance is on a level with the ground, and we simply run the machine up on the porch when we arrive. It makes quite sufficient shelter for it in our mild climate; and it has proved, rather unexpectedly, to be the most delightful feature of the camp. We began by calling it "The Garage," but we now call it the "Living Room." It is always shady and always cool. All through the open weather our dining table stands at one end; the children play on it all day long; and I suppose the rest of us spend five-sixths of our time there.

But no mere enumeration of details such as these can give any conception of what I love to call "our permanent vacation." During the first three years or so of its possession I was in the condition of so many young wives and anxious mothers: desperately and almost chronically in need of a vacation, and yet in no condition to enjoy or profit by an orthodox one. Twice a summer in Colorado was planned and given up, solely because I did not have the strength and courage to undertake it with the babies. Pinafore arrived before Peterkin had ceased to be a most absorbing care; both had their full share of infantile ailments; and it sometimes seems to me that I could not have weathered the soul-trying gales of this period without those blessed, healing intermissions in the familiar routine, those "visits home" to the wise old untroubled mother who has never failed to give me of her courage and her calm.

During the first "big flight" after Pinafore was weaned, when I was able to leave her for a whole golden October morning with the nurse, while I lay in the dry sedge with Peter and the Bachelor Uncle and watched for the whirring flocks to "come in" from the North, I felt the wrinkles smoothing themselves out of my forehead and my spirit, and the physical and nervous waste of four momentous years being repaired in a day. And, as the seasons pass and the strain lessens, I am able to add many active delights to the mere passive process of recuperation. I have learned to manage a row-boat in a safe and dependable, if not a finished manner; I carry



TWO HAPPY YOUNG CAMPERS.

lovely things from the woods and set them out in favorable spots at home; I train wild grapevines, and try fascinating experiments in naturalizing "tame" things and transplanting wild ones from the roadside and the other shores of the lake to the neighborhood of the camp. And this summer Peterkin and I added swimming to the list of our achievements. The other day I discovered and "named" the rose pogonia, daintily flourishing with its feet in the water at the edge of the sweet, ferny "wash-place" where I rub out Peterkin's portentous overalls with my own hands; the day before, I found an ahinga's nest; and this morning I killed my first snake!

As for the children, if Nature has been to me the soothing mother, she has been to them the doting grandmother—she of inexhaustible treasures and ever new delights. They are getting many things, besides the fresh air, which I consider supremely good for them. Before Pinafore was two, she began to notice and imitate the owls and frogs, and to develop a sense of direction; and Peterkin, at three and a half, eagerly offered to take a fish off the hook for me—and succeeded! In grubby overalls and cast-off hat of his father's, he made a picture of an absorbed man-baby which I shall remember, I think, when he is old enough to have barefoot boys of his own.

And the crowning comfort is, that it is always there. Whenever an especially delicious morning suddenly stirs up the gypsy mood, whenever the tyranny of telephone and doorbell begins to "get on the nerves," whenever there is a visitor to be amused, whenever one of us gets "puny" for no definite reason—we have one unfailing resource. Sometimes it is only for a day, with a sketchy and unpremeditated lunch-basket; sometimes for a single moonlight summer night; frequently for a week or two, or even longer. For my longer stays, I owe much gratitude to Peter. He cannot leave business and stay with us; but he is always glad to have us migrate, and comes down every evening to return to work every morning—by car, buggy or horseback, according to the state of our precarious roads. If Peter's love of nature were of the parlor variety we should have distinctly fewer family outings. As for me, the long days are never long enough for my multifarious affairs. I have spent three weeks with no company, in the daytime, but the babies and a negro cook, who slept at night in the attic-room over the kitchen. It is true that our friends sometimes shake their heads over us, and wonder frankly what we find to do, and "what sort of folks we are." But most of them avail themselves joyfully of our primitive hospitality, and go home with improved spirits and digestions.

As I said in the beginning, each season has its distinctive charm, each month, even, for the watcher and lover, its characteristic bird and color; and one of the great delights of a permanent camp is in being thus enabled to know intimately one bit of wild nature through the round of the year. Last month it was the whistle and flash of the cardinals against the dogwood drifts, and the gold festoons of the yellow jessamine, lighting the dim gray woods. This month (April, with the woods in full leaf) the

AUGUST IN THE PERMANENT CAMP.

noisy crested flycatcher, that diverting Wild Irishman among the birds, is dominant; and the waxen cups of the sweet-bays empty their faint, delicious fragrance into the morning mist above the lake. So far, on account of the babies, we have sought fair weather; but even so, many a gray day of blustering rain has caught us; and "Father," splashing through the mud at nightfall, with shining face, has found us snug and safe. And, as they grow older, we mean to pass on to them our own love of the good earth in all weathers. The woods are never bankrupt, even in December. They always keep something in store. Some of the months flaunt their gifts, some love to hide their special treasures for us to hunt for; but none comes ill-provided. We have learned to name each month for its unique delight, and through the happy outdoor lessons that Nature, with her woods and streams and changing seasons, has taught us, we have learned far deeper and more wonderful truths than any schoolbooks could hold.

HOW ONE STATE IS ENCOURAGING TOWN FORESTS

UNDER the new Town Forest Law recently passed in Massachusetts, cities and towns may own and operate forests of their own. It is to encourage the movement in this direction that the Massachusetts Forestry Association is offering to plant 60,000 three-year-old white pine transplants on fifty acres of the land acquired for the town forest, of the city or town that wins the prize. The young trees will be spaced six feet apart.

In order to enter the contest, a municipality must own and set aside at least 100 acres, under the new Town Forest Law, and fifty acres of that area must be planted to forest trees. In Massachusetts the white pine is the best commercial species, and most of the places entering the contest will plant white pine.

A committee appointed by the Association to judge the contest will visit all the forests. It will determine the standing of the contestants on the area acquired, the amount of planting done, the quality of the trees planted, extension provisions, advantages for lumbering, and water and soil protection, fire protection, recreation and æsthetic possibilities, and general improvements. Appropriate scores are allowed on each point. As a result of the requirements, the city or town having the best possibilities for a permanent and efficient town forest wins the prize. At least ten entries must be made before the prize will be awarded. The contest opened June 1, 1914, and will close June 1, 1915. This allows for fall and spring planting.

When we consider the splendid advantages which a town forest will bring to a city or town, and the small outlay required to start such a forest and to maintain it, we should expect to hear of many places entering this public-spirited contest. They have nothing to lose and much to gain.

Many places already own considerable areas on their water-sheds to protect their drinking water from pollution. They could do nothing better than to plant these areas to trees. Besides getting the best protection for their water supply, they will be growing a crop of timber. It is to be hoped that many cities and towns will avail themselves of this opportunity to beautify their surroundings and conserve their resources. Is not the idea worth carrying out in other States also?—From The American City.