

"Old Muskie" the Rogue.

By LEVI T. PENNINGTON.

"You must go; that's all. There will be some way, you'll see."

Carl Mills and Lee Henly were separating for the night. They were close friends; and although Carl's father was the most prosperous man in the community, and Lee was the son of a poor widow, they had always been together, and had been leaders of the class that had been graduated from the local high school the month before.

To-night they had been discussing for the hundredth time their plans for the coming year. Carl was going to college in the autumn—that was a settled thing—and Lee longed to go as he had never longed for anything before in his life. There was nothing to prevent his going but the lack of funds. His mother was to spend the winter with a married daughter, ten years his senior. He had a scholarship in the college and a chance to pay his way in part by working in the college library. But that would take all his spare time, and he was sure that he would still lack about one hundred dollars of having enough to carry him through the first year.

Both boys dearly love Lake Wannawasco, on the shore of which they lived. It was indeed one of the most beautiful of all the sheets of water which a half-century ago knew the dip of the Indian's paddle and the ripple of his birch-bark canoe. There may be other waters as clear and sweet as those of northern Michigan, but the native and the enthusiastic summer visitor find it hard to believe it.

Both Lee and Carl spent much of their time in the employ of the people at Forest Lodge during the summer, when the Chicago fishermen, headed by the wealthy Camerons, were there for three months.

Lee was in Mr. Cameron's special employ, and from him had learned the art of bait-casting. At the close of the previous season, Mr. Cameron had given him his longest and strongest maskinonge casting-rod; it was too heavy now for Mr. Cameron, who found his casting arm seriously crippled by rheumatism.

It was but a few days after Lee's last talk with Carl Mills that he heard Mr. Cameron and Mr. Gardner discussing the fine collection of mounted fish belonging to Mr. Cameron in Chicago. Mr. Gardner was speaking of it in glowing terms, and was especially praising a maskinonge in the collection.

"Yes," said Mr. Cameron, "that certainly was a fine fish when Smithson took him out of this lake five years ago; but I had set my heart on a bigger one. I wanted one that would weigh over fifty pounds when he came out of the water, and that one weighed only forty-three. I'd gladly give one hundred dollars for a specimen caught with hook and line that would tip the scales at fifty pounds or better."

"Do you think you'll ever find one?" asked Mr. Gardner.

"I hardly know," said Mr. Cameron. "Two years ago one was netted in the river near Detroit which was over that weight, but I did not learn of it until too late; and, anyway, I want one that was caught with hook and line, and the story of whose capture I can know."

Two weeks later, one morning when Mr. Cameron had decided that he would not go out upon the lake, Lee Henly paddled a light canoe out across Forest Lodge Cove and practised with his casting-rod. In this cove there seemed to be no fish at all, although elsewhere in the lake fish were plentiful. At one point here three great elm-trees with spreading tops had fallen into the lake years before.

There they still lay, water-logged, their hundreds of branches forming a miniature jungle under water, just off the bold shore. Merely for practise, Lee dropped his casting-bait near these treetops, and started to reel in.

Then he almost fell from the boat, for there was a great swirl in the water where his minnow was spinning along, a broad tail came out and hit the water with a tremendous splash, and he struck but did not hook the fish, which, however, he saw to be enormous.

That night he said to Carl Mills, "Carl, I believe I see a chance for college."

"What is it?" asked his friend.

Then Lee told of the conversation he had heard, and of the great fish that had given him a strike. "And I believe that he weighs over fifty pounds, and that I can catch him if you will help me," he said.

There was but one day in the week, however, that they could try for the big fish, for both were employed that year every week-day except Tuesday, when Mr. Cameron went to the town fifteen miles away; and on Tuesday they dared to fish only in the very early morning, for fear some of the fishermen at Forest Lodge would learn that there was a great fish there, and catch him. They did not want to be unsportsmanlike, but Lee was confident that none of the rich fishermen needed the fish as he did.

The first Tuesday morning brought them not even encouragement. Although Carl paddled the boat all about the cove, and Lee did the best casting of which he was capable, no strike rewarded them; and when they

saw the first stir about Forest Lodge, they hastened to another part of the lake, and left "Old Muskie," as they had already named the big fish.

When the next Tuesday morning came, again they were out. The boat was kept as great a distance from shore as Lee could cover with his longest casts, and just as the casting-minnow fell straight out from the middle treetop, there was a great swirl in the water. Lee struck and the reel began to sling as the great fish started a tremendous run; but in an instant the line came back slack. The saber-like teeth of the maskinonge had cut it off like a knife.

"And what can we do about that?" said Carl, as Lee sadly reeled in the useless line.

"I don't know yet, but I have an idea," said Lee.

The next Tuesday morning Lee was not ready to try for the big fish again, although it was almost torture to stay away from the old treetops. He promised to be ready the next week, and he was. What he had done had surprised his mother, who knew that he had been saving every cent in the hope of going to college. He had sent away to a fishing-tackle house for their largest first-class silk line, and received one hundred yards of line that was tested to fifty pounds. He had sent to an electrical supply house for their smallest unground copper wire, and had received a spool of it, almost hairlike in its fineness. Both purchases had been expensive for him.

From "Old Injun Jake" Lee had learned the art of doing fine splicing and of braiding many strands. He unbraided the silk line for a considerable length, and weaving in one by one the copper wire lengths that he had cut from the spool, he joined the wire to the silk with a joint that would readily pass through a line-guide, and continued to braid till he had a six-foot, flexible copper leader that would sustain his own weight, united to his one hundred yards of line with a joint as strong as the line itself. Thus did he provide against the teeth of Old Muskie.

Tuesday morning the boys were again fishing in Forest Lodge Cove at daybreak. Again Old Muskie struck, and unable to cut the line, rushed into the interlacing boughs of the submerged treetops.

For a while the strain on the rod indicated that he was surging back and forth among the treetops, but soon the dead pull showed that the old warrior was no longer making a fight.

Rowing in, the boys found the casting-bait fast on one of the limbs. When they got it loose and pulled it in, they found that one of the treble hooks was gone. Old Muskie in his rush had caught one of the hooks upon a branch and it had held, while the one that was in his mouth had pulled from the minnow, and the big savage of the lake was again at liberty.

Lee made a change in his minnow before the next Tuesday morning. Instead of using the treble hooks that were fastened with screws into the sides of the minnow, he bored a hole in the body of the wooden bait, and using again the copper wire, passed it back and forth through the body of the minnow and through the eye of the treble hook on each side. He knew that no fish would break all these strands of copper wire, although he felt that Old Muskie might break the hooks.

The next Tuesday morning Lee again hooked Old Muskie. Again the big fish got to the treetops, and again Lee felt the dead pull that meant that he had no longer a fighting fish to deal with. Reeling up as Carl paddled the boat toward shore, Lee found that Old Muskie had entangled the line among the branches, and getting a chance to use his great strength, had broken the heavy silk line. Lee was delighted to see that it had been broken above the point where he had spliced it to the copper leader.

"What can you do about that?" asked Carl.

"I'm not sure," said Lee, "but every time thus far the old fellow has run straight away from the direction in which I was reeling my minnow. I believe that if we come at him from near the shore he will take a run toward the open lake, and we'll have a chance at him."

During the week that followed, Lee again spliced a copper leader to his line. Again he "made over" a big casting-minnow, and when Tuesday morning brought its opportunity Carl put the canoe along the shore, but as far out as the end of the submerged treetops. Three casts were made, each farther and farther forward, without results. The fourth, however, a perfect cast of over one hundred feet, which fell just beyond the farthest treetop, was rewarded; the water broke in a great eddy as Old Muskie took the bait. Lee struck with all his might, and pulled with all the force he dared to use, although he was pulling almost straight back toward the treetops.

As he had hoped, Old Muskie pulled the other way, and with a tremendous rush, left the treetops, and started toward the channel into the open lake. Half-way across he gave an astonishing leap into the air, showing the boys for the first time just

what a monster they had succeeded in hooking.

Hope more lively than any they had felt before filled the hearts of the young fishermen, as the monster maskinonge rushed across the cove. But instead of hitting the narrow open channel into the main lake, he rushed across the wide bar, through a veritable forest of burliashes.

Then the fight was quickly over. The fish had been hooked only on the treble hook in the rear of the casting-minnow; the hooks on the side dragged through the rushes, and caught upon so many of them that the hook was torn from the mouth of Old Muskie, and again Lee reeled in his line without the big fish at the end of it.

Both boys sat in the canoe for several minutes as blue as boys could be. It certainly was discouraging. But presently Lee raised his head, and with a flash of his eyes said, "I'll catch that fellow yet!"

And Carl Mills, with admiration and determination both on his face, said, "Right! And I'll help you do it!"

A big maskinonge lives a life much like that of a rogue elephant in its isolation. He selects some spot—a cove filled with lily-pads, a bend of a river, or a sunken treetop like the home of Old Muskie—and there he will stay, month after month, if not year after year. So there was little danger of Old Muskie's leaving Forest Lodge Cove that summer unless he was caught or killed or died the mysterious death that comes to the great fish of the streams and lakes.

Lee Henly and Carl Mills knew this, and they had been learning more and more of the habits of this particular maskinonge. In every new thing that they learned, they felt that they had one more aid toward the final capture of Old Muskie and the realization of Lee's ambition for college that year.

Lee had learned that hooking the big fish was the easiest part of the work of capturing him. He decided that he must provide by every possible means against the entanglement of his casting-bait.

With this in view, he made a wooden casting-minnow himself. He took a spinner and the glass eyes from an old one he had used, and from a bit of red cedar he whittled out the shape for the body. He had bought a very heavy, although not a very large, hand-forged treble hook. He took a heavy, spring-steel wire, and had the old blacksmith at Kessler's Corners weld an eye in it through the eye of the treble hook. He put on the back spinner, and passed the wire through the wooden minnow. He used no front spinner, as it might catch in the rushes.

The front eye he made in the wire himself by bending and twisting till he was sure beyond all question that it was safe. Then he fastened his copper leader into this eye, put the glass eyes into the head of the minnow, and with careful painting his bait was complete.

The season was now growing late. College was to begin September 23. On Tuesday, September 9, Carl and Lee set out at daybreak on their quest. They fished long and carefully but got no strike. They left the cove for half an hour, then tried again. This time the great fish struck, but was not hooked. Soon Forest Lodge was astir, and fishing for Old Muskie ended for that day.

Then came the last day. Carl was to leave for college the following Monday. "We just must get him this morning!" he said, as they pushed out from the landing with the first glow of daylight. They knew a little later in the day would be better, but they felt that they must lose no time.

Carl worked the canoe down the shore, the little craft slipping through the water as quietly as a floating swan. Lee outdid himself in length of cast, for he did not wish Old Muskie to take fright because they were too near.

At the fifth cast the big fish hit the bait. He rushed savagely at it, and closed his jaws down squarely upon it. Lee struck as if for his life, and drove the hooks deep into the fish's jaw, and with click and drag both on the reel and his thumb adding to the pressure, he pulled all he thought his tackle would bear—pulled straight back toward the treetops, which he was most anxious to avoid.

Stubbornly the big fish pulled in the opposite direction, and with a rush started across the cove. So fast did the line run out that Lee's thumb was almost blistered, but he held it hard against the spinning reel, and the fish rushed on across the cove.

Straight through the forest of rushes he dashed, and Lee and Carl held their breath, as the line cut through the water. Lee held the rod high, Carl sent the canoe along the track taken by the fish; and in a few dizzy seconds Old Muskie was through the rushes and out into the open lake. And now Lee made no effort to check him, but let him run as far as possible from the shore, although he continued his mad rush till less than thirty feet of line remained on his reel.

Forest Lodge was quickly awake and astir. Mr. Gardner was just at the landing for a trip across the lake, when out in front of him came the canoe as if being towed by the great fish, which leaped high into the air. He rushed into Forest Lodge and roused Mr. Cameron and all the rest by beating upon his door and crying, "Get up! Get up! Your fifty-pound maskinonge is hooked, and by a boy!" No further call was needed, and the beach was soon lined with a score of fishermen and their wives, hastily and some of them grotesquely dressed.

Meanwhile, Lee and Carl had begun working together to regain the line that had been run out. The victory could never have come to the young fisherman but for the masterly way in which Carl handled the canoe. He made it almost a club of Lee. It moved with his motion, always responsive, always steady.

When the fish went out toward the open lake, the boat went with him, that he might go as far as he would. When he made a wild rush for the shore, the paddle sent the boat off at an angle to his course, that the steel rod might exert a pull sidewise, and thus turn him from his course, and back toward the open lake.

And all this time, Lee was putting on his tackle all the strain that he dared, holding the line so taut that his arm ached before the fight had been on ten minutes—and it lasted fifty-five.

When Old Muskie would leap frantically into the air, fiercely shaking himself, down would go the tip of the rod, clear below the surface of the water; and when he would "sound," the tip of the rod pulled upward relentlessly. Whatever the direction of the rushes of the big fish, always the skilled hand and wiry arm of Lee Henly were ready to baffle and turn aside, to hold back and to weary.

"Pretty fight!" said Herbert Gerish to Mr. Cameron, who was watching in silence, but with keen admiration.

"Fine!" said Mr. Cameron. "Never saw a better."

"Think he'll land the fish?" asked John Newby.

"If he does not now, he is bound to do it some day," replied Mr. Cameron. "That fish might just as well give it up now as any time. I know Lee Henly."

Indeed, it began to look as if victory was near. Slowly the rushes of the maskinonge were becoming less fierce. Carl had the gaff at hand for Lee when he was ready for it. Lee, fearful of a rush under the boat, dared not work the fish round for Carl to gaff, but kept him at the end of the boat where he himself might use the big hook.

But what he had feared came to pass. The big maskinonge did make a run under the boat. He was straight in front, when with a lightning-like dash he made a half-circle and went under the boat from the side.

With a quick motion of arm and wrist, Lee threw the end of the rod over the prow of the canoe. It was all there was to do, but the rod would surely have struck the end of the boat, and something would probably have broken and the fish escaped, had not Carl, with a mighty stroke of the paddle, backed the canoe so quickly that Lee was almost thrown overboard. But the fish was saved.

The fight was nearly over. Gradually they forced the maskinonge toward the sandy beach. Mr. Cameron had got a big, long-handled gaff-hook, and now, forgetful of his rheumatism, waded out waist-deep into the water. There was a brief but decisive struggle that went hopelessly against the fish, and Mr. Cameron gaffed Old Muskie and dragged him ashore.

Lee and Carl stepped out on the beach, both of them on the verge of collapse.

There was a great fish supper at Forest Lodge that night. The skin, head, tail and fins of Old Muskie were carefully preserved and sent to the best taxidermist in Chicago; but there was enough left of his fifty-three pound body for the company gathered about the big "Oak Hall" dining-table. On the right of Mr. Cameron sat Lee Henly, and on the left, Carl Mills. Mr. Cameron and the Forest Lodge people were jubilant. Carl found a fifty-dollar bill under his plate, and Lee found a check for one hundred dollars. And as the meal progressed, the story of the capture of Old Muskie was told substantially as I have told it to you.

There is little more to tell. I might tell you about how Lee Henly worked his way through college, after the catching of Old Muskie had given him his start. I could tell you of his work to-day as general manager of the business house of Cameron, Page & Co., of Chicago. But that would be the story of Lee Henly, and I started out to tell you nothing but the story of Old Muskie, whose mounted body is now in the private office of Mr. Cameron himself, where Lee Henly sees it every day.—Youth's Companion.

Wisconsin Man's Odd Will.

One of the shortest wills ever written was drawn by the late Joseph Hess, of Beloit, and reads as follows: "I am in my right mind. I will my right to Annie Hess, my wife. I give everything in her hands, fifty acres of land, two horses, two cows. She has the right to sell if she wants to. She can give the children a dollar if she wants to."

The will was signed by Hess and two witnesses. It was lying around the house for nearly two years before Mrs. Hess realized it had any value. —Beloit correspondence Milwaukee Wisconsin.

Biggest Man in Parliament.

The tallest member of the new Parliament will probably be found to be Douglas B. Hall, the Unionist representative for the Isle of Wight, who is no less than six feet five inches in height. He is run very close, however, by Sir Randolph Baker, the new Unionist for North Dorset, who is one-half inch shorter. Sir Owen Phillips, the Liberal member for Pembroke, is one of three brothers—Lord St. Davids is among the number—whose average height is six feet four and three-quarter inches.—Baily's Magazine.

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

Sleep in the City.

By William Hemmingway.

Is it possible to obtain eight or nine hours' sleep every night in the great and noisy city? Surely it is. The man or woman who pretends that this is impossible is either a victim of self-deception or a very rare invalid. Let us consider a few cases in New York, the biggest and noisiest city in America. There are living in that city some half-million or more of men who work as day laborers, mechanics, etc., and who sleep as soundly in tenements in the most congested districts as in the equally noisy outskirts of the city. Any cases of neurasthenia or insomnia among them? Not to any great extent. Of course their hard manual labor gives them a fine appetite, their means are small, and their diet therefore plain, and the good, honest fatigue resulting from a day of physical toil sends them swiftly into sleep that restores to them abounding vigor next day.

It is not so long since the eight-oared crew of Columbia University won the intercollegiate championship of all America at Poughkeepsie on the Hudson, and several times since then the crews of this university have finished second in the great struggle, so close up with the leaders that spectators could not tell who had won. Yet these young athletes lived during nearly all the period of training in the busiest, noisiest city in America, and if they had not taken plenty of sleep they could not have made such a splendid showing against the crews of Cornell, Pennsylvania, Syracuse, Wisconsin, Georgetown, etc. Moreover, the champion amateur eight-oared crew of America today is that of the New York Athletic Club, made up of young men most of whom were born in or near the big town and who earn their daily bread by hard work in the sky-scraper district. At every national regatta for years the crews of this club have won one or more championships, competing against the ablest crews from all parts of this country and Canada. Does the strain, the noise, the bustle, the crowd excitement of the metropolis afflict these young athletes with insomnia or neurasthenia? What a joke! City-born, city-bred, city workers, they are splendid types of the clean, normal, well-balanced athlete. And whether they are living at home in the noisy city or for a few weeks preceding a race at quiet Travers Island, Coach Giannini always sees to it that they sleep eight or nine hours every night, varying the amount to meet the needs of each individual.—Harper's Weekly.

Helping Italian Children.

By Henry V. Andrews.

THE Italian House of the Children's Aid Society is at Five Points, in the heart of the downtown East Side Italian district, a stone's throw from Mulberry Bend, once a synonym for congestion, misery and crime, now the site of one of the best of the small parks that afford breathing space for New York's tenement population. Founded in Leonard street about fifty years ago as the Italian Industrial School, last autumn the school removed to two large buildings formerly occupied by the Five Points House of Industry, and opened a new epoch in its history as the social center of the greatest Italian colony in the world. The old Leonard street school had for many years maintained day classes for the children of Italian parents who were too poor to clothe their little ones well enough to send them to the public schools, even if many of the children had not been too backward, by reason of their ignorance of English, to profit by the instructions given in those schools. The school not only helped to clothe these children decently, but also furnished a hot midday dinner every school day. It also provides instructions in evening classes in carpentry, cooking, dress-making, embroidery, English, Italian and gymnasium work. On its removal to the new location in Worth street, the day classes were continued on the same lines as before, but the work of the evening classes was developed into that of a trade school and social center. This resulted in the addition of certain classes, such as those in power sewing machinery, English stenography, Italian stenography, typewriting, printing, sign painting, and the establishment of a model flat and the general housekeeping training naturally associated with it, of a "business boys' club," and many social activities. Twelve hundred pupils—men, women and children—are enrolled, representing five or six thousand Italians directly reached by the formal and informal teachings of the House, and perhaps fifty thousand of the alien community more or less indirectly influenced.—Leslie's Weekly.

King Edward's Status.

By Charles Johnston.

KING EDWARD, in verbal theory, is almost as absolute as his all-conquering ancestor William the Norman. He is still, in theory, the executive head of the nation, governing through secretaries and ministers, like the Secretary of State for War or Foreign Affairs, or the Home Secretary. The very name of minister implies that they are the king's men. All acts of the ministry are, in theory, the king's acts. Similarly, the king is the fountain of justice throughout the realm. Every criminal trial is, in theory, a suit between "our sovereign lord the king, and the prisoner at the bar." And, finally, in the king resides the sanction of all legislation. It is in receiving the king's signature that a bill is transmuted into an act and becomes law.

Thus much in verbal theory. In reality, the king, though now powerless to do aught against the nation, is very powerful in union with the nation. He symbolizes its life and continuity, holds the balance between contending houses and parties, and stands at the head of the nation's social life. He is the chief of an aristocracy which has done much for the cultured life of mankind, evolving an ideal of urbane and gracious life, founded on service to the realm.—Harper's Weekly.

Give Investors a Square Deal

By President Brown, of the New York Central Railroad.

THE GREAT increase in cost of living is caused very largely by the tremendous increase in the price of everything raised on the farm. In spite of the fact that this great increase in the cost of these prime necessities of life has increased the cost of labor fully thirty-three per cent, by economies in administration, operation and disposing of their product, the great corporations (or "trusts," if you please) are maintaining average prices lower than obtained a decade ago, and by these same economies and methods are yearly increasing their sales abroad, offsetting to a great extent our rapidly diminishing exports of agricultural products, and to this extent preserving our balance of trade. I know intimately and have known for years many, perhaps most, of the men who, beginning in a small way, have built up these great industries; and I know of no more law-abiding, patriotic, high-minded men in all the citizenship of this great nation than they. I know that it is the desire and determination of those who direct the affairs and are responsible for the policies of some of the largest of these interests to obey the law not only in its letter, but in its spirit, whenever a definite interpretation shall have been placed upon it by the court that can determine these questions.—Leslie's.

Oregon's Lake of the Clouds.

One of the wonders of Oregon is Crater Lake, a remarkable body of deep water occupying the immense crater of an extinct volcano in the Cascade Mountains of Oregon. It has been suggested that this mountain was once one of the loftiest in America, but that, ages ago, its summit fell in. The heart of the mountain is now occupied by a lake of exquisitely blue water whose greatest depth is 2,000 feet. The lake is 6 miles long by about 4 1/2 miles in width, and is completely encircled by precipitous walls, varying in height from 1,000 to 2,000 feet above the water. The greatest elevation of the crater rim above sea level is 8,200 feet. Out of the lake rises a volcanic cone, called Wizard Island, 840 feet high. When it shall have been rendered a part of access Crater Lake is expected to rank among the wonders of natural scenery, with the Yellowstone and Yosemite valleys and the Grand Canyon of Colorado.—Harper's Weekly.