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DIAMOND LAKE PROBLEM

By CHARLES V. STANTON

Diamond lake, one of Oregon's principal tourist attractions, is being taken over by trash fish and is ceasing to lure vacationists.

Once the world's largest rainbow trout egg-taking station, the lake has become so depleted that limit catches are few and far between and continued decline is certain unless improvement methods are devised.

The value of good fishing as a tourist attraction is amply demonstrated at Diamond lake. Heretofore vacationists thronged to the lake and remained for long periods of time. This season, however, the percentage of "one-nighters" has grown until it includes a majority rather than a small minority.

It is a sad commentary on sportsmanship that the damage to the lake was brought about by anglers and that everyone must suffer because of vandalism by a few—just as the majority of real sportsmen are barred from fine fishing and hunting grounds by "No Trespass" signs because a few people have no respect for property rights.

Diamond lake has been wrecked by roach, a fresh-water fish of the carp family, closely related to the chubs which coastal water anglers know so well.

Roach minnows were brought from Klamath lakes to be used as live bait for Diamond lake rainbows. Some escaped, but others were deliberately dumped into the lake by anglers who had minnows left after a day's fishing. Being extremely prolific, the roach have increased to the point where they are exhausting all bottom feed, destroying insect hatches, thus ruining fly fishing, and starving out the natural trout spawn, as well as game fish under legal size planted in the lake.

Efforts have been made to control the increasing roach population by poisoning. The small trash fish school by the thousands in shallow water during the heat of the day. The poison, a form of rotenone, derived from derris root and cube root, is spread between the fish and deep water. When the small fish come in contact with this poison, it causes an inflammation of the gills and they are quickly suffocated. So many roach are being killed by this method that even the gulls and game fish can't dispose of all the carcasses and at times portions of the beach become untenable because of the stench. Yet roach population is increasing. Few game fish have been killed, although the poison must be most skillfully used if game fish are to be saved.

The game commission is considering a proposal to lower the level of the lake about 20 feet, reducing the 1000-acre water area to about one-third its normal size, and then poison out all the fish remaining, leaving the water barren of fish life. Lowering the lake would be necessary to provide capacity for exhaustion of the poison before water again started flowing through the outlet. Otherwise the poison would be carried into the North Umpqua river and would cause untold damage. It is believed the effects of the poison would have worn off by the time the lake was refilled, if the level were first reduced as planned.

The commission probably would not hesitate to adopt this drastic plan if it could be assured that no roach would escape, but there still is danger that some might not be reached and the whole job would have to be done over again at some future date. As the cost would be enormous, it would not be good policy if repetition should be required.

It would be the plan, of course, to seine out as many game fish as possible and remove them to holding ponds, pending return to a clean lake. Heavy restocking also would be required in subsequent years. Scientists believe the job could be done between seasons so that angling would not be materially affected.

An alternate proposal is that the game commission stock the lake each year with 50,000 or more legal sized fish. The annual take by anglers is around 30,000 fish, thus 50,000 rainbows would leave an annual balance. Game fish in the lake seem to be in healthy condition, as they feed on the carcasses of the poisoned fish. The poison is not injurious except through external contact, so trout are not harmed by eating fish killed through present control methods.

The game commission now is puzzled as to whether to continue the existing practice, supplementing it with an extensive planting program, or experiment with the more drastic plan advocated by some of its scientists. Either course will prove enormously expensive, but any expense would be justified by the value of the lake as a tourist asset.

Turkey To Cost Less This Year, Nation Assured

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23.—(P)—Housewives got good news Monday for their Thanksgiving and Christmas menus.

Turkeys should be plentiful and cost less.

The Agriculture department said the 1949 crop will be the second biggest in the nation's history and the biggest since the war. This promises lower prices.

Peru Breaks Relations With Cuban Government

LIMA, Peru, Aug. 22.—(P)—Peru broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba yesterday.

Salve



Scrapes from the MENDING BASKET

By Viahnett S. Martin

Along about now there is a very busy person on an apple ranch in Hood River valley. She isn't picking apples, however. She did that, too, in the war when no help was available. But after the fifteen-hundredth box she went to the hospital. And that gave her her start on the book she wrote about the now-famous Uncle Monte. The deadline for her second book is very soon.

When she collected the material for "The Trail Led North" she had so much that the publisher said "Keep everything before and after Astoria for another book." So all during the breathless whirl which authorship of a successful book plunged her into, she was busy on the second of what is to be a trilogy. Book number two is tentatively titled "Them Was the Days," a title of special interest when you consider the author is an ex-teacher of English, and ex-dean of women at Multnomah college. But she learned a lesson in her first book. She had the manuscript nearly completed and something seemed wrong. . . . "It wasn't Uncle Monte's story," said

Martha Ferguson McKeown, "it was just my story, telling about Uncle Monte. Since he had little formal education his speech is not always grammatical. Well, I re-wrote the book, and then it was Uncle Monte's own story. . . ."

Mrs. McKeown is a delightful person. We had a most enjoyable visit with her and with her husband, Archie, who makes guns as a hobby, and is likely to be a professional photographer since their trip to Alaska quickened his interest in that work. He also spends a lot of time driving his favorite author around the country when she has speaking dates. "This time-business is really confusing," said Mrs. McKeown across the tea-table in her lovely ranch home. "Archie and I found we had nearly an hour to kill, not long ago. Then when we thought it about the right time to put in our appearance we discovered we were an hour late, according to their time—and I was the guest speaker!"

You would never have guessed our hostess was expecting a family party of 14 for the week-end, the first ones due any minute.

Editorial Comment

From The Oregon Press

WHERE THE BIRDS ARE (The Oregonian)

The other day we received a letter from D. M. Murch, of Roseburg, and it made us feel sad—a sort of "days that come no more" feeling. "Where are all the birds?" asked Mr. Murch, who has spent all his 78 years in Oregon. "The woods used to be full of birds and bird music—but now everything is silent." So we called a naturalist, a professional one, a dweller in Oregon since early boyhood, and we explained Mr. Murch's pensive rejection, as nearly as we might, and over the telephone we heard the naturalist sigh gustily. "My diagnosis," he said, "is that Mr. Murch has the same trouble you and I have. He's getting old. It is then," continued the naturalist, "you find yourself remembering the times when all the grass was green, and every goose was a swan—poetically speaking, of course. Where are all the birds of our boyhood? It is my business to know, you might say. I think the birds are plentiful as ever, and in some cases more so."

There are just about as many mourning doves in Oregon as there were when McKinley was president, said the naturalist, taking up one item of the complaint. As for grouse and valley quail, did not the Oregon game commission distribute an unprecedented amount of grain last winter for the relief of such game birds? And robins? Man alive! There never were so many robins in Oregon, in grandpa's day, as there are now. One of our native quail, the mountain variety, perhaps is losing ground, but the difference in numbers may be a cyclic variation. The bob white? This bird is an introduced species and any discussion of its present and past in our state scarcely is pertinent to the issue. Ducks and geese are more than holding their own of late years, and it seems certain that expert management will insure their security. If by the pigeon, Mr. Murch means the band-tail, said the naturalist, this bird still is abundant in season where there is natural food. The Denny

or China pheasant, is, of course, hunted to the approximate limit of its capacity, and we can expect no more of it than this.

So there you are, Mr. Murch. It is the naturalist's attempt to induce a happier view. Why, you'd the naturalist—a good part of whose business is birds and their habits—there are even more nummingbirds these recent years than ever there were when he had a big toe in a rag and a stone bruise on the other heel. We are glad to have served in this matter.

And now, one last word. Less than a year ago this page lamented the sad scarcity, as it seemed, of the meadowlark in western Oregon—just as D. M. Murch laments it in the southern region. In no more time than it took for the mails to carry the letters we had reliable testimony of the prevalence of meadowlarks in sundry parts of the western area. We sympathize with our Roseburg friend, we do, indeed, yet we can but believe that the birds are holding up rather well. We think that schoolboys would confirm this.

RUMORS FLYING IN CALIFORNIA AGAIN (Astorian Budget)

Every year, about this time, someone down in California seems to start rumors that all boats are gone and all housing accommodations sold out for the annual Astoria salmon derby. This year, as usual, the chamber of commerce has to put out information to deny such rumors. The salmon derby is extremely fortunate in having a tremendous supply of boats available, in the glimmet fleet, indeed, yet we can but believe that the birds are holding up rather well. We think that schoolboys would confirm this.

The first people to devote themselves chiefly to commerce were the Phoenicians, who developed their fishing boats into a commercial fleet.

School Bill In Congress Due For K. Of C. Attack

PORTLAND, Aug. 20.—(P)—The Knights of Columbus convention was prepared today to adopt a firm policy of insisting on federal school aid to parochial pupils if such aid is given public school pupils.

Delegates were planning to write a stinging condemnation of the Barden bill now in Congress. Supreme Knight John E. Swift, Boston judge, had made the topic the theme of his address to the 67th annual gathering. He was re-elected yesterday and was expected to have a hand in writing the resolution today.

Archbishop J. Francis A. McIntyre of Los Angeles said yesterday that the slogan—"separation of church and state"—being used to fight federal aid for parochial schools had no meaning. He said it was a "bugaboo designed to effect legislation that will bring about the compulsory education of our children in public schools."

Referring to the slogan and any possible state church, the archbishop said "If we may judge from the reaction to the recent controversy over the Barden bill, the conclusion would be that the union certainly would not be with the Catholic church."

"It is a slogan that has crept into even the supreme court," he said. He referred to the McCollum case, which involved releasing children from school for re-

ligious education, and said: "The court, or at least a minority of it, endeavored to introduce personal opinions into the law using a figure of speech for a rule of law, and using the first amendment as a springboard."

The archbishop said the constitution says only that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise there-

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Strategy Meetings Planned By CVA Supporters

CENTRALIA, Wash., Aug. 23.—(P)—The league for the Columbia Valley administration has mapped strategy for a series of congressional field hearings on the CVA to begin two weeks after Congress adjourns.

At a meeting of the league executive board Saturday, religious education, and said: "The court, or at least a minority of it, endeavored to introduce personal opinions into the law using a figure of speech for a rule of law, and using the first amendment as a springboard."

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Mitchell (D-Wash.) suggested Sept. 19 as a possible date. He said funds for the hearings have been granted by Congress. Attending the conference were E. M. Weston and J. T. Marr of the Washington and Oregon Federations of Labor, respectively, Henry P. Carstensen and Morton Tompkins, masters of the Washington and Oregon State granges, and Roy W. Atkinson, regional director of the CIO.

The group said the Senate House Public Works committee would be asked to hold hearings at "as many points as practicable in the Columbia basin."

A telegram sent to Senate committee chairman Chavez (D-MN) said the issue "is the most important one ever to face the people of the Pacific Northwest, and we believe they deserve a full say."

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