

line gave a score of tantalizing runs and jerks, and then, at last, just as I was about to draw out, thinking that the pesky minnows had eaten all of the bait, a heavy rock, coming from the rear, hurtled over my head and dropped, with a resounding splash, into the pool at my feet. I turned angrily at this interruption. Imagine my surprise at seeing four girls drawn up in menacing attitudes just behind me. Indeed, so amazed was I that my anger was forgotten for the nonce. Then, as no one spoke, the foremost of the girls, quickly stooping, lifted another stone from the ground and hurled it after its mate.

"Don't do that," I said, quickly.

"Why not?" inquired the girl.

"Because you'll scare the fish and spoil my sport."

"We don't care," said the first. "Serves him right" echoed the others.

I was nonplussed. For the life of me I could not imagine how I had come to gain the ill-will of these maids of the lake.

"Why, what have I done," I asked, in an injured tone, "that you should treat me in this way?"

"Everything that you shouldn't have," said the foremost. I looked at her from under the wide brim of my hat, and as I looked, I came to the conclusion that she was decidedly pretty, and that I should like to follow up our acquaintance, sudden and informal as had been our introduction.

"How have I offended you?" I asked.

"By scaring poor little Jim nearly out of his wits, and then spoiling our dinner by losing our provender."

I began to see things in a clearer light now. Evidently these were "the leddies" of Jim's acquaintance.

"I am very sorry," I said, humbly, "that I have caused you any discomfort. If there is anything I can do to repair the damage I shall do so at once." Just at this moment my eyes lighted upon my dinner basket. "Here," I said, springing quickly to my feet, and picking up the lunch, "take this, and let it partly make up for what I have caused you to lose." I forgot for the moment, what a sorry figure I must make in my battered hat, my blue overalls, and my uncle's shirt, several sizes too large for me. I was recalled to this by the amused and curious glances which were cast at me. Thanks to my old hat, however, they couldn't see my face.