

## A Country Ramble

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On Saturday evening the newsman boarded the east bound train on the C & G. T. railroad, and headed for Pine Lake. At the train he met our well-known and deservedly popular superintendent of the Central Michigan fair-grounds, J.N. Smith also bound for home, and cheerfully yielded to that gentleman's invitation to become his guest for the night.

Arriving at Pine Lake station, soon after 6 o'clock p.m., we walked eastward on the track about 25 rods, where we found the little steamer "Lincoln," owned by the Hardy Brothers, waiting at the head of the canal, recently cut from the lake to the railroad, to convey passengers to Nemoka (the spiritual camp-ground) and to their own grounds, Pine Lake park. Boarding the neat little boat, which is capable of accommodating about 100 passengers, and is very staunch and swift craft, we were soon landed at the dock of the Nemoka camp-grounds, where we disembarked, and found ourselves in a grove at the north end of the grounds.



The Nemoka purchase consists of a little more than 100 acres of land, bounded on the west by the main road, running north from Okemos to Pine Lake, and meandered by the lake on the east. On the south it reaches a little below the C. & G. T. railway. The lake front is fringed with trees and bushes, and for the greater part is marshy on the edge; but

the ground rises rapidly on the west, presently near the center of the plat a high eminence, from whence it descends slightly towards the west. About 80 acres have long been cleared and converted into fields. They are consequently devoid of shade save at the lake shore, but it is high, and affords a fine view. With the single exception of a lack of shade, which can, of course, be remedied in a few years, there are a large number of beautiful sites for cottages.

North of the fields is a natural grove of 18 acres, where the present camp meeting is being held. The ground has an easy slope for about 80 rods from the road on the west to the lake front. The main entrance is at the southwest corner, and the dock is at the southeast corner. But very little attempt has been made as yet to improve this grove, and most of it is in a state of nature; but it has the possibilities of a beautiful place. There is a plentiful growth of young hickories all over it, which would soon make ample shade if the large timber was cut out, and those exposed to the sun.

Three or four cottages have been erected on the south side of this grove, and Mr. Shaw has erected one at the main entrance on the west, for an office. A large number of tents also dotted the grounds, and a large boarding booth had been erected, as well as a stable for horses. A well has also been placed on the grounds. Near the center of the grove a cottage with folding doors, by which it can be thrown entirely open towards the west, and with a wide veranda in front, has been erected for a speakers' stand and seats have been placed on the gentle rise to accommodate the audiences. The whole thing is yet in a crude state, but one can easily see what it might be made by skill, capital and enterprise.

Taking a skiff, at about 8:30 P.M., with our genial companions, we pulled across the western arm of the lake, enjoying the cool evening breeze, and in about ten minutes were landed at Pine Lake grove, the popular pleasure resort of the Hardy Brothers. We were hospitably received by the popular hosts, and were soon seated at a bountifully laden table, enjoying, among other good things, fish which were swimming in the clear waters of the lake but a short time previous to our arrival. Even at this hour the grounds were yet filled with visitors.

Leaving these pleasant grounds and driving north about a mile and a half, we reached the home of Mr. Smith a pleasant, cozy farm house, two stories in height, located on a slight eminence on the west side of the main road. The house and surroundings are fitted with a view of neatness and comfort, and wear that air of hearty hospitality which is so prominent a trait in the character of the owner. After a brief and pleasant chat, we retire to obtain such rest as a weary and well fed editor can alone enjoy.

At about 8 o'clock a.m. on Sunday morning, we were again greeted by our host, and soon were seated at such a breakfast as is enjoyed at no table save that of the prosperous American farmer. It was presided over by Mrs. Smith, a lady possessing in an eminent degree, those social and hospitable characteristics which make the farm homes of this country so pleasant to the stranger.

After doing ample justice to the meal, we entered a buggy with our friend, and proceeded to explore his domain, which is located in the southeast corner of Bath township, Clinton county. It is more than a score of years since Mr. Smith located in this section, purchasing a large quantity of land, much of which, at that time, was regarded as quite inferior, and some of it irreclaimable. But to the thorough training of a farmer, Mr. Smith had added a good practical education, a good physique, strong common sense, and a love for his business. He reclaimed his first farm, purchased more, and has continued to until he now owns 1,000 acres in a single tract extending around the east side of Pine lake. Of this tract about 400 acres have been placed in condition for cultivation, and they are among the most productive lands in that section.

Mr. Smith early turned his attention to stock-raising, and has followed it to the exclusion of grain raising for market. He was one of the first breeders of Galloways in the west, and many of the most celebrated animals mentioned in the American Galloway herd book, were bred, imported, or first purchased by him. He is regarded as one of the best authorities on these animals in the west. He has at present 20 beautiful specimens of this breed.

It must not be inferred that this farm is not adapted to mixed farming. There are portions of it which bear remarkably heavy crops of grain and on a beautiful hill in the rear of his residence he has a choice orchard of 1,200 bearing trees. A portion, however, is like Chandler farm, reclaimed marsh, and peculiarly adapted to grazing purposes. There are also, upon this tract three small but beautiful lakes, fed by springs, as clear as crystal, and stocked with an abundance of fish. These afford an ample supply of pure water for stock at all seasons of the year. A portion of this tract is covered with good timber, sufficient for fencing purposes. There are but few more pleasant homes than that of our genial friend, Smith.

Having completed our inspection of the farm, we returned to Pine lake park, arriving there at 10 o'clock A.M. Here we met a large company, among them many Lansing acquaintances and the grounds presented a lively appearance. The lake was dotted here and there with sail boats and skiffs, containing sailing and fishing parties, and the steamer, well loaded, made regular trips across the lake, stopping at Nemoka on each trip.

Stepping aboard, we soon landed at the camp-ground, where exercises were in progress in the grove. The entire grounds presented an animated appearance, knots of well dressed people being scattered all over the grove, and a good audience gathered at the stand. Over 20 vehicles passed through the gate, but people were continually moving, riding upon the steamer, and going in skiffs from Nemoka, to Hardy's and returning, it is impossible to estimate their numbers.

Owing to illness of Mr. Burnham, who was expected to be present, the exercises were somewhat marred, and in the afternoon a succession of heavy showers broke up the meeting entirely. It ceased, however, at about 5 o'clock p.m., and an impromptu meeting was held in the evening, which was well attended. The meeting is setting into shape, and large additions are expected during the week. An interesting programme is promised for next Sunday.