



Big Lake, near Bigelow, Mo., October 2.—When one hasn't "wet a line" all summer long it means something to get away into the big timber and rusticate on the bank of a pretty body of water.

Big Lake is shaped like a crescent moon and is about six miles long by from half to three-quarters of a mile wide. Its peculiar shape is due to the fact that years ago—and not so very many, either—it was the bed of the Missouri river. One night the river took one of its wild notions to "cut across lots" and when it got through the river was about four miles further west and Big Lake had been born. Four years ago the river rose unusually high and flowed through Big Lake again, and the people in the vicinity feared that the river had come to stay. But it didn't; it had merely come on a visit. One result of that freshet was to clean the lake of moss and yonkapins, and as a result bass fishing was not so good for a year or two afterwards. But the good fellows who frequented the lake planted moss and sowed yonkapins again, and the fishing is getting good again.

It tickles the writer to hear some of the Kansas City and St. Joseph fishermen telling about the nice fish they have caught in Big Lake during the past twelve or fifteen years. It has been just about that long since Big Lake began to achieve some fame as a fishing resort. But away back yonder in 1882 and '83, when the writer was a youngster and learning the printer's trade, he and his boy companions used to slip over to Big Lake and get such fish as the Kansas City and St. Joseph sports only read about. There were no German carp in the lake then. That reminds us that we'd like to have the privilege of inflicting the proper punishment on the man that invented the German carp. Of all the detestable things that inhabit the water to inflict the genuine lover of rod and reel, the carp takes the premium. He is a scavenger. He soon rids the water of all other fish save the gar and the spoonbill cat. He is not good to eat. There is only one way to provide him for the table. Here is the recipe as furnished by a friend:

"Soak the carp over night in strong salt water. Pour off the salt water and soak in fresh water until about an hour before supper time. Clean thoroughly and split. Have an oak board about two feet long, eighteen inches wide and an inch thick. Spread the carp upon this board and tack lightly around the edges to prevent curling up under the heat. Put the board in the oven and bake until the flesh is thoroughly done. Spread with butter, season to taste and then withdraw the board from the oven. Remove all the tacks, then gently lift the carp from the board and throw it in the ash barrel and then eat the board."

I've never tried this recipe, but I'll readily agree that the board is the more edible of the two.

It was Saturday noon when the writer stole away from official and journalistic cares and boarded a train for Fortesque. The Biggest Girl went along this time, and it was great fun to watch her as she enjoyed herself. Say, about the best fun there is in this life is to watch the youngsters hav-

ing fun. And the older you get the more fun it is. The Biggest Girl wants to do all the rowing, and Dad is perfectly willing. The fun of rowing a boat ended for him a long while ago. He is content to sit in the back end and troll for bass or pickerel, or recline on his folded-up coat, with his hat over his eyes, and his faithful and fragrant old pipe sending up its incense skyward. As a matter of fact that's about the way most of the time is spent. The fish are not suffering much on account of our visit.

But, say! After an afternoon out on the lake, with an appetite sharpened by the autumn breeze, isn't it bully to row into the little anchorage about 7 o'clock in the evening, wash up and then hike into the dining room and eat fried fish and roast sweet potatoes, and apple sauce, and pork gravy and home-made bread, and strong coffee, and luscious pumpkin pie—topping all off with a foaming beaker of sweet milk and then tilting one's chair back and stoking up the old pipe while we rehearse the day's doings? Talk about your private yachts and your house parties and your week-end parties and all that sort of society dope—me for the rustic lake where I can wear overalls on the front porch and smoke a pipe strong enough to start the shingles on the roof.

We are not alone down here. In the next lake house to us the Family Physician and the Political Enemy are quartered, and when we've nothing else to do we get together and tell about it. The Political Enemy is a mighty fine fellow who has been a personal friend for a quarter of a century, and the Family Physician has been present when we received a couple of members of the family. The Political Enemy tells us of the fight he had with the big muskie last summer, when he was camping in the Minnesota woods. We know he had it, for his hands still bear the scars of that fight, and the huge thirty-two pound muskie, stuffed and mounted, adorns the wall of his office in the Nebraska state house. And we like to hear him tell about it, too, for next to catching a big muskie the most fun is to catch one. And the writer caught a twenty-two pounder up in Lake Ida a few years ago, and he'll travel many miles on the assurance that after a week's fishing he'll catch another one just like it. The Family Physician tells no stories of big muskies, but he has caught tarpon off the coast of Florida and sea bass off Cataline, and he knows how to relate his experiences without appearing to be drawing the long bow. Then the Political Enemy will show the reel and the hook that caught the big muskie, and I'll show the reel and hook that caught my big muskie, and the Family Physician will show his reel and hook—and by that time the stars are shining, the Biggest Girl is toppling over in her big rocking chair, and the three of us are yawning and wondering if it will be good fishing in the morning. Then we fill up at the pump—at the pump, mind you—and hike off to bed, with that tired feeling that is so pleasant.

No trouble to go to sleep down here. No worrying about official matters; no worry about work to be done. Just eat and sleep and enjoy yourself for the three or four days you are permitted to commune

with nature. Funny, isn't it, that while we are thus enjoying ourselves down here, the people who live here are asking us all about the city and expressing the wish that they could spend their vacations there. We can't understand how they can figure out any fun in a big city—but I suppose they think we are just a little bit nutty because we hike back to the solitudes to have our vacations.

Fish? Yes, we've caught a few—enough to prove that there are still fish in the lake. And we have all the fish we want to eat. And that's enough. Heaven protect us against the man who is a fish butcher. We always meet up with that kind, but so far we've managed to avoid the necessity of chumming with one. When that time comes we'll quit fishing.

The Biggest Girl interrupts here for the purpose of insisting that I write the solemn truth, which is that she has caught two fish to her dad's one since we started in here.

—W. M. M.

HER VIEW OF IT

An old gentleman who owned a fine estate not far from the country seat of the Duke of Devonshire (which is open to the public when the Duke is not there) one day drove with a party of friends to this famous residence, taking with him his housekeeper, Martha, a good old soul who had been with him a great many years.

Arriving at Chatsworth, they passed slowly through room after room of almost priceless pictures. But Martha spake never a word, although it was evident that she was not missing anything. Each and every picture that her eye lit on underwent a most rigid scrutiny, much to the amusement of the rest of the party.

At last her master turned to her and said, "Well Martha, what do you think of it all?"

"Why," exploded Martha, rapturously, "I canna see a speck o' dust anywhere!"—Lippincott's.

A LABOR SAVING DEVICE

Joseph H. Choate, at a recent banquet in New York, praised Attorney General Wickersham.

"When this able man fights," he said, "feathers will fly. But he won't fight until he has a grievance. There will be nothing spectacular, nothing burlesque, about his battles."

Mr. Choate smiled. "No," he said, "we shall see nothing of Broncho Bill in Attorney General Wickersham. Broncho Bill, you know, had only one eye.

"How did you lose that left optic, Bill?" a young tenderfoot politely asked him.

"Loose it?" Bill thundered. "Did you say 'lose it'?"

"Why-er-yes," faltered the tenderfoot.

"Lose it be hanged," said Bill, ferociously, "I cut it out so's I wouldn't allus be havin' to shut it in drawin' & bead."—Omaha World-Herald.

REASON FOR IT

"Why is Maude so angry with the photographer?"

"She found a label on the back of her picture saying, 'The original of this photograph is carefully preserved.'"—Boston Transcript.

IDENTIFICATION

Mistress (at door)—"Well, my dear, what is it?"

Little Girl—"Please 'm, our kitty is losted. Did you see a kitty go past here by the name of Nuddles?"—Boston Transcript.



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AROUSED CURIOSITY

"Beg pardon," said the hotel clerk, "but what is your name?"

"Name!" echoed the indignant guest, who had just registered. "Don't you see my signature there on the register?"

"I do," answered the clerk, calmly. "That is what aroused my curiosity."—Chicago News.

AFTER HIM

"Satan is representead as runnin' after folks wif a pitchfork," said Uncle Eben, "when de truth is dat so many folks is pullin' at his coat-tails dat he ain't got time to chase nobody."—Washington Star.