

HUNTING AND FISHING, HERE AND ELSEWHERE

FISHING RESORTS HANDY TO VICTORIA

V.—Sooke Lake

Whether Sooke Lake will ever afford Victorians an adequate water supply or not I know not, but that for many years to come it will afford those of them who care to go to it a supply of nice little trout of excellent quality and gamey little fighters withal, seems after a recent visit to the lake indis-

Sooke Lake trout do not run very large on an average, going about three and four to the pound, with occasional rather bigger ones; but they are very plentiful, they fight well when fished for by sportsmanlike methods, and they rise well to the artificial fly, reports and rumors to the contrary notwithstanding. It seems to me a great pity that on this beautiful little lake, where the fish, though strong little fellows, which give excellent sport on the finest tackle and the smallest sizes of flies, do not as a rule run very large, fishermen should resort to the method which appears to be most fashionable there just now in order to try and catch as many as possible without that element of sport entering into the affair which consists in exercising a little skill and also giving the fish a fighting chance. To skull-drag a ten-inch trout from the depths of the lake with a worm-baited hook at the end of a wire trace reflector" spoon to attract the fishlet's attention seems to me to call for no skill at all, and to afford no sport at all, merely a joy in killing and possibly beating the other fellow in the number of fish brought home, and I must say I think (in common, I know, with some other anglers who habitually fish this lake) that such methods are hardly legitimate on a trout water where there is no need of such tactics for the sportsman to make a fair catch.

However, the chief point I wish to make at present is that the fly-fisherman contemplating a visit to this water need not be put off by hearing that the spoon and the worm are the only things with which trout may be caught there at this time of year. Indeed, if it came to a competition between an experienced and skillful fly-fisherman and the devotee of the reflector and the worm, I would be inclined to back the fly-fisherman, as my experience went to show that the fish would rise to a fly even towards the middle of a July day. Not that I made a very big basket, my attentions were too much divided between exploration, fishing and photography for that, but I hooked two fish at a cast twice during the morning and succeeded in landing the two on one occasion, losing one on the other. I found that near the edges of the reeds and where the deep water ended and the shallows began were the best places for trying the fly, and that almost any pattern of small fly presented without disturbance on the finest cast I could get in Victoria brought a response. July is scarcely the best month for trying fly-fishing, so I doubt not that earlier and later in the season the sport with the artificial fly in Sooke Lake must often be fast and furious.

Unfortunately the falls on the stream which flows from the lake into the salt waters of Sooke harbor are such as to prevent the passage of any fish through from the sea to the lake, or undoubtedly the fishing would be improved immensely, the trout which run up the lower waters of the river being noted for their big average size. I have never had an opportunity of seeing these falls, so do not know if it would be feasible to aid the passage of fish from the sea by the construction of fish ladders. If this could be done it seems reasonable to suppose that the average size of the Sooke Lake trout would be substantially increased.

Sooke Lake is a long way the most picturesque of the lakes in the comparatively near neighborhood of Victoria, and affords an ideal camping place for a summer holiday, a fact which is taken advantage of by not a few people already, and probably would be by much greater numbers did they but know what a charming spot it is and how easily reached.

Every Saturday afternoon in the season a stage leaves Cameron & Caldwell's stable on Johnson street direct for the lake, returning every Sunday afternoon about four o'clock. Those who do not wish to be bothered with tents can arrange with the owner of the stage for cabin accommodation at his place at the lakeside, called "The Maples," where he has a number of variously sized cabins, picturesquely situated and fitted up with bunks and cooking utensils. The distance from Victoria by road is twenty odd miles and takes about four hours by stage. It goes without saying, of course, that the drive is a very picturesque one, the scenery being varied and impressive, the one drawback possibly being the stiff climb to the summit each way, when our genial driver facetiously remarked that there was a little hill which he hoped the gentlemen would not mind walking to ease the horses. Still the walk afforded a change on a long drive and a chance to stretch one's legs.

The railroad can be taken as an alternative route to the lake, but this entails a walk or ride of some five or six miles from the track to the lake. However, it is a trip taken by many a cyclist fisherman who has only a single day at his disposal.

A DAY OF DISASTERS.

It is a generally accepted fact that patience is a most necessary quality for the angler to possess—in fact, it should be as much a part of his stock in trade as his rod and reel. I am a very ardent fisherman, and yet I have never

credited myself with being the possessor of the smallest particle of that very desirable virtue. On looking back, however, at a certain day I spent in pursuit of the wily trout on a remote loch I have come to the conclusion that I must have been a veritable Job to have ever taken a rod in my hands again. The day in question was an ideal one, but it is always the ideal days that prove disastrous. A considerable amount of rain had fallen during

the humble velocipede is a cheaper method of transit than the jaunting car, with its mercenary jockey, and all went as merrily as the proverbial marriage bell till my bicycle punctured at the end of the first mile. Half an hour was spent in repairing the tyre, and no sooner had I started again than another puncture occurred, this time in the front wheel. I rode the rest of the way on the rim, which is calculated to have a jarring effect on one's

bad job, and, having put up our rods, we pushed off from the shore. Whether N. gave a lustier heave than was absolutely necessary, or whether I slipped on the damp boards, I have never been able to discover; but the fact remains that I sat down with considerable violence on my rod, and neatly severed my top joint in two places. I smiled. I am in the habit of using every word in my vocabulary when I break a cast or lose a fly, which

N. announced that he had had enough of pulling a lumbering barge against a gale of wind, so I took a turn at the oars while he fished. The wind, however, was so strong that it was impossible to cast with any degree of accuracy, but in a very few seconds he was rewarded with a smart tug that made his reel shriek, and after a scene of wild excitement it was discovered that the tail fly was fast in the blade of my oar. Unfortunately, I was pulling a lusty stroke, and the discovery was made too late to save N.'s cast. I still maintain, however, that the fault was not mine; but N. has different views, though I think his opinion was prejudiced by the fact that he had forgotten his cast box, and was unable to replace the broken one.

A sudden lurch then disclosed the fact that the tub had taken full advantage of the momentary lull in rowing and making a steady ten knots an hour had deposited us on a lee shore, having covered in three minutes the half mile we had gained after twenty minutes' hard rowing. I again took a spell at the oars; but, despite my efforts, we failed to reach the other side, and gradually drifted down the loch. N.'s casting, which, owing to the gale resembled Mayfly fishing with a blow line, was not rewarded with any degree of success; in fact, he seemed to spend the greater part of his time in replacing the flies, which cracked off with alarming frequency. At last we grated on the western end of the loch, having made a leeway of a mile and a half, as compared with twenty yards' headway, which rather spoilt my reputation as an oarsman. I then took a turn at casting, and almost immediately a misguided fish, evidently suffering from some affection of the eyes, took my tail fly, and, after circling the boat three times, was at last brought to the net. Unfortunately he was never lifted out, as N. missed his footing at the critical moment, and both trout and net disappeared.

We then mutually decided that fishing was poor sport, and wondered why we had wasted so many hours on such a futile and exasperating pastime. Taking down our rods, we manned the oars, and with lusty strokes shot out into the lake on our return journey, but at the end of ten minutes we found that we had not shot far. Judging by the work we had put in, we expected to see the shore fading away into the blue distance, and we were therefore somewhat pained to find it only twenty yards off. At last, by hugging the side, we managed, after the most strenuous labor, to creep up the lake till we were within 100 feet of the landing stage.

"A few more lusty strokes will do it," said N.; and they did, for as the first lusty stroke snapped my oar in half, the second and I shot backwards off the seat into 6 inches of water that covered the bottom boards, while the barge, revelling in its new-found freedom, careered off in the teeth of the gale. Ten minutes would have seen us back where we had started, and then N. did a gallant thing. Without pausing to remove his clothing he snatched the painter and jumped over the side. I was just trying to work up a pretty little speech for breaking the news to his widow when N.'s voice recalled me to more mundane matters, and I then found that he was standing in the lake with the water up to his knees and dragging the boat shorewards. I learnt afterwards that the loch is of a uniform depth of 2-1/2 feet, except in one spot, which N. knew well, so his deed was not so gallant as I at first thought.

Once ashore, and having left the terrors of the deep behind us, we were confronted with the horrors of a wet and greasy road, a punctured bicycle, and a head wind, for the gale had veered round in a most unaccommodating manner. We decided not to risk it, and, having discovered that a small wayside station lay a mile to our left, we hurried along the track to intercept the train that, according to N.'s time-table, was now due. The going was very rough, and not by any means improved by the heavy downpour of rain that then set in, but we arrived at the station just as the train came round the curve. "I hope it stops here," said N., panting for breath. "Don't you know?" I gasped, in horror-struck voice. "No," he replied; "my time-table doesn't show this station at all. If it doesn't pull up here, we are a mile out of our way, the gale's blowing harder than ever, and the rain doesn't look like stopping." The rain did not stop, neither did the train, and over the miseries of the return journey I will draw a veil.—Scudamore Jarvis, in The Field.

THE BIRTH OF NATIONS

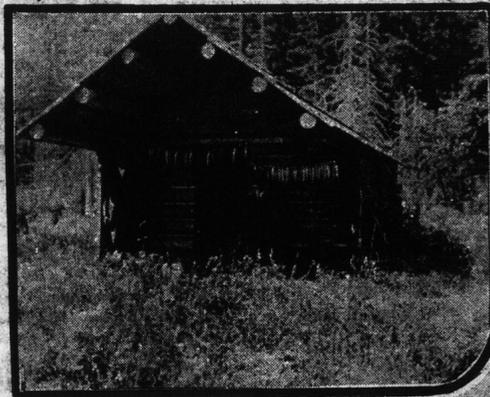
(Continued from Page Four)

For they believed that they might thus succeed in surreptitiously fixing a grasp upon the Irish soil, and might be able to oppress the Irish people again. . . . The three captives, therefore, coming from the ports of Norway, landed in Ireland with their followers, as if for the purpose of establishing trade; and there, with the consent of the Irish, who were given to peace, they took possession of some seaboard places, and built three cities thereon, to wit: Dublin, Waterford and Limerick.

Dublin remained in the hands of the Norsemen for more than three hundred years, and thirty-five Scandinavian kings governed it in succession. It became a very important city and a centre of active commerce. Even as late as 1650 we are told that most of the merchants of Dublin claimed descent from the first Norwegian Irish king, Olaf Kwaran.

About the eleventh century the power of the Norsemen began to wane and they were finally completely overthrown at Clontarf.

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TWO FISHERMEN AND THEIR DAYS' CATCH, SOOKE LAKE



THE MAPLES, SOOKE LAKE



A SUMMER RESIDENCE, ON SOOKE LAKE



THE LOWER NARROWS, SOOKE LAKE

the last twenty-four hours, and N. and myself had every reason to expect that a large number of sea trout had found their way into the loch with the increased flow of water. Whether such was the case we were unable to discover, but they certainly gave no signs of their presence.

We started off at midday on bicycles, it being a recognized and indisputable fact that

nerves, especially when a fifty-knot gale is blowing in one's face. In due course we arrived at the loch with our tempers severely frayed at the edges, and found that our boat was in use, and that the only craft at our disposal was a huge, unwieldy tub, with the lines of a packing case and a disposition to make as much leeway as a hop in a jug of beer. We, however, determined to make the best of a

is a foolish and extravagant procedure, as it leaves one in such a helpless predicament when anything real serious occurs. There was only one thing needed to make my cup of bitterness full to overflowing, and that was the discovery that I omitted to put my second top in the landing net handle, but this I was spared.

By the time I had fitted my rod up again

The City of Brass

(By Rudyard Kipling.)

(Reprinted from the Morning Post, London)

Here was a people whom, after their works, thou shalt see wept over for their lost dominion; and in this palace is the last information respecting lords collected in the dust.—The Arabian Nights.

In a land that the sand overlays—the ways to her gates are untrod—
A multitude ended their days whose fates were made splendid by God,
Till they grew drunk and were smitten with madness and went to their fall,
And of these is a story written; and Allah alone knoweth all!

When the wine stirred in their heart their bosoms dilated,
They arose to suppose themselves kings over all things created—
To decree a new earth at a birth without labor or sorrow,
To declare: "We prepare it today and inherit tomorrow."

They chose themselves prophets and priests of minute understanding,
Men swift to see done—and outrun—their extreme commanding—
Of the tribe which describe with a jibe the perversion of Justice—
Pandars avowed to the crowd whatsoever its lust is.

Swiftly these pulled down the walls that their fathers had made them—
The impregnable ramparts around they razed and relaid them
As playgrounds of pleasure and leisure with limitless entries,
And havens of rest for the idle where once walked the sentries;

And because there was need of more pay for the shouters and marchers,
They disbanded in face of their foeman their slingers and archers.

They replied to their well-wishers' fears—to their enemies' laughter,
Saying: "Peace! We have fashioned a God which shall save us hereafter,
We ascribe all dominion to man in his factions conferring,
And have given to numbers the Name of the Wisdom unerring."

They said: "Who has eaten by sloth? Whose unthrif has destroyed him?
He shall levy a tribute from all because none have employed him."
They said: "Who has toiled? Who hath striven, and gathered possession?
Let him be spoiled. He hath given full proof of transgression."

They said: "Who is irked by the Law? Though we may not remove it,
If he lend us his all in this raid, we will set him above it."
So the robber did judgment again on such as displeased him,
The slayer, too, boasted his slain, and the judges released him.

As for their kinsmen far off, on the skirts of the nation,
They harried all earth to make sure none escaped reprobation,
They awakened unrest for a jest, in their newly-born borders,
And jeered at the blood of their brethren betrayed by their orders.

They instructed the ruled to rebel, the ruler to aid them;
And since such as obeyed them not fell, their Viceroy obeyed them,
When the riotous set them at naught they said: "Praise the upheaval!
For the show and the word and the thought of Dominion is evil—

They unwound and flung from them with rage, as the rag that defiled them,
The imperial gains of the age which their fore-runners piled them.

They ran panting in haste to lay waste and embitter forever
The wellsprings of Wisdom and Strength which are Faith and Endeavor.
They nosed-out and digged up and dragged forth and exposed to derision
All doctrine of purpose and worth and restraint and prevision;
And it ceased, and God granted them all things for which they had striven,
And the heart of a beast in the place of a man's heart was given. . . .

When they were fullest of wine and most flagrant in error,
Out of the Sea rose a sign—out of Heaven a terror,
Then they saw, then they heard, then they knew—for none troubled to hide it,
That an host had prepared their destruction: but still they denied it.

They denied what they dared not abide if it came to the trial,
But the Sword that was forged while they lied did not heed their denial,
It drove home, and no time was allowed to the crowd that was driven,
The preposterous-minded were cowed—they thought time would be given.

There was no need of a steed nor a lance to pursue them;
It was decreed their own deed, and not chance, should undo them.
The tares they had laughingly sown were ripe to the reaping,
The trust they had leagued to disown was removed from their keeping.

The eaters of other men's bread, the exempted from hardship,
The excusers of impotence fled, abdicating their wardship,
For the hate they had taught through the State brought the State no defender,
And it passed from the roll of the nations in headlong surrender.



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