

BIG SPRING GIVEN PUBLICITY IN DETROIT SUNDAY TIMES

Michigan folk might as well start practising the pronunciation of "Kitch-iti-kipi." For a secret place of mystery and beauty has become, through the generosity of wealthy citizens, a state park, and Kitch-iti-kipi will presently be as well-known as the Pictured Rocks, the Soo Locks or Belle Isle.

When the conservation commission visited Grand Island recently, Executive Chairman William H. Loutit announced that the state had come into possession of the Big Spring of Manistique. That meant little to outsiders except an awkward name to fumble with.

It was John M. Bush, land agent of the Cleveland Cliffs Iron, who volunteered to approach the executors of the Book and Palm estates in Detroit, with the proposal to present the Big Spring to the state. It could not be purchased; in the first place, it was not on the market, and its value could not be appraised by any real estate body, and, in the second place, no state funds were available to buy it.

Members of the Book and Palm families, in Detroit, eagerly fell in with Mr. Bush's suggestion and, under the direction of P. J. Hoffmaster, superintendent of state parks, Kitch-iti-kipi will be introduced to the general public.

For half a century woodsmen have spread the story of the marvelous spring and residents of the upper peninsula have made long pilgrimages to feast their imaginations on the wonders of it. The Indians for countless generations venerated the place as the abode of spirits, good and bad, and tossed into the depths of the crystal pool their offerings to the gods. The pale faces have followed the Indian example and almost every visitor drops a coin into the water and makes a wish. A sizeable fortune must have been swallowed up into the seething sands at the bottom of the spring.

The spring is in the heart of a fir forest and there is no hint of its presence until the visitor emerges from the dense brush along the bank and stands at the water's edge. The pool is a short city block from rim to rim—about 4040 feet. Its waters are miracu-

lously transparent, more so, even than crystalline Lake Superior. The bottom of the spring, 50 feet or more down, seems, because of the magnifying quality of the water, that a coin, after it sinks to the bottom and reposes for a few seconds on the white, bubbling sand looks as though it were within reach.

Schoolcraft County officials have provided a sturdy raft on which visitors embark. The sensation, as the raft is paddled away from the bank, is eerie in the extreme. The effect is of floating without sound or effort, in the upper levels of the air. About is the circle of sky framed by the tree wall and beneath is the diamond clarity of the pool. There is no break between air and water—both elements are like liquid light. It is only when rain is falling that the Big Spring really looks like water.

Big Spring was not named Kitch-iti-kipi by some "below the straits" school ma'am in imitation of the Indian. The Objibwas bestowed the name, nobody knows how long ago. It is said to mean "heaven's mirror" or "mirror of the evening star." There is, of course, an Indian legend accompanying the spring. A maiden teasing her lover, when he was his canoe and go home to her folks, insisted on jumping from an overhanging cedar. The cedar broke and the maiden dropped smack on her sweetie, tree and all. She escaped drowning, but the next day the brave was visible, impaled on a branch, far beneath the surface. There was, of course nothing else for the maiden to do but to pine away for a time, and then leap into the spring herself carrying her love's bow, arrow and tomahawk with her to present to him in the happy hunting grounds.

Kitch-iti-kipi is five miles north of U. S. 2, and near Indian Lake above the city of Manistique. It has remained off the beaten track for generations, and Superintendent Hoffmaster will make no "improvements" which will in any way detract from the wild charm of the setting.

(From The Detroit Sunday Times)

"Kitch-iti-ki-pi," the Wonder Spring



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