

Field Sports at Home and Abroad

THE REVENGE OF THE FISH

(By Richard L. Pocock)

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Some years ago it was my fortune to have to spend some few days in the month of May at the mouth of Powell river, about ninety miles north of Vancouver on the mainland coast. Several fishing friends had told enthusiastic tales of the fish that were to be caught in the river, whose numbers were said to be legion and whose appetites for feather and tinsel were always keen, so that I took good care to go provided with my best fly-rod and a plentiful supply of flies. Fishermen do not always lie, even when relating their exploits to brothers of the rod, and I found on putting my friends' information to the test that they had not even exaggerated, and a certain amount of exaggeration is always allowable and allowed for in recounting and discounting fish-stories. I followed the log chute to the head of the falls, and soon found a spot where it was possible to get out a line without hooking a giant cedar or Douglas pine, and I speedily discovered that there was only one drawback, or possibly two, to the fishing in this part of the river; it was too easy, and the trout, though very numerous and apparently hungry, and, as we very shortly afterwards proved, of a most excellent flavor, were of a very proper and convenient size for the pan, but of a uniformity in size which was a cause of greater satisfaction to the cook than it was to his patients, the anglers who provided him with his material.

Anyone but a fish-hog, who comes armed with bags of salt and "yanks" his fish from the water to the salt barrel, will speedily tire of the monotonous slaying of quarter-pound troutlets of suicidal tendencies, so that, after the first day or so, when we had abundantly proved to our satisfaction, or rather our dissatisfaction, that, though the small fellows were there to be caught in quantities wherever it was possible to get out a line, there seemed to be no big ones in any fishable water above the falls (and that was above the falls that had been told that we must go, if we were to catch trout), the monotony brought satiety. We caught as many as we could use ourselves, and we shipped a few boxes away by the Comox to friends in Van Anda, Sechelt and Vancouver, and then we cried halt. We had struck a place which many would have called an Angler's Paradise, and were no more contented than was Eve in the Garden of Eden. Any fool with a line and a hook at the end of it could catch those fish, and when they were hooked they were not big enough to cause the thrills of excitement and apprehension which follows the hooking of a "whopper."

The friends who gave us the tip about this fishing had all told us that we must fish above the falls, and we were new to the coast and followed instructions; but, if these same friends knew nothing of the fishing below the falls, they must either have been much more easily satisfied than we were, or else were telling "the truth and nothing but the truth," but not by any means the "whole truth." The month of the river looked very fishy to one of us, so that one day, when the other was sweetly dreaming beneath the shade of a maple tree near the beach, I rigged up a cast with a couple of large-sized sea-trout flies, and strolled down along the sandy bank, which was exposed at low tide on the south side of the river. I did not feel as keen as I should have done when I cast, but the listlessness speedily gave way to excitement as I had a rise at almost the first cast, and realized that this time at any rate I was into a good one. The reel screamed for the first time on that trip as a fine two-pounder rapidly took out line in the swift current, and was not brought to bank until after several swift runs and many a bold leap from water to air. The very next cast produced a double, and then I did what I shall always consider a most self-denying and considerate action. I laid down my rod deliberately and I hastened to where the slothful one was snoring and as deliberately kicked him into consciousness. After I had shown him the three beauties I had landed, he grumbled means deliberate in his actions. He grabbed his rod, tied on two flies without winking, and soaked the gut or do anything as it should have been done, ran across the sand to the river, cast, hooked—and lost a four-pounder (his estimate). We had struck a run of sea trout, and we certainly took advantage of it. The Comox was due that evening, and when she left us it was with a box of the prettiest large trout I had seen since I first struck the country. If the receipt of the fish only gave our friends half the pleasure the catching of them gave ourselves, they must have been tickled, to put it mildly. Even that kind of fishing would have grown monotonous, I suppose, if we had kept at it long enough, but our stay was coming to an end with the next trip of the old Comox, and in the intervening time we had some splendid sport.

On the last evening of our holiday we naturally wanted to make a last catch to take back to town with us, and we were anxious to have a few of the very choicest and biggest to show the friends who had directed us to confine our efforts to the water above the falls, where the fish were so numerous, but alas! so small. With a view to this end, I had taken the boat with a long line on the anchor, and was working in the middle of the river current, manoeuvring the boat by means of the anchor line to within casting distance of where I spotted unmistakable big ones rising. The tide was in flood, but even so the current of the river was very strong. I had a few two-pounders in the boat, and the other man, who was fishing from the shore, had hooked and

landed a fish which almost went four pounds, when subsequently weighed, when I noticed the repeated rises of what seemed to be a real rising among his lesser brethren. The fish was really letting out rope, I was able to get the boat down within safe distance without much disturbance. A cast or two, and he took it as a dog takes a lump of meat, and I was fast in the biggest trout I ever hooked either before or since. Six pounds if he was an ounce (my estimate—the other man said four, perhaps, but he is a poor judge of fish weight). I played him as carefully and skillfully as I knew how, and gradually he tired, until at last with a feeling of deep satisfaction I beheld his vast breadth as he lay lifeless on his side reeled up short to the side of the boat. I reached for the landing net, I put on not an ounce more strain, I swear it, and, as I leant over the side to dip the net underneath him, he gave not a kick or a struggle, so long and carefully had I played him to utter exhaustion, but—the hook came away, and he was borne by the current from the gaze of the maddest angler for the time being in British Columbia. I could not swear, I knew nothing that was strong enough; my friend who had witnessed the struggle from the bank, sympathized enough to keep a respectful silence. There was still time to try again, though little chance of making connections with such another magnificent specimen fish. However, at it again I went with resignation and hope. Not getting another rise for some time, I decided to change my position; I laid down the rod with the flies trailing behind on the current while I went to the bows to haul up the anchor. While so engaged I heard a rattle in the stern, and, turning round, was just in time to see the whole bag of tricks, rod, reel, line, and everything disappear over the end of the boat. In that current it was impossible to catch it before it disappeared, and I saw a fish, the twin brother evidently of the one I had just lost, make one or two leaps as he fought to shake the hook out of his mouth which he had seized while my back was turned—and the rest is silence!

A SEA TROUT DAY

The principal topic of conversation in the farmhouse and out of it in August was the weather. In order to catch sea trout in that month you want water, so that the fish may come up, but you want it in moderation. A succession of floods may bring up the 5-pounders, but they are of no use, even in the rivers, when worms and mice and minnows and small brown trout are washed down to them in thick water, and there is not a solitary rise to a fly in a whole day. However well you know the river and however diligently you fish, disappointment results.

We grew accustomed to waking in the morning to the sound of the never-ceasing drip-drip from the eaves and the sight of heavy clouds filling the valley from end to end. We had relays of mackintoshes sent down with the luncheon, and we wore uncomfortably large waders and monstrous hats, and in order to wrench a bare subsistence from the river we descended to the worm; but during a whole week we caught very little. We decided to go away for Sunday to renew our zeal by visiting a glacier and rubbing shoulders with German tourists in a hotel. This plan succeeded very well, and we went on board the local steamer in the early morning of Monday with high hopes and energy completely restored. After a run of a couple of hours we reached the mouth of our river, and were glad to find that the water had fallen considerably. Carts were waiting for us, and we drove up the valley to breakfast in the best of spirits. We anticipated a grand day, and were not disappointed. For the previous ten days our average bag was only five fish a day to two rods, and this included two days upon each of which we killed five brace.

We started for the river about 10 a.m., my friend taking the most direct route to a favorite spot near the house, while I walked along the road to the next bridge, which was half a mile lower down. The most reliable fly on this water is the Silver Wilkinson, and I always begin with it. The Jock Scott, Alexandra, Butcher, Silver Doctor, March Brown, and others generally get a turn. On this occasion, however, the flies with which I began, a Wilkinson and a reddish-brown pattern something like a Butcher, remained unaltered all day.

My first pool was below a wooden bridge, and, so far as water went, was in perfect order; but it could only be fished from the bridge, where, I fancy, the fisherman is too easily seen by the fish, for though I have tried it many times I do not remember to have killed more than one fish there. Crossing the river at this point, I threaded my way amongst alders, along a high bank, fishing wherever possible, until I came to a deep pool which always has to be carefully fished, because the sportsman after whom it is named once killed a big fish there. I did my duty, but nothing came of it, and a horrible dread seized me, lest, after all, it was one of those days when, everything being most favorable, you catch no more than you would in your mother's pail. If the river had been new to me I should have changed my fly, but there was a little grassy lawn just beyond the next cove where I expected to enjoy myself, so I held on my way, rejoicing that it was not raining.

At the lawn, which is simply a small meadow mown very early, and coming down close to the water's edge, I rose a fish in the back-water below a pile of rocks. He would not come again, but at the tail of the pool, in a

very shallow ripple, I felt a tug, and a beautiful pouter jumped out of the water. Fish under 2lb. are the fittest of all, and I was relieved when this one dashed up the backwater, and, after a few short runs, subsided into the net. My companion passed me on the other bank with a half-pounder, and I repassed him to fish Slippery Bridge Pool. The present bridge is wide and safe, and not slippery, but when the pool was named an old bridge spanned it which was very narrow, and so dangerous in wet weather that ladies were not allowed to use it. I was standing on it many years ago when I hooked and lost the levathan, the great fish which has never been caught, an 8-pounder of more, which dashed off down stream with such a rush that a strong trolling line parted like tow.

The chief advantage of fishing from the bridge itself is that, notwithstanding the trees, which here grow close to the water, you can get out a very long line, and on this occasion I made the most of the opportunity. As the fly swung out of the stream into the right-hand backwater I hooked a 2-pounder. To net it I had, of course, to get off the bridge, which could only be done on the left-hand side, reel up the slack, and get the fish across the stream and into slack water. The gill rod was equal to the occasion, and number two was soon in the bag.

The next pool was another of the disappointing ones; it runs straight and deep between an island and a gigantic rock, and I fish it because once I caught a 6-pounder. Neither before nor since has it yielded anything. Half a mile further on there is a very large pool below a new bridge, from which few fish are caught, but there is a small pool a little further down where an old bridge used to stand, and fishing from the rocks which formed one of the buttresses, I caught a good fish and lost another. The river here takes a sharp turn into a long, straight reach, consisting of a hundred yards of broken water and about the same length of "pool," division being made by a very large rock about a yard from the bank, which is very steep and barred by an ugly fence.

I had just caught slight of my partner fishing the pool from the other side (where he got a brace weighing nearly 4lb.), when, against all experience, I hooked a fish about halfway down the rough water. It was impossible to stop him, so I had to hustle toward the bank, giving line, scramble over the fence, and guide him round the rock. Then the stream slackened under the near bank, and I netted the liveliest fish of the season. So to lunch, with seven fish between us, of which averaged about 2lb., and no rain. The ladies joined us, and we took the road to a quiet, easy pool half a mile lower down, where wading is unnecessary and lessons in casting can be given. I gave one, but regret to say that the fish which I caught immediately afterwards refused to lend himself to a demonstration, and declined the same fly from a lady that he willingly accepted from the tutor. The death penalty was enforced. In the next pool I lost a good fish, and so, with varying fortune, wandered on down, catching a pounder and losing a brace of short risers in one place, and killing a larger fish in another, all on the same flies, which, however, I carefully retied to the cast. The old Silver Wilkinson was partly unravelled, but this seemed to be an advantage.

At last I got to the sea, and as the tide served it seemed worth while to wade out and put a fly over the last of the river. It is not so interesting as fishing between the banks, but I cannot help remembering the day when nearly all my line was taken by a monster of the deep which I never saw, so I still fish for him now and then. In a few minutes I secured a brace and a half of small ones, and then, well pleased with ten fish, returned to the first bridge, lighted a fire, and made tea. The bag was duly spread out on the grass, and as we were rather tired of carrying so much dead weight we gave away half of it to some of the neighboring farmers, who are always grateful for such gifts and then raise the rent.

The beauty of the day was over, the sun disappeared behind the mountains which shut in the narrow valley, and it began sadly to rain. The day closed with the usual heavy downpour, and we reached home soaked. In the meantime, however, the fish continued to rise. I got a brace more, and a small one which I put back, while my companion greatly enjoyed himself with a brace in one pool and three in another. Two of the latter were taken at one cast, and the fish weighed nearly 10lb.

We met in the farmhouse, simultaneously demanding baths and exchanging congratulations on a record day, our twenty-one sizeable fish weighing 20lb. Owing to the incessant rain and floods our average bag for the whole trip was but half a dozen a day.—Bradnock Hall in The Field.

BREATHING SPACES IN CANADA

(By Harold Havens in Field and Stream)

The call of nature has never been heard more distinctly than it is heard today. Back to the country, back to the farm, back to the wild! And this national—this universal hunger for the open has set men thinking on how best to conserve the forest resources of this continent, on which game and fish so completely depend.

In Canada much has been wasted, but so vast is this Dominion that much remains if only it can be saved from their who wantonly waste. Quite early in her career Canada began to set aside large areas of forests.

The Temagami forest reserve in Ontario contains 3,750,000 acres. Lake Temagami alone has a shore line of 3,000 miles. In the Temagami district shooting is allowed in season, and fishing as well. This is a famous country. During the fishing season, and before the shooting season opens, moose may be seen daily wading about in the shallow of the lakes, feeding on the floating lily pads.

Algonquin National Park is also in Ontario. Here is a perpetual reserve, where nothing is killed. Four or five of the large rivers of the north-country flow out of this wilderness of lake and wood. Algonquin Park covers 1,800,000 acres of land and water. It is one of the most interesting places on the continent for the real nature student who does not hunt to kill. Dr. Wm. J. Long has spent a good part of the two past winters here in this hushed wilderness, watching the wild things as they go about their business.

At this writing the Doctor, by permission of the Provincial Government, is camping in Algonquin Park, trying to outwit the wolves who slaughter the deer when the snow lies deep in the wood. When a light crust forms a crust which will carry a wolf, but through which the sharp feet of the deer breaks, the latter are at the mercy of these gaunt marauders.

Every year we hear of organized "Wolf Hunts" in the highlands, but so far the wolves have not been embarrassed by them; in fact the only occasion upon which a wolf was seen was one moonlight night when a pack was attracted to the camp by a strange noise oozing from the main tent. It was a new voice in the wild, deep, penetrating and peculiar. It was James K. Hackett, the actor, reading "Three Weeks," the dramatic rights of which he had bought by wireless from the wilderness. Since that no wolves have been seen in that locality.

Down in old Quebec there is the Laurentian National Park, the Gaspesian Forest Reserve, and other Government reserves, having a total acreage of 2,000,000 acres. Fishing and shooting under special licenses in the open seasons is permitted in these reserves, but an effort is being made to secure the enactment of laws which will prohibit shooting here altogether.

Out in Alberta on the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific, the Dominion Government has set aside 156 square miles. They have built a fence around this reserve 12 feet high, and here in this Buffalo Park they propose to pasture the great herd secured from the States last year. This herd was secured by the Hon. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior, from under the very nose of that mighty hunter then inhabiting the Government Reserve known as the "White House." This is by far the largest herd of Buffalo left on the American Continent. In this new park alone they will have some 700 animals. Of course, there will still be a small band left at Banff, and at Lamonte, in Alberta.

This is pretty far north for Buffalo, but the deep grooves still visible in the unploughed plain shows that the buffalo did frolic and wax fat in these far flung fields in the golden days, when only the Indians roamed in the West, and it was not necessary to cache your chattels.

Another vast reserve has just been set aside by the Dominion Government at the foot of the Rockies, where the Grand Trunk dives into the hills, and threads its way through Yellowhead Pass without climbing the hill. This park holds 500,000 acres.

There will in all probability be set aside in northwestern Ontario another immense forest preserve. In this good work of saving to posterity a part of this last wilderness, the Canadians should have the encouragement, at least the full appreciation of the great American Republic, whose playing ground is being stripped of its forest and whose open fields are being furrowed by the farmer.

The Provincial Government has set aside in British Columbia a grand sanctuary for the mountain goat, mountain sheep, elk, mule deer, and other important wild animals of the East Kootenay district of that province. The initial act, as published officially in the British Columbia Gazette, takes the form of an order proclaiming an absolute close season for ten years from November 15, 1908, throughout an area, the boundaries of which are specially defined. Its southern line is sixty-three miles north of the international boundary, and its eastern boundary, Elk River, is fifteen miles from the western boundary of Alberta on the summit of the continental divide.

The total area of the region which thus becomes an absolute game preserve is about 450 square miles. It is reasonably certain that in the whole of the grand mountain regions, of southern British Columbia, there cannot be found an equal area which it at once so finely equipped with picturesque mountain and valley scenery and so richly stocked with grand game. It is undoubtedly the centre of abundance of the White Mountain goat, the number of which is estimated by competent sportsmen and guides at about 1,000 head.

Of the many attractive resorts, for an all-round outing place, Temagami is perhaps the most popular in Canada. The endless variety of scenery, the thousands of miles of interesting shore line, the great variety of beautiful reaches of pure, cold water, all combine to make Temagami exceedingly attractive.



Sportsman's Calendar

APRIL

Sports for the Month—All game fish now in season:

Trout of all kinds, spring salmon, steel-heads, grilse, bass, char, etc.

Geese may be shot, but not sold.

April is one of the best months for bear and brant.

N.B.—Visiting non-resident anglers must take out a license to fish in British Columbia waters.

there is the endless wild, with its balsam forests and its bed of boughs.

In summer time there is deep fishing for large lake trout in the larger lakes and by short easy portages to the lesser lakes one finds the finest black bass fishing in Canada. This sport is all the more enjoyable because it involves just enough physical exertion to make one enjoy the good fish dinner which the Indian guides know so well how to prepare.

Temagami in the fall becomes the happiest hunting ground in all America for those who rejoice to follow big game.

As the kill is limited and the license high, and as cow moose are never killed, the moose are now more numerous than ever in the great forest reserve.

WEIGHT FOR LENGTH

It is a common experience among fishermen to feel acutely at times the need for a spring balance when the unexpected but always wished-for giant has been brought to net. It is exasperating not to be able to tell with accuracy the weight of a fish, and to have to rely wholly on guess-work and the imagination when describing the catch to the unbeliever. The following table of weight for length, compiled by Mr. Edward Sturdy, an experienced Old Countryman fisherman, and contributed to the Fishing Gazette, will be found quite reliable for computing the weight of trout or salmon in condition. Although the balance may be forgotten, it is always possible to take the measurement with a piece of string or stick:

Salmon			
Length in inches	Weight in lbs.	Length in inches	Weight in lbs.
30	11.574	43	34.082
31	12.770	44	36.516
32	14.046	45	39.063
33	15.506	46	41.725
34	16.848	47	44.500
35	18.370	48	47.407
36	20.000	49	50.432
37	21.713	50	53.584
38	23.522	51	56.864
39	25.428	52	60.274
40	27.435	53	63.819
41	29.544	54	67.500
42	31.759	55	71.320

Trout			
Length in inches	Weight in lbs. Ozs.	Length in inches	Weight in lbs. Ozs.
9	5	20	3 7
10	7	21	3 0
11	9	22	4 9
12	12	23	5 3
13	15	24	5 15
14	1 3	25	6 11
15	1 7	26	7 8
16	1 12	27	8 7
17	2 2	28	9 6
18	2 8	29	10 7
19	2 15	30	11 9

The measure should be taken from the snout to the middle rays of the tail fin.

For my part, had I a river, I would gladly let all honest anglers that use the fly cast line in it; but, where there is no protection, then nets, poison, dynamite, slaughter of fingerlings, and unholy baits devastate the fish, so that "Free Fishing" spells no fishing at all. This presses most heavily on the artisan who fishes fair, a member of a large class with whose pastime only a churl would wish to interfere.—Andrew Lang.

Comet

they will show us whether or full, elliptical or circular section or, what is more it is of irregular construc-

d that this caudal appendage posed of electrified gaseous apart from the other, gled minute cosmic dust in ity, the number of shooting appear on this famous night siderable as one might imally about May 6 that they en when we will arrive in the comet's orbit. But we will some effect analogous to 86r. On that date it seems the earth traversed the tail ent which, moreover, passed majority of the inhabitants globe.

r. Hind, the astronomer, in the heavens a very singu-glow, and Mr. Lowe noted presented a pale yellow ap-that of the aurora, although below the horizon. The ob-rd on the daily register urch before it became known met the tail of a hairy star, as appreciably obscured and ed a more nebulous appear- preceding nights.

things pass as in 1835 it may the tail will not reach our will disappear after the perihelion will take place on April hand, Mr. Barnard, the as-ferkes observatory, has al-length of the present tail, February 10, and has found 00,000 kilometres. On the 15th of the head was 307,000 ame astronomer remarks as e considerable extent of the before perihelion "gives ill be completely immersed on the date of May 18. will see—Camille Flammar-Herald.

ERI SANG IN A CHEAP E IN ROME

ve to pass through so many art of their careers as Lina ce of the beautiful prima nattan Opera House now thousands of dollars yearly, if fourteen, she supported a les herself by singing in a francs a night. Mlle. Cava-tramatically in an interview telegraph:

ptore, wandering boy, six-phaned and hungry, limped Porta del Popolo. At five ows of a savage hunchback had driven him from his Eleven years he had lived to Rome to find work. One in one of the Papal Guards he found him employment, as a workman. That was children were born to him, een and a half he lost his ell ill with a prostrating children an old uncle de- for support.

ant our starvation. We were he house in which we lived l us a makeshift lodging in tenement, far out on the l the Porto Pia, near the lever. For days our family ve known times when one all I ate for half a week. I me all turned. I did indeed work. I sewed all day long, ts a day. Ten cents a day a famiglia!

about that some one noticed and some good looks—good me mercy of heaven had us of hunger. certain miserable little cafe port of Rome which lies e Angelo and the Vatican, seem so disdainful of the erty, beneath.

in need of a singer. Those me know such places. The songs and afterward gather a saucer. The proprietor of had lost his woman singer, would do, and they drilled songs into my head.

at night until 12, night after said that I sold flowers in nothing so sweet and grace- tionable jests of befuddled. Tiberine scum, I sang my er again, rattling between spirit up their lazy and cons. It was done for the at, for the family on the in the roofless house, for the bedridden uncle and children. At night I had whole city, a dismal, fear- hours, terrifying to a child me seem full of ghosts?— home."

has me faded comes to talk; comes to listening, er beat a block.