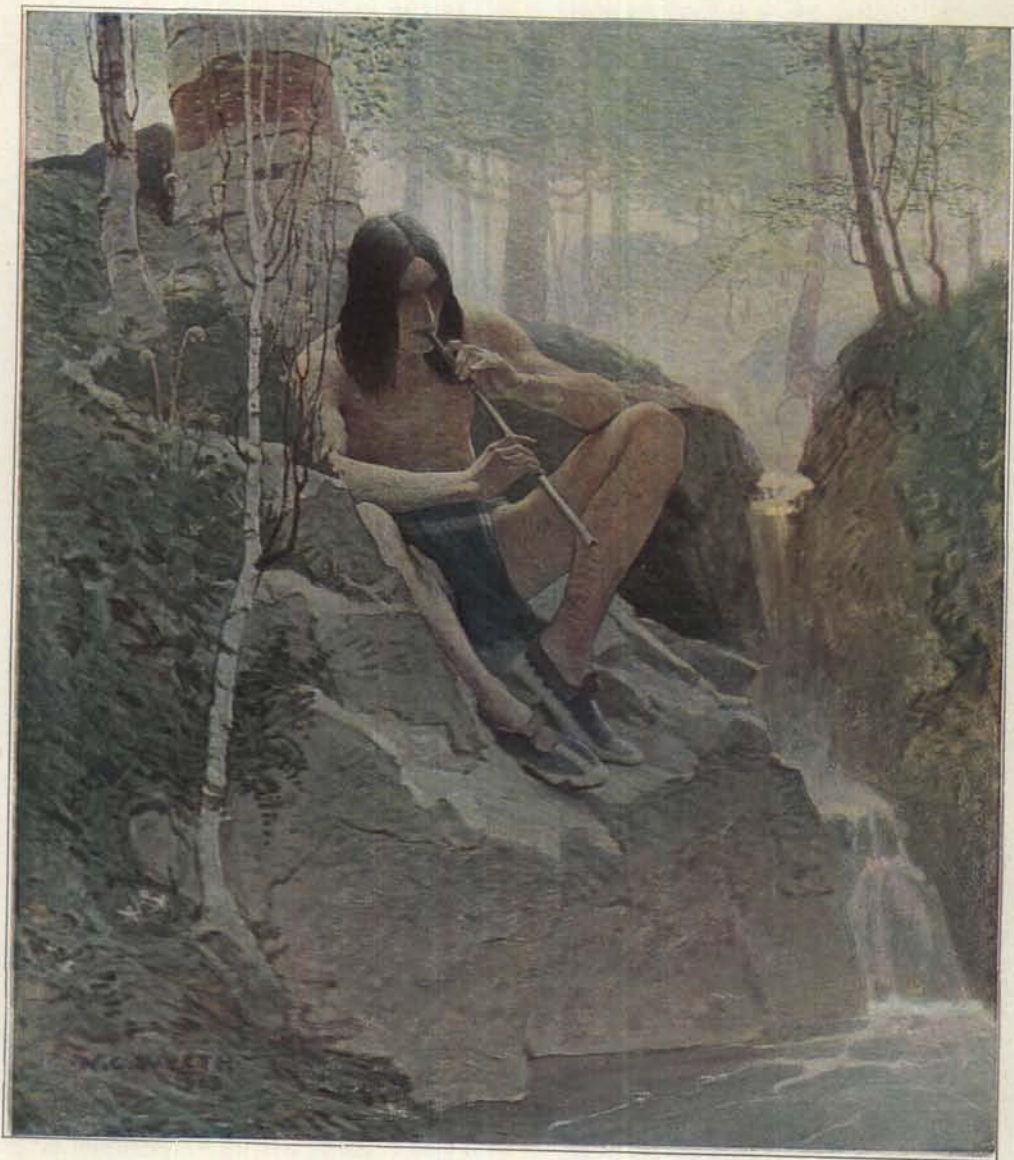


THE MOODS
By
GEORGE T. MARSH

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
N. C. WYETH





Spring.

SONG

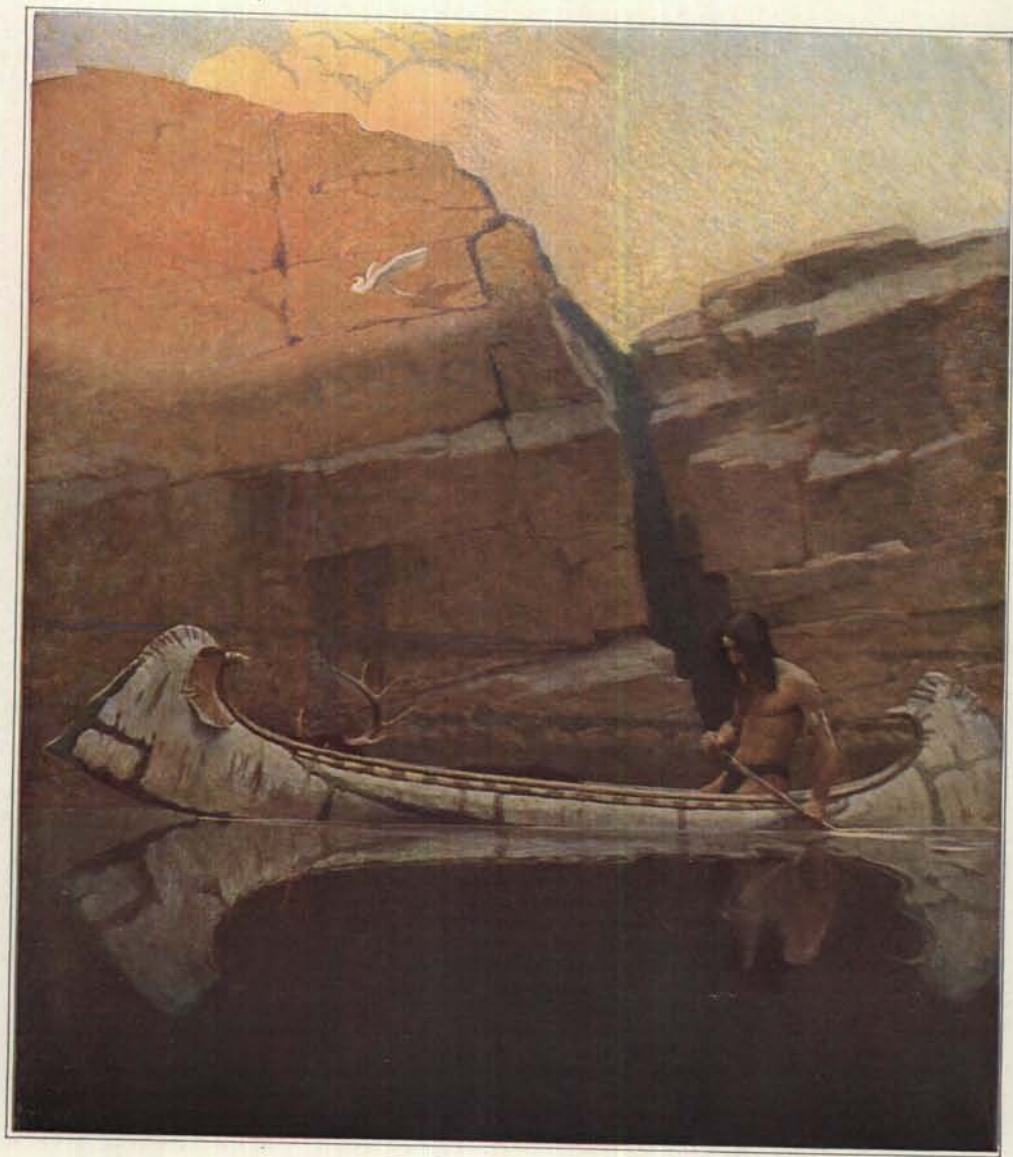
SING the breezes in the birches.
Hymn the runnels as they journey.
Pipes the warbler where he perches
Challenging to vocal tourney
Brook and breeze—What sylvan spirit
Trolls those magic staves that hover?
Hark! 'tis fairy fluting, hear it?
Of some vanished Huron lover.



Summer.

HUSH

Long the mating season's over;
Motionless lie meadow grasses;
Mute the throat of feathered rover;
Mirrored in the still pools' glasses
Hang the hot clouds' shimmering fleeces.
Are they runes of summers perished
That the fisher hears—and ceases—
Or the voice of one he cherished?



Autumn.

WAITING

Through the mists that veil the valley,
Blazoned by the Frost King's brushes,
Vanguards of gray legions sally;
Flaps the heron from the rushes.
In the haze that hides the ranges
Lurks the breath of white winds creeping
With a shroud—the forest changes
Its gay garments, and is sleeping.



Winter.

DEATH

When the wild blasts whip the passes,
In the tepees Famine tarries.
Sore the stinging sleet harasses
Where the snow-swirls sweep the prairies.
The Great Spirit's face is clouded:
Hears he not the women wailing
From his Hunting-Grounds enshrouded?
Shall our prayers rise unavailing?

THE MESSENGERS

By Richard Harding Davis

ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG



WHEN Ainsley first moved to Lone Lake Farm all of his friends asked him the same question. They wanted to know, if the farmer who sold it to him had abandoned it as worthless, how one of the idle rich, who could not distinguish a plow from a harrow, hoped to make it pay? His answer was that he had not purchased the farm as a means of getting richer by honest toil, but as a retreat from the world and as a test of true friendship. He argued that the people he knew accepted his hospitality at Sherry's because, in any event, they themselves would be dining within a taxicab fare of the same place. But if to see him they travelled all the way to Lone Lake Farm, he might feel assured that they were friends indeed.

Lone Lake Farm was spread over many acres of rocky ravine and forest, at a point where Connecticut approaches New York, and between it and the nearest railroad station stretched six miles of an execrable woodroad. In this wilderness, directly upon the lonely lake, and at a spot equally distant from each of his boundary lines, Ainsley built himself a red brick house. Here, in solitude, he exiled himself; ostensibly to become a gentleman farmer; in reality to wait until Polly Kirkland had made up her mind to marry him.

Lone Lake, which gave the farm its name, was a pond hardly larger than a city block. It was fed by hidden springs, and fringed about with reeds and cat-tails, stunted willows and shivering birch. From its surface jutted points of the same rock that had made farming unremunerative, and to these miniature promontories and islands Ainsley, in keeping with a fancied resemblance, gave such names as the Needles, St. Helena, the Isle of Pines. From the edge of the pond that was farther from the house rose a high hill, heavily wooded. At its base, oak and chestnut trees spread their branches over the water, and when the air was still were so clearly reflected in the

pond that the leaves seemed to float upon the surface. To the smiling expanse of the farm the lake was what the eye is to the human countenance. The oaks were its eyebrows, the fringe of reeds its lashes, and, in changing mood, it flashed with happiness or brooded in sombre melancholy. For Ainsley it held a deep attraction. Through the summer evenings, as the sun set, he would sit on the brick terrace and watch the fish leaping, and listen to the venerable bullfrogs croaking false alarms of rain. Indeed, after he met Polly Kirkland, staring moodily at the lake became his favorite form of exercise. With a number of other men, Ainsley was very much in love with Miss Kirkland, and unprejudiced friends thought that if she were to choose any of her devotees, Ainsley should be that one. Ainsley was eager to agree in this opinion, but in persuading Miss Kirkland to share it he had not been successful. This was partly his own fault, for when he dared to compare what she meant to him with what he had to offer her he became a mass of sodden humility. Could he have known how much Polly Kirkland envied and admired his depth of feeling, entirely apart from the fact that she herself inspired that feeling, how greatly she wished to care for him in the way he cared for her, life, even alone in the silences of Lone Lake, would have been a beautiful and blessed thing. But he was so sure she was the most charming and most wonderful girl in all the world, and he an unworthy and despicable being, that when the lady demurred he faltered, and his pleading, at least to his own ears, carried no conviction.

"When one thinks of being married," said Polly Kirkland gently, "it isn't a question of the man you can live with, but the man you can't live without. And I am sorry, but I've not found that man."

"I suppose," returned Ainsley, gloomily, "that my not being able to live without you doesn't affect the question in the least?"

"You *have* lived without me," Miss