

**THE FOREST ARCADIA OF
NORTHERN NEW YORK.
EMBRACING A VIEW OF ITS
MINERAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND
TIMBER RESOURCES.**

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The forest Arcadia of northern New York. Embracing a view of its mineral, agricultural, and timber resources. by N. W. Coffin

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N. W. COFFIN

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STEREOTYPED AT THE
BOSTON STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY.

TO THE

HON. FREDERIC W. LINCOLN, JR.

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE INTEREST TAKEN BY HIM
IN THE REGION OF COUNTRY DESCRIBED IN THESE
PAGES, AND AS A MARK OF THE AUTHOR'S APPRE-
CIATION OF THE MANY ACTS OF PERSONAL
KINDNESS RECEIVED FROM HIM DURING
THE FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE
OF MANY YEARS,

THESE SKETCHES

ARE AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THAT portion of the great wilderness of Northern New York visited by the writer, lies in St. Lawrence county, on the western slope of the Adirondack Mountains. It forms part of an extensive plateau, which is said to embrace an area of many thousand square miles. Its elevation is from fifteen to eighteen hundred feet above the sea.

The ascent from the St. Lawrence is gradual, and, apparently, by a series of steps, until the highest level is reached. The country is watered, principally, by the Grass and Oswegatchie Rivers, and is studded with numerous lakes and ponds. Cranberry Lake is the largest sheet of water in the region, having an extent of five miles, and a width of from two to three miles.

The rivers following the stratification of the country flow by circuitous windings into the St. Lawrence.

The main branch of the Grass and the Oswegatchie are valuable streams.

This section has, thus far, escaped the notice of the descriptive tourist. It is comparatively level, and contains a large surface of good farming lands. It is, at the same time, not devoid of romantic interest; but the means of access to it are so limited as to debar the ordinary pleasure-seeker.

It presents none of the facilities afforded by the Saranac region, where the interior woods are penetrated by a series of lakes and streams, opening into each other, with occasional portages, thus exempting the visitor from the fatigue of much travel on foot.

Since these notes were penned, however, and as a result of the visit herein narrated, the lake has, in a general sense, been opened to the public. The Lake George road has been cleared of dead wood, and straightened; six to seven miles of new road cut to the Windfall; a saw-

mill built upon the river but a short distance above the old Indian fishing-ground; and the romance of that secluded scene, as pictured by the writer, somewhat dispelled.

The mineral resources of the plateau are of great value, and will hereafter make a large item in the productive wealth of the Empire State.

Immense ranges of magnetic iron traverse the country, and there are also indications of more valuable minerals in a few localities.

Of its agricultural importance, too much cannot be said.

The soil is rich and strong, and yields abundantly the usual products native to this latitude.

Its chief value in this respect consists in its peculiar adaptation to the grazing of cattle.

The climate is that of the hill country of New England.

To the lover of Nature, it presents the greatest variety of attraction, and to the sportsman, abundance of game upon the land, and fish in the lakes and streams.

That it should have been suffered to lie so

long undeveloped by the spirit of enterprise and active industry which surrounds it on all sides, is indeed a marvel.

These hasty sketches of a ramble through its silent recesses, taken for the purpose of an examination into the value of the lands, must necessarily lack that variety of incident and adventure which usually follow upon the movements of the hunter and the fisherman. The reader must, therefore, be charitable, and if he can find these deficiencies counterbalanced by any merit of another kind, the writer will be content.

To F. B. Hough, Esq., author of a History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, — a work of great research and value, — obligations are due for many facts and incidents occurring in these pages.

DORCHESTER, 1864.