

## LAKES LOWERED IN VAIN HOPE TO RECLAIM LAND

Many Bodies of Water of Considerable Value Destroyed by Drainage.

Unless remedial measures are taken in the immediate future, Indiana, the lake State of the corn belt, stands in danger of having all of the prime possessions of the Commonwealth taken from her. Possessions that bring annually thousands of dollars to communities fortunate enough to be situated adjacent to lakes. This is the statement of officials of the State department of conservation, who, for the past year, have kept in close touch with the lake and dredge ditches situated in the State.

Drainage ditches and other drainage projects in northern Indiana, in addition to costing individuals and the State large sums of money, have threatened to lower the level of the water tables of the State, and in many instances have appreciably lowered the level of many lakes so that cottagers and lake keepers about the lakes have appealed to the department of conservation to restore the water level in order that the lakes may not be destroyed altogether.

Unknown to many persons, perhaps, the level of many of Indiana's largest lakes is maintained through means of a dam, constructed at the outlet. By this means, only by an overflow of water running into the lake can the level be changed, and it is impossible for the level to be reduced.

Many years ago it was a popular idea among farmers in the lake region that if they could reduce some of the lakes to a lower level, through drainage projects, much valuable land could be reclaimed. Accordingly many drainage projects were carried out, and the level of many of the State's most beautiful lakes was reduced greatly.

The results, however, were due for a great awakening. And they got it. After their land had been reclaimed, they found it was practically worthless, as far as raising crops on it was concerned. They simply had much barren ground, most of it sand, on which it was impossible to raise any sort of produce. Now the land is either covered with cattails or is swampy or like barren.

Many appeals have been made to department of conservation officials to have dams constructed at the outlet of many of the lakes that have been so drained, thus restoring the water to its old level.

Some of the lakes that have been lowered, and for which appeals have been made to the department are: Winona and Lake James, Kosciusko County; Silver Lake, Steuben County, and Dewar Lake, in Kosciusko County.

The department of conservation is more than willing that dams be constructed at these lakes, but the department is unable to do the work. It is unable for two reasons. First, because it has no money; second, the statutes do not give the department authority for such work.

When this had been explained, many persons have asked why should the local financing of the damming project, and then have the lakes turned over to the exclusive care of the department in order that the water levels may be protected.

The financing of the building of a dam would have to be borne by the township in which the lake is situated, or by the county, through the county commissioners, according to the department. While the department now has control over water levels, it is to a certain extent the trustees do not define clearly to what extent this control reaches. Therefore it is powerless to act.

The value of the construction of these dams is infinite. There are many reasons why they should be constructed in cases where the water level of a lake is threatened with reduction. First, the beauty of the lake is altered. There have been beautiful lake surrounded with large strips of barren desert land, or with swampy land that makes approach to the water unsightly, if not impossible, would be a deplorable condition.

Then, there is the pecuniary value in the lake. Towns that are fortunate enough to be situated near a large body of water have been removed from their grasp. It is the means of thousands of dollars annually being spent in the community. Many persons, in recent years, more than ever before, have constructed cottages, which they rent to outing parties from various parts of this and other States. Hundreds of tourists, annually, visit the lake regions of Indiana, bringing with them the capital of the world.

In addition to the monetary value, there is the value of the water as a place of resort to vacationers and fishermen. The lakes of Indiana abound in food and game fishes.

The following statement, taken from an official of the bureau of biological survey of the United States Department of Agriculture, sets forth the value of the destruction of the lake.

"Under proper conditions water farming" of many lakes and ponds and of swamp or marsh areas will yield a distinctly larger return than would the same area drained and used for agriculture. Under intelligent management these areas will yield abundant and varied returns to the community, as indicated in the following brief summary of their productivity:

"1. Food and game fishes.

"2. Wild fowl to be shot for sport and food.

"3. Furs from such furbearing animals as the muskrats, skunks and raccoons, which frequent their borders.

"4. A natural ice supply.

"5. A definite and invaluable help in maintaining the underground water level in various parts of the State, and in helping hold back the run-off of rainfall to prevent excessive erosion and other damage.

"6. Opportunities for healthful and interesting recreation for the citizens of the State.

"7. Where such water areas are included in State parks or reservations they lend themselves to educational uses, and help interest the people in out-of-door life and in the natural resources of the State, thus giving pleasure and animal life, which are such important elements in supplying useful commodities."

Some lakes in Indiana that have been lowered by drainage afford excellent examples of the fallacy of dredge ditching. Round Lake, in Starke County, according to officials of the conservation department, has been lowered to one-fourth of its natural level and area. Some lakes that have had their outlets dammed, in order to maintain their areas and levels, are: Lake James and Fish Lake, Steuben County; Sylvan Lake, Noble County; Round Lake, Whitley County; Wawassee, Webster, Winona, Pappagee and Palestine Lakes, Kosciusko County; Lake Manitow and Bruce Lake, Fulton County; Bass Lake and Koontz Lake, Starke County; Cedar Lake, Lake County, and the Fish Lakes, in LaPorte County.

An area of where drainage projects have affected timber lands and agriculture, is afforded in the Kankakee drainage situation. The Kankakee drainage project also has affected the area and water level of several lakes around Valparaiso.

There are 200 lakes in Indiana, which are natural bodies of water. Of these lakes, Lake Wawassee, in Kosciusko County, is the largest, and Lake Maxinkuckee, in Marshall County, the second largest. The area and level of Lake Wawassee is maintained by means of a dam.

Cost of construction of a dam, according to one of the conservation depart-

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## CLEOPATRA IS PROVIDED WITH PRIVATE BATH



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Cleanliness, Economy, Convenience  
For Sale by all Leading Coal Dealers

Cleopatra and a Glimpse of Her Apartment.

Except for those occupied by the polar bear colony and the five troupes of performing seals, there is but one apartment left in the building. Kingling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows which is fitted with a private bath. This is the glass-front flat where lives the coy, seven-ton hippopotamus, Cleopatra, mascot of the circus zoo.

The animals, however, were due for a great awakening. And they got it. After their land had been reclaimed, they found it was practically worthless, as far as raising crops on it was concerned. They simply had much barren ground, most of it sand, on which it was impossible to raise any sort of produce. Now the land is either covered with cattails or is swampy or like barren.

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When this had been explained, many persons have asked why should the local financing of the damming project, and then have the lakes turned over to the exclusive care of the department in order that the water levels may be protected.

This lady of the Nile is the largest black African specimen ever captured. She will "receive" afternoon and evening when Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Combined exhibit an Indianapolis.

As a result of the consolidation of America's two great circuses there has been produced a menagerie such as has never before toured this country.

In addition, they have re-established their African and Asiatic expeditions, temporarily suspended because of the war. These recently sent the circus over four hundred animals. Among these are a polar bear, a male elephant, black-horned rhinoceros, golden-necked tapir, a black chimpanzee of the Congo region, civet cats, black leopards and a great

number of birds, mammals, reptiles and fish.

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For each time that you arrange correctly you will receive 10 "Points" toward the Ford Sedan or 185 "Points" all for arranging all names correctly. You can gain 60 more "Points" by "Qualifying" your answer. That is, by printing on a card the names you have shown a copy of our paper, *The Rural Weekly*, to five people. The first five persons to "Qualify" will receive a gift from the three judges on the names, style, handwriting and spelling of your answer.

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You will not be asked to subscribe to *The Rural Weekly*, nor spend one penny in order to win. We have given away over 100 autos. You may be the next to win. Write your answer to the puzzle on one side of the paper, name and address in upper right hand corner. You can win—Answer the puzzle now.

The Puzzle Man, *THE RURAL WEEKLY*, St. Paul, Minn.

men officials, would approximate \$500. This expense would be borne by the township or county, and should the lake be turned over to the department all further expense would be borne by the State. However, aid from the department would be given in the damming project.

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