

PIKE SPEARING ON HAMILTON BAY.

Pike spearing is a recognized industry on the shores of Hamilton Bay, Lake Ontario, the harbor of the beautiful city of Hamilton, during the winter season. The first intimation the citizens have that the ice is formed thick enough to bear is when they see some fine morning the little square huts of the adventurous spearsmen shoved out on the glistening surface of the frozen waters. The huts in which the spearsmen shelter themselves from the cold are small wooden structures about five feet square by six feet high, with a

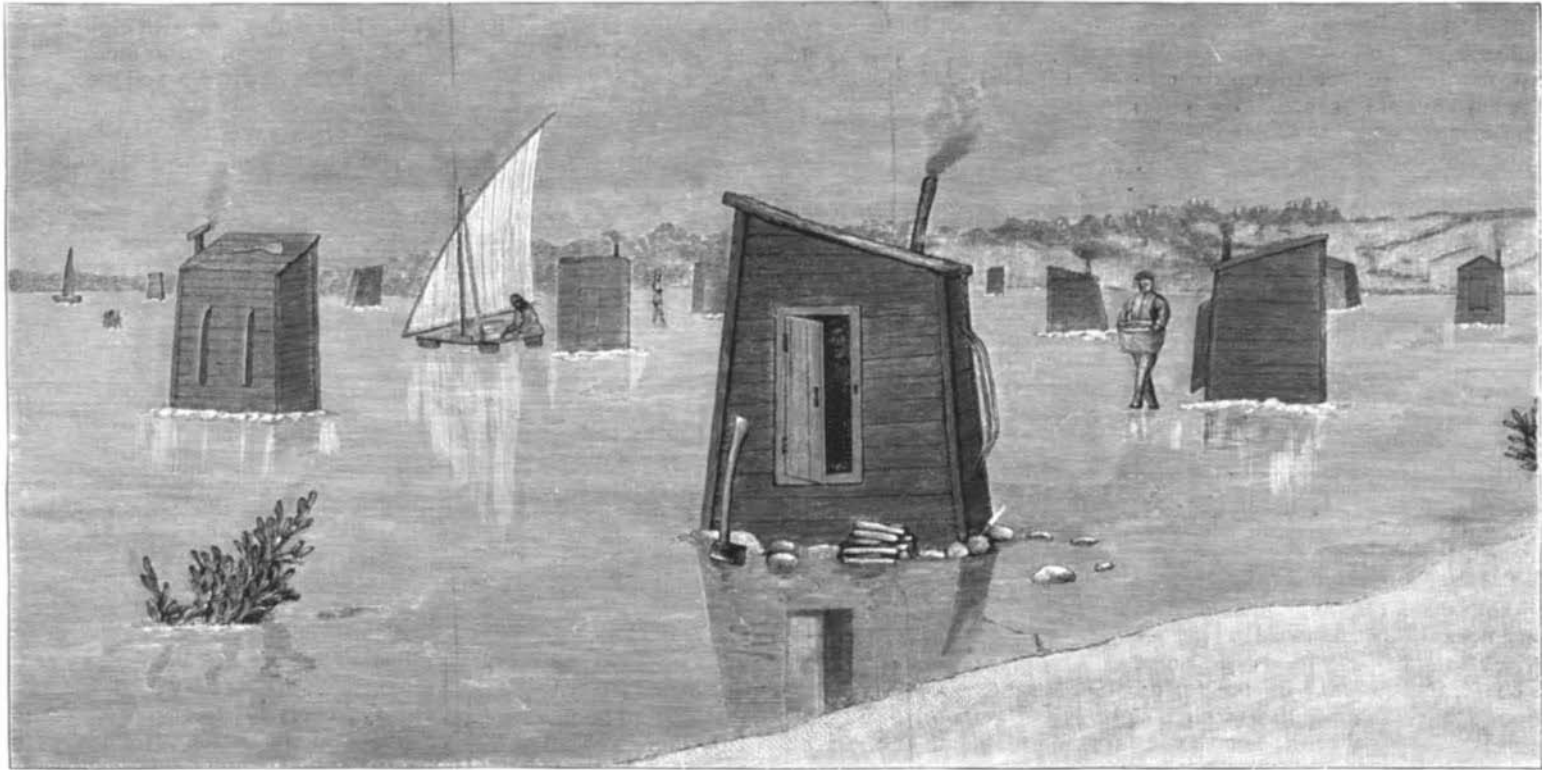
winter is over, on account of the inclosed nature of that body of water. Frequently as many as two or three hundred of these huts can be counted on the surface of the bay and among the many coves that mark its beautiful shores. The illustrations this week by Mr. Heming provide an excellent idea of the appearance and habits of this interesting class of fish hunters.—*Dominion Illustrated.*

Vaseline.

Mr. Robert A. Chesebrough, of New York, is

expansion of the demand which we have experienced this year. In America, in England, and particularly on the Continent, there seems to have sprung up a sudden unanimity in favor of our product. The scientists in Germany, who have been backing the cheap mixtures of earth wax and oil which have been sold as paraffinum molle there, seem to have found out their inferiority, and have withdrawn their recommendations. Our trade with Germany has largely and almost suddenly developed.

"Vaseline is not a distillate nor a mixture of so-called



FISHING HUTS, HAMILTON BAY, ONTARIO.

small door on the side, and sometimes a window. They are easily fitted on sleds, so that their owners can draw them over the ice from place to place in search of an advantageous location. When the spearsman has departed his hut to the proper point, he proceeds to cut a hole in the ice about eighteen inches in diameter, and over this he sets the hut, having taken it off the sled. The outer edges are banked up with snow, and water poured over it until it freezes solid, and the cold is effectually excluded. The interior furniture is very simple, and usually consists of a piece of board nailed across one corner for a seat, and another shelf on which stands a small cast iron stove, the pipe of which goes through the roof. A village of these miniature houses makes quite a picturesque appearance on a bright winter morning. The spears, hand nets, poles, etc., piled against the sides, the little heaps of fire wood beside each door, the spiral wreaths of delicate blue smoke ascending almost perpendicularly up into the clear, crisp, frosty air, and the long shadows cast by the rising sun along the shining surface of the snow-covered lake make up a picture against the background of somber evergreen-covered bluffs that is not easily forgotten.

The spearsmen usually select portions of the bay where the water shoals and has a smooth, sandy bottom. They do not, as a rule, venture into deep water, but prefer the shallow eddies where the bottom is plainly visible. The hut is kept carefully closed, and the only light to the interior comes up through the ice beneath. It needs great patience as well as endurance to make a successful spearsman. There he sits hour after hour on his little ledge with his six-pronged spear poised above the hole in the ice, watching for the curious pike coming up to investigate the shining minnow bait at the entrance of the hole or to get a breath of air. When sport is good the occupation is fascinating enough as a pastime, but it often happens that the spearsman may sit in the bitter cold for an hour at a time, not daring to move, and yet never see the slim, graceful outlines of a fish in the translucent waters below. When a pike does appear, the spearsman waits until it is well under the hole, and then, before it has time to be alarmed, darts down his six-pronged spear like a flash. The spear resembles lightning, according to the small boy's definition, in that it never needs to strike twice in the same place. It is seldom the fish can dodge it.

Sometimes the houses are larger and more pretentious than those above described, and the spearsman is occasionally accompanied by a boy to feed the stove, bring in wood and generally look after his comfort. But at the best it is rather a lonely and arduous way of making a living. Hamilton Bay is particularly well adapted to this mode of fishing, as when the ice is once formed it seldom breaks up until the

the inventor of vaseline. When in London recently he was interviewed by a representative of *The Chemist and Druggist*, and among other things gave the following particulars:

"The reason why vaseline is scarce is that we have not got the article. With our present plant—which is a pretty large one, as you may judge when I tell you it cost us half a million dollars—we can't produce fast enough to meet the demand. Every pound of vaseline we sell has to be collected drop by drop as we filter it through bone black. That, too, has given us some



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trouble. We use some sixteen tons of bone black every day, and the sugar combination in America has got hold of the manufacture of that article and has put some difficulties in our way. But I think we have conquered that obstacle. The principal cause of our limitation of supply, however, has been the remarkable

paraffins, but a gelatinous residual substance. It is *sui generis*. We cannot make it by mixing paraffin wax and petroleum oil together, nor can paraffin be made from it without distillation.

"A very important structural change takes place in the process of manufacture, for vaseline is purely amorphous, and no paraffin crystals can be separated from it by pressure after freezing."

The oftener vaseline is filtered, the higher becomes its melting point. That is why the white vaseline is stiffer than the yellow. The latter, as now turned out,

melts at 97° F., but beyond this point the company do not propose to go, in fact, they cannot go as it is at present manufactured, but it is possible that they will hereafter introduce a much harder jelly, which dispensers can use to add to ordinary vaseline when necessary. This harder jelly is made from a thick deposit which separates from natural petroleum.

Mr. Chesebrough said it was about 1869 or 1870 that he first produced vaseline. He was in the petroleum trade then as a refiner, and was fond of experimenting. When he produced vaseline he was convinced of its pharmaceutical value, and patented the process of manufacture, but from then till 1876 he got very little encouragement. The doctors and the chemists were very slow to take to it, and only did so after the public were appealed to.

"It nearly broke me," interjected the colonel, with a gallant effort to resume his sadness of fifteen years ago. During these years Mr. Chesebrough said he spent every dollar he received in advertising the new product and introducing it to the profession. Altogether over a half a million of dollars had been spent in introducing it, besides another half million in plant. About 1876 it began to go. By 1880 it was a great business and was made into a joint stock company, and about that date the Standard Oil Company acquired a controlling influence in its management—Mr. Robert A. Chesebrough retaining, however, the presidency of the company. About 250 men and 130 girls are employed at the company's works in Brooklyn, and the offices in State Street, New York, are among the finest in the city.

A Giant Boulder.

One of the biggest rocks ever moved in the course of railroad construction in this country was recently excavated on the line of the Mexican Southern by Col. Lamar. *The Lower Californian* says the giant boulder was 120 feet in height and measured 1,000 cubic meters. Six dynamite cartridges were placed under the rock, after the men had excavated as much earth as possible, and were fired one after another. At the sixth explosion the big fellow rolled out of the way.