

The early settlers were not good huntsmen, nor expert fishermen. They had to learn these high arts by practice. In those days there were no breech-loading arms. If a man could get hold of a flint-lock fusee from an Indian for a little barter, and use that for his gun, he was doing exceedingly well. It was a long time before any white man proved himself smart enough to shoot a deer; it was said that because they had the buck fever¹ so badly, their steadiness of nerve was not sufficient to bring down such game, although the woods were filled with it. There were deer in great abundance, prairie chickens, partridges, ducks and geese. At that time there were no quails or rabbits,—I always supposed for the reason that the wolves and foxes destroyed them.

The streams were full of fish. One of the most useful and substantial articles of diet was the sucker, which was found in Rock river, in the Crawfish, and in the lakes, where they could be obtained in wagon loads, almost. Reaching the lake a little late in the fall we of course did not "catch onto" the ways of the fish, but the following spring the great wealth of our lakes and streams was most singularly unfolded to us. Our log house was upon the banks of the stream. A little way from the house was the log stable, and near this stable a small dam had been constructed to raise the water on a level with the banks so the horses could drink more easily. It was spring time. The snow had gone but the ice was not all out of the lake, and the water in the creek was singing merrily as it proceeded on its way. Just at sundown, one day, my younger brother² and myself went to water the horses, and we went to this rise of water above the dam where they were in the habit of drinking. In looking into the stream we discovered that its bottom was literally covered with very large fish. I called out to my elder brother Abe,³ to come there and see what all that meant. He at once took in the situation and ran to the stable, and soon came back with pitchforks, and we commenced sticking

¹ Pioneer slang for the species of nervousness engendered in amateur hunters by the sudden appearance of big game.—Ed.

² Oliver A. Keyes, now of Merasha, born in Northfield, Vt., 1831.—Ed.

³ Abel Keyes, now of Menasha, born in Northfield, Vt., 1832.—Ed.