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SPORTING SKETCHES IN NEW BRUNSWICK AND MAINE.

A BUNCH OF SALMON TAILS FROM THE MIRAMICHI.*

BY AN OLD ANGLER.

CHAPTER III.

OLD sportsmen acquire a habit of waking at any hour they please; eagerness for sport effectually banishes drowsiness, and but little time is lost in stretching and yawning. With the first lawn of day Charles and Harry woke almost simultaneously; they were speedily up and in bustling activity. To rouse the men, rake together the smouldering brands of the fire, pile on plenty of wood and raise a cheerful blaze, was their first care. While Charles saw to placing all things necessary in the canoes, Harry was preparing a delicious cup of chocolate. These preliminaries completed, Jim and Fred were roused from sound sleep, and informed that "Morn, in russet mantle clad, walked o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill," that "the ship it was ready, and the wind it was fair," if they were bound for the stream. Rising at once, donning thick, warm outer garments to protect them from the cool morning air, while seated inactive in the canoes, taking their guns and ammunition, and a spare rod each, they pronounced themselves ready for a start. Harry presented each with a "stirrup cup" of hot chocolate, which was drunk with great gusto, then taking their seats in the canoes, wishing us good luck, and receiving hearty wishes for a *bon voyage* in return, they were speedily *en route* for "fresh fields and pastures new."

Leaving Charles and Harry to their own good company and such luck as fortune may vouchsafe them, you and I, reader mine, will use our privilege, take each a seat in the canoes, and accompany Fred and Jim to report progress.

The morning air was chilly, but the aspect of the sky gave promise of another splendid day. After an hour's brisk poling, we arrived at Long Pond, the scene of Jim's intended operations, just as the sun rose above the horizon, and turned the dew-drops into glistening diamonds. Here we purposed breakfasting

after the pond had been thoroughly fished, so one man from each canoe was detailed to make a fire and prepare breakfast, while the others managed the canoes for our anglers.

Fred had taken down his salmon rod for greater convenience in stowing his well-laden canoe, not intending to use it except at the mouth of Lake stream. A light trout rod was kept in readiness for any tempting cast that might offer; with this he commenced fishing at the head of the pond, where the water, flowing down the rocky bed of the river above, tumbled over a ledge into a basin that had been formed in the softer soil. Jim took his station at the foot, which commanded a splendid cast, where the still water of the pond was broken into a rapid, as the bed of the river resumed its rocky character. He had scarcely made his second cast, when the fly was taken by a fine fish, which was so determined to go down stream that Jim was compelled to humor him, and follow in the canoe.

With a good canoe-man, one who combines judgment with skill, and also understands enough of the "gentle art" to enable him to second the wishes of an angler, a fish, securely hooked, rarely escapes a cool hand. A'e was skilful, and long practice with anglers had made him a first-rate hand in a chase. With Jim's skill and imperturbable coolness, and Abe's readiness at "playing into his hands," this fish had small chance of escape; after a short chase he was "brought to bay," handled neatly, and killed superbly in the short space of twenty minutes.

On reaching his former position, Jim saw Fred's slender trout rod sustaining a terrible strain, and threatening to break under the determined efforts of some unseen captive. The attention of all was now directed to Fred, who, fishing for trout, and not expecting nobler game, had "caught a tartar," that was put

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