

Field Sports at Home and Abroad

WHAT WOULD YE GIVE?

I.
What would ye give to be with me
In my woodland home, where I am free
From worry and care, with children and wife—
Ah! What would ye give for this country life?
Say, you of the city! who sweat and toil,
Come back to Nature and God's free soil;
Among the beasts and the birds to live—
Ah! slaves of the sweat-shops! What would
ye give?

II.
What would ye give to be with me
In the brook, with the water up to my knee,
With rod and reel, as I cast about?
Ah! what would ye give to see the trout?
As he plunges and leaps, his freedom to gain,
Your hot blood goes rushing through every
vein.

III.
What would ye give to see the fun,
As I go forth with my dog and gun?
Returning soon with a full game-bag,
A pleasant change from your city drag,
Where you forfeit your soul for the greed of
wealth,

IV.
And you and your children are broken in
health.
Ah! come with me to the woods and hills,
Where we know no pains, or aches, or ills.

V.
What would ye give to come with us,
Away from the noises and city fuss—
In our log cabin among the trees,
Among the birds and the humming bees?
Beautiful Nature! this is the place
Where man meets his Maker, face to face.
His work you will find here on every hand,
Come! abide with me in this wonderful land.

VI.
What would ye give for a home like mine,
Cozily nestling 'neath the pine?
'Tis humble, I know, for all of that,
I would not change for your city flat.
Ah! look in the glass at your poor worn face
And come with me to my country place,
Among the beasts and the birds to live—
Ah! Slaves of the Dollar, What would ye
give?

—Marvin O. Jenkins, in Sports Afield.

THE DEMON SALMON

For a man ungifted in word painting to describe Søndefjord were a vain task. In Scandinavia are many scenes of grandeur prospect—there, indeed, no endless vistas of snow-capped ridges meet the eye, no expanses of river and fjord fill the onlooker with that sense of infinite vastness, so often noted by Norwegian tourists and their guide books. From Søndefjord house to the fjord the river flows in clear, steady stream over a pebbly bottom—an almost uniform depth of some 4 ft., an almost uniform breadth of some 80 yards. Here and there a turn, here and there a few big boulders break the continuity sufficiently to earn various stretches names of their own as pools. From the grass banks the land on either side rises, fir and larch covered, to the grey-headed hills above wood level. The house itself, standing out in the sunshine green and red, seems as it were the end of the valley, which converges to this point. No one driving up from the sea could divine the scene beyond the house. It were as if nature had in an hour of mischief played some trick; what is a quiet, rippling stream below is above a mighty cataract, roaring and hissing down through a deep-cut channel, so dark that in it a man may count the stars at midday through the narrow crevice at the top. Above the gorge is the Fosse, beneath which the force of the impetuous torrent has eaten out of solid rock a mighty basin.

However, I must not anticipate, for I did not myself enter the gorge and try fortune on the Fosse pool for some little time after my arrival. If Mons, indeed, had had his way, I never should have gone there, and I really think the very persistence with which he endeavored to keep me to the lower water, and the mysterious manner in which he baulked all questionings as to the chance of a salmon in the Fosse pool, were the mainspring of my attempt. I confess, too, just a suspicion crossed my mind that this pool, where, if salmon came to the Solde, they must be kept a native preserve. And so, with glorious weather and no mean sport, though the season was all too late, I contented myself in the lower valley. With such sport, indeed, no one could fail to be content. Who that has killed on light tackle not one, but some days twelve, some days twenty, sea trout can deny it, more especially when in every score landed a prize of double figures came to the net?

If a hundred men have killed a tale of salmon, not ten have killed a tale of sea trout, and it was one of that ten—yet I longed for the old— and I grew impatient. On the evening of Sept. 4 about 8:30, just as it was getting dusk, I was bringing a very large sea trout to the stand in the first reach below the house. Mons the most gigantic salmon I had ever seen leaped clear out of the stream. The fish fell back with a splash and thud of a ship's boat let drop from her davits. Even the momentary glimpse of the monster as he shot out did not prepare me for the reverberation with which he fell

back on to the water, and I started back. It was all done in a second; the jerk broke the gut; unregretted he went—the sea trout till then so large, so keenly played—and sank back frep, a thing of insignificance. Mons must have performed an extraordinary feat for a middle-aged, sombre peasant—I saw him as I turned on the bank behind, sitting huddled up, with white face and chattering teeth, an image of the blankest terror. Even that panacea "aquavite" failed to restore his equanimity; like a dazed man he walked with me back to the house, and as he went muttered disjointed words. I could only make out that some nets had been injured in the fjord, and that a fisherman had been drowned, and that the "fiend" had played an active part in both occurrences. But for the extreme and real agitation of a brave and kind man, I should have at once dismissed Mons' weird behaviour from my mind, for at the moment I never connected the fish with his odd mutterings about the fiend. The sight, however, of that fish could not be dispelled, and as I sat and smoked I weighed and reweighed him. "Yes," I said to myself, "not one inch under 5 ft. long, 70 lb. at least." Then as my eye rested on the log books—28 in number—dating back to 1865, I thought I would see if there were any record of salmon caught at Solde, and I opened the first.

Under date September I found these entries in Sir A.'s neat handwriting:

Sept. 4, 1865. Lord X. reported seeing a gigantic salmon leap.

Sept. 5. He went up alone to fish the Fosse pool; had not returned as he said he would by five, so went up with Erik and Ole. Men very uneasy at going, filled with crazy superstition about the fiend fish—natives report monster due this year, and accident in Fjord attributed to its visitation.

Awful tragedy—found poor X. drowned, body caught on partly sunk tree at bottom of gorge, brought body back. This is awful—made all arrangements for return.

Sept. 6. Went alone to Fosse pool; no trace of X.'s rod or gaff—no marks to indicate how he was lost. Leaving today.

For the next five years there were no books, they started again 1871, and were consecutive till 1885, when again till 1893 there was a hiatus. I knew that in that year poor Sydney Smith, Sir A.'s nephew, and heir, had been drowned at Solde, and I turned over the page to read the record of his death on the same date, Sept. 5. It was simple—"Sydney drowned Fosse pool." No mention was made of why he went there. Here then, was the reason why Sir A. had not for years asked a guest to Solde, and here too, perhaps, the reason for his having said to me so markedly, "Stick to the sea trout, my boy, and don't even take a salmon rod with you." I had a salmon rod.

Next morning Mons seemed seriously unwell, so I told him to take the carriage and do a commission for me at Flekke. When he had gone I undid my old and trusted salmon rod—a 19 ft. greenheart, seasoned, tough, heavy. I tested the line, 125 yards, well backed, and I tested one of the three casts I had brought. All was in order. Putting into a small tin some six flies—two Jock Scotts, two Dusty Millers, and two Durham Rangers, No. 4 and 5—with a few captain's biscuits and a flask of whisky in my pocket, and an ash-handled clip slung across my shoulders, I started to try issue with a possible salmon, fiend or no fiend.

In all ventures of life a man at times feels an extraordinary confidence—I do not for one moment suggest that such lapses from rational control are trustworthy. But be that as it may, as I walked down from the house a sense of elation, a certainty of a big issue, filled my mind, and I scarce noticed the things around—the splendid sunshine making bare places hot, shaded places cold, or the chattering magpie which mocked me as I passed. Winding a tortuous way through the thick woods, I reached the river bank, and slowly ascended. Above the broken water—half fosse, half rapid—which marks the turn of the Solde river below the house, there is a long stretch which converges at the upper end to a narrow rush of water, classed on nine loo fixed in the rocks on my bank, held by an iron hand against the current, doomed to decay but ever fighting the force of destruction. The bank here afforded an easy but slippery path, and here the sunshine just touched the edge of the stream. Past the neck of the pool I could still pick my way without difficulty, for the water was dead low, and, indeed, for the next quarter of a mile up to the Fosse pool itself no real obstacle barred my passage.

At each step the hillside steepened, and at places but a narrow path had been left by the shrunken river, while looking up it seemed almost as if the trees on either banks hundreds of feet above intertwined. The character of the river was a vivid presentment of unrest; the turbid foam-covered waves of the broken water seemed in their constant restlessness almost peaceful in contrast to the stretches of surface smoothness, which the bubbles and seething eddies of deep turmoil failed to disturb. I saw no place where in my experience a salmon could lie. At last I reached the one pool—the Fosse pool. Here at last I could feel once again the kick of the old rod as the line curled out, and yet, as my eye took in the pool, and its possibilities, I lost for quite a minute the angler's zest. Looking upwards, I saw, if one may apply the epithet, the most vicious waterfall I had ever seen. The river fell over a

precipice some 200 ft. high, and yet it seemed that each 10 ft. or so the rocks protested at the water's licence. Scraps and crags, still unsubdued, hurled the mighty mass of foam at every angle in its descent, so that the mass, though in fact continuous, presented as it were a series of storm-driven breakers on a rocky coast. Nor did the river fall in one current. Three separate torrents, widely separated at the apex, joined into one at the base, and rushed into an abysmal hole, to be hurled back and redivided into seven different streams by a ridge that, barely hidden, seemed like some Titanic dam of old world impotence. Breaking past this barrier, the pool broadened out into an immense basin, moulded out of solid rock, yet strewn with boulders and shingle. So far, also, as the eye could judge, the river basin was like the banks, smooth rock bottom, boulder strewn; and over it one even-swinging current 200 yards across narrowed down to the hissing rapid below. As I got nearer the fall itself, I found the shingle edge stopped, and the further approach was on a narrow ledge, which just gave foothold on the sheer side of the gorge. Here, at first sight unnoticed, a black mass of impenetrable deep water flowed back from a second submerged barrier. As one stood on the ledge it seemed possible, despite the roar of the fosse, to hear the gurgle of this back current return course. Above the crest of the fall, far, far away, the warm sunlight touched the tree tops, deepening the shadow of the chasm, making colder the spray charged air.

After sufficient contemplation of the scene, I prepared for business, and, having refreshed the inner man, I put up a Dusty Miller. On ascending the ledge I had for the first few yards a clear space behind, and with a long line could cast over the backwater underneath me into the nearer current off the barrier. It was just 3 o'clock, as, after some preliminary casts, I got the Dusty Miller fairly out into the stream, and as I did so I wondered where poor Lord X. had slipped. As the fly came round to the back eddy I moved a half step forward and lifted the rod to prevent the line from being drowned. As I took in a few yards of line in preparation for a longer cast, the fly worked to the surface and at that moment a salmon sprang out of the stream; it seemed to yards away, hurled itself sideways over the surface of the water, and turned over my fly. I just had time to steady myself, put my heels down firm, and press against the rock. I believe, had not the fish given me warning, I had fallen, for despite an easy reel, the force of that rush as the fish darted away across the main current was great. It was a very big fish. I had only seen one fish like it, and that was the fish that had jumped the evening before; I still live to see that salmon's peer. Step by step I moved down the ledge, my rod bent double, my line all out, the backing half spent. At last I reached the shingle, and then, till my back ached and my throat grew parched, I played the fish, or rather, the fish played me, for at the end of full three hours I felt the stout greenheart, but a willow wand, and the stout gut like gossamer against the impetuous force of my tireless foe.

God of Battles, it was good!—a bead of sweat in such a fight is a very diamond of health. I had no rest, not a moment, and then, with a rush that left me only about three yards of backing, he shot down stream, and I, hustling over the rocks, followed in mad pursuit, and as I neared the rapid, wondering how I could follow, I heard above the roar of the water a mighty splash. I turned to see him sink in the back current that returned under the ledge. There was no time to regain the belied line with the reel. Hauling in hand over hand, risking tangles and being tripped by my own tackle, I slowly retraced my steps. At last the line was taut again, and then I reeled up; at last, too, the fish had found leisure. This gave me rest; my line was regained; he was still on, for now he began to nag. I had killed heavy fish before on strong tackle and on light and I have often spoken, and heard others speak, of that terrifying shock which the nag of a half-spent fish produces. The nags of that fish beat description. Somehow he upset the angle of the line and rod, for at every other tug his whole weight came on my rod, and the reel gave no line, and then it was not just a tug and a rest, but literally a series of savage nags quick as a cinematograph, alarming as a pom-pom fusillade. Despair almost overcame me; no tackle could stand it. Then he altered his tactics, and inch by inch, so that the reel ticked evenly, almost like a minute gun, he took up my line. Further and further he went in under the ledge. I got to the edge. I placed my hand tight on the line. For the first time in self-preservation I gave him the butt—the full butt. I might as well have bidden the river to stay its course. The line had gone. Yard by yard the backing followed. I glanced at the ledge. There was no alternative. I went up it, and along, and for each foot I went a yard more backing went out. It was very slippery and narrow. My right arm, holding out the rod which doubled back under me, ached; with my left I steadied myself. I moved slowly, and the backing still went out. The ledge grew narrower. A larch tree wedged into a fissure was fixed across the meagre way, and beyond there was no foothold. The tree was strong. I tested it with the left hand, and then put my left leg across and sat. I knew the final issue had come. The cylinder of the reel was barely covered. It still ticked out the remaining coils, but more

slowly. One tick in about twenty seconds, and then it stopped. I wound up, the line came back. I wound quicker and quicker. I got the line with ease. The bend of the rod eased. I had won! won! won! Slowly but surely the pressure had told, and the giant's strength had given way to that yielding but constant force. He slowly left the cavern and came to the outside stream. With new heart and vigour I slipped my leg back from the tree, took the rod in an untired left hand, and, keeping a light but firm pressure, retraced my steps along the ledge, and got back to the shingle below.

I glanced up; the sunlight had left the tree tops; I could see the stars. It had grown very dusky. I measured the pool for a landing place, there was a ledge on my side, where the water flowed in deep current about 30 yards above the rapid. I did not unsling the gaff, but I took the leather off the point. It was 7 o'clock. Once on safe footing with both hands free, I gave the gut the full confidence of the rod's strength. A few brave yards the fish at times ran, but each effort was more feeble and after each he turned. The struggle now was not against strength; it was against weight, and no pressure that I dared apply sufficed even to bring the gut in sight. Deep down the monster rolled over; I could feel him roll lazily, tiredly. Gradually he came to the appointed place, but ever deep under water, and then at last in the darkening gloom I saw a huge trail and then he rolled. Again he dived deep and yet again broke the surface. At last he lay some 20 yards out, head towards the stream. Literally hauling, with rod arched to the water's edge. I tried to turn him, I failed. The down stream caught him sideways, and before I could realize I was rushing madly down the side of the rapid, and the fish, apparently renewed in vigor, was tumbling away before me.

Never shall I forget that wild chase, for chase it was. Three times I fell, and twice I only saved my whole tackle by a few turns of backing. I was sheer fortune that saved me. Seeing nothing but the white edge of the stream, I followed blindly, and at last we reached the stretch above the house. Here was a chance. Getting on equal terms, and with a short line, I guided him towards the bank. He was drowned as dead as ever a fish was drowned, and, remembering the fir log, I guided him to it. Here was a small backwater. I unslipped the gaff, towed him into the backwater, put down the rod, and took the line in my left hand and held the gaff in my right. I was myself dead, but I had a firm grip, with my legs round the tree.

The monster came slowly alongside. I got the gaff exactly right, over and under his shoulder, and I struck for all I was worth. At the moment I struck I remember feeling strong hands on my own shoulders and nothing more. And then I was aware of a light in my eyes and Mons, white-faced, bending over me with some whisky in my flask cap, telling me to drink. "Drink," I cried. "Where is the fish?" "There's no fish," Dok, he said. "There is," I said, springing to my feet.

He was right. The steel of the gaff head was broken, but the fly was still on the gut.—G. A. Scott.

REVOLVER SHOOTING EXTRAORDINARY

(Extract from Outdoor Life.)

On Sunday, March 5th, we accompanied Capt. Hardy to a point north of Denver, where we erected a frame, tacked a sheet of paper upon it and then pinned an image turkey on the paper. We merely steeped off 300 yards, as it was not intended to make this trial official, and after several sighting shots Capt. Hardy was able to place two bullets in the turkey out of five shots at 300 paces. He fired other shots, but this was his best string of five shots.

On Monday, March 6th, in the company of several sportsmen, including Sergt. A. Smith, who has won many championship medals with both revolver and rifle, Capt. Hardy repaired to the Denver Rifle Club range near Golden for an official trial. The club having a regular 200-yard range officially measured an 100-foot tape was used to measure 100 yards more, and at the end a frame work covered with oilcloth was placed. A black silhouette the size of what those present considered would be a fair size of a turkey was pinned to the oilcloth.

After a few sighting shots were fired, Capt. Hardy announced that he would now make an official trial, which resulted as per the accompanying target, photographed from the original. As will be seen, he hit the turkey three times out of fifteen shots, or an average of once in five shots. We will state for the benefit of our readers that these fifteen shots were the only shots fired by Capt. Hardy, except the sighting shots mentioned.

It is the general consensus of opinion among Denver's best shooters, including Lee Knapp, Sergt. Smith and A. W. Peterson, (these three probably being Denver's best revolver shooters) that there seems nothing impossible in the feat performed by the Louisville shooters, although they all admit that such work is pretty fast going.

In this connection it must be taken into consideration that this is not Capt. Hardy's game, his specialty being fancy work at close range, and both he and we believe that with practice he can do much better work than did the Louisville shooters when they hit a turkey



Sportsman's Calendar

APRIL

Season for all game fish now open—
Trout, salmon, bass, char.
Geese may be shot but not sold.

N.B.—Non-resident anglers can only fish in British Columbia on taking out a license.

once out of every fourth or fifth shot at 200 yards.

Accompanying this report will be found an affidavit from nine persons who witnessed Capt. Hardy's performance. Capt. Hardy's own statement, a cut of the target, and a table herewith appended, showing where each of the fifteen shots fired by Capt. Hardy struck.

First shot, 10 1/2 inches from mark.
Second shot, 13 3/4 inches from mark.
Third shot, 9 1/4 inches from mark.
Fourth shot, scored.
Fifth shot, 2 1/4 inches from mark.
Sixth shot, 2 3/4 inches from mark.
Seventh shot, 3 inches from mark.
Eighth shot, 8 1/4 inches from mark.
Ninth shot, 7 1/4 inch from mark.
Tenth shot, 5 1/4 inches from mark.
Eleventh shot, 28 inches from mark.
Twelfth shot, 10 3/4 inches from mark.
Thirteenth shot, scored.
Fourteenth shot, scored.
Fifteenth shot, 17 inches from mark.
The size of the oilcloth background is 8 feet 8 inches by 3 feet 8 inches, and every shot hit it.

A FISH STORY FROM OLD IRELAND

A angler caught a huge fish in an Irish river, and after the first run could not get a move of him. So he tied the line to a tree on the river bank and hurried home for help. On his return, what was his astonishment to find the tree torn from its roots and towed by the pike to the other side! Then, in its flurry, the fish caused the tree to fall upon him, and so he met his doom. The weight of the pike is not stated, but the tree weighed several tons.

THE CELESTIAL SURGEON

If I have flattered more or less
In my great task of happiness,
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain—
Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake;
Or, Lord, if too obdurate I,
Choose Thus, before that spirit die,
A piercing pain, a killing sin,
And to my dead heart run them in!

—Robert Louis Stevenson.

IN LINE

Suitor—"Your daughter, sir—well, er—that—is—she told me to come to you—she says you—"

Pater—"Quite so—I understand. Let's see, are you Mr. Bronson or Mr. Wibbles?"
Suitor—"Why, I'm Mr. Hotchkiss."—
Brooklyn Life.

BETWEEN FRIENDS

"I don't like my new gown very well," said the young lady. "The material is awfully pretty, and the style is all right, but it needs something to improve the shape of it."
"Why," suggested her dearest friend, "don't you let some other girl wear it?"—
Boston Globe.

New Reporter—The auto turned terrapin, and—

City Editor—You mean turned turtle.
New Reporter—Well, it was a high priced machine.—Judge.

A company with a capital of \$10,000,000 and plantations aggregating 450,000 acres has been formed for the purpose of growing cotton in Chosen, (Korea.)