nurished by the decay of last year's leaves , violets grow in purple profusion. But before the violets appear, when the trees are still leafless, the shad,like drifts of unmelted snow,looms through the bare gray trunks. And later in the second growth woods on higher ground Linaea covers moss-encased rotting stumps and forgotten logs with trailing vines, perfuming the air for yards about with its tiny pink flowers.

In the fall of the year the Adirondacks reach their time of greatest glory. Then the autumnal color-changes reveal the great variety of vegetation; where before all was green and one leaf was scarcely distinguishable in the mass from another, now this uniformity is replaced by all shades of browns and russets, yellows and reds. The hillsides become patterns of contrasting vivid colors which thousands of city people travel hundreds of miles to view. The undistinguished bushy pastures change their character completely. In the tangles of weeds and coarse grasses the leaves of blueberry bushes glow in the slanting rays of the sun like the coals of burned-out subterranian fires, and the sharp spears of paling grass are the flames above the surface. Lichens seem to be richer in hue at this time of year. The forest floor when the fall of the leaf begins is strewn with discarded needles of the pines, scattered like jack straws among the red and yellow maple leaves and browning ferns -- all except the evergreen ferns that retain their green under the snow. The quiet flowing brooks are at their best now littered with still unfaded leaves revolving in the eddies and plastered on the wet rocks at each little cascade. The clear water reflects in blurred and swirling patterns all the colors of the fall mixed with the blue of the sky -- kaleidoscopes of shifting hues. Along the marshy borders of the flows cattails turn to russet-brown

and their full ripe coffee-colored heads lose their plushy firmness as they begin to disintegrate and disperse their seeds.

Second to the mountains themselves the rivers, streams, and lakes of the Adirondacks are the wildest areas. The Hudson River rises at the foot of Mt. Marcy, and to the north the Ausable flows into Lake Champlain. Water is everywhere abundant. In the southern part an intricate network of inter-connecting lakes and ponds offers some of the best canoe country in the United States. Ponds dot the country-side, every hollow in the hills holds one, some are the sources of brooks whereas others are intermediate between the flow from high drainage basins and large streams. The hiker often comes upon them shimmering through the yellow birches on an October day as he follows the course of a brook to its origin.

In few places on this continent does the land retain such an intimate relationship with its water system. The areas between the streams are small or steep and rocky. This is not farming country although farms there have been and still are. It is a land of wildness, a land where the forests belong, a land of the beaver and bear of the deer and fox, a land where one can see what the land once was, a land to go to and return from, a land to escape from his neighbor in and enjoy the peace of solitude which those who live in cities need. It is a land where the human spirit can yet be free.