

Hunting and Fishing Here and Elsewhere

TROLLING FOR BIG SALMON.

HOW that the season of the run of salmon in the straits is imminent, the time when all the world and his wife goes salmon fishing; and comes home with fish every time, it may be of interest to those, who have not yet experienced the thrill of being at one end of a line with a fine weighty salmon at the other, to read the following account by Calvin H. Barkdull in "Sports Afield" of an encounter with one of the monsters that frequent the waters of the Alaskan coast. Similar fish, caught by rod and line, and of even greater weight, in British Columbia waters can be seen any day mounted in our museum and those who are not satisfied with the size of the average coho or Spring Salmon that they can catch just outside Victoria harbor, need not go very far from home in order to be able to try conclusions with one or more of these monsters. If you are of the opinion that there is very little excitement in salmon-trolling read this:

It was plain to see that my fish was a monster. "So you are the operator at the other end of the line that has been sending back that speedy message—are you?" I said to myself, when the air was rent by a mighty yell. Regaining my composure, I looked toward the town. Everybody was waving his hat and yelling, "Stay with him!" "He's a good one!" "You're all right!" Scanning the horizon in the other direction I saw more than fifty small frail cedar canoes and skiffs, each with its stalwart skipper resting on his oars, intently watching the new circus that had just come to town. Several tremendous spurts, followed by great leaps above the surface, compelled me to direct my undivided attention to my fish.

Down he went again, making a complete circle around my boat—several of the nearest Indians hauling in their clothes-line gear, so that I might have all the room to myself; then up he came with such tremendous speed that the air was scented with the fumes of burning oil from the bearings of the reel which was now fairly smoking. Work as I might, I could get him no nearer than 50 feet. In all my experience in handling salmon I had never seen a fish fight like this one. Play now began to be labor indeed—grinding away on the old reel for a few yards of line, only to see it go overboard again with as much speed as it always gained. Thus I labored, managing to always keep a good even strain on my line; and after a long hard tussle I managed to bring the old boy within sight or maybe he volunteered that move himself—swimming straight toward the boat for more than a hundred feet. Watching closely as he approached, I got a glimpse of the old monster, moving slowly toward me; winding hard on the reel would, I thought, bring him near enough the surface so that I could use the gaff. As he neared the boat he sounded deeper but as he passed under the gunwale I saw that the hook was fast in the center of his back, about eight inches back from the head. It had torn out a few tissues but had a deep hold in the very toughest part of his anatomy.

As he went underneath the boat I switched my rod around the bow, so as to keep my line clear, but accidentally dipped the tip in the water; this move listed the boat; that list scared old Quinnat and again he started. The ring slipped down off the reel, the reel coming loose from its seat on the rod and falling in the bottom of the skiff. Then there was the greatest game of Hop Scotch going on aboard that packet that ever happened. Well, to make a short story shorter, by the time I got possession of the reel and got it in place again on the rod, more than 100 yards of line were again trailing after old Quinnat; but that was the last hard rush. Knowing where my fish was hooked and trusting implicitly in my strong light tackle, I put a heavier strain on the reel, and after he had completed several more complete circles around the boat, I managed to bring him to gaff. Another mighty yell echoed among the snow-covered mountains, fifty young cedar paddles struck the water, the fleet of canoes moved; the crowd on shore dispersed. Old Quinnat lay gasping in the bottom of the skiff.

Another magnetic thrill went through me, another grim little grin stole over my relaxed countenance—the thrill and grin of victory. But as I sat there drifting with the tide, looking over the dripping pole and great coil of line with the cruel little hook at its end that had been the means of causing the life-blood to run from so grand a specimen of our Creator's handiwork, a feeling of revolt stole over me. I was almost tempted to lift old Quinnat and restore him to his natural element again. Then I thought of the dozens of young salmon, herring, and other species that this old monster devoured alive every day and I said, "No, Quinnat; you too are a murderer. In the future many sportsmen will come to Alaska and will greatly enjoy a life-and-death tussle with some of these same young salmon that I am saving from that old capacious maw of yours. But your bones will be respected; your savory flesh will delight the palates of hungry townspeople; your likeness will grace the pages of the leading sportsman's magazine of the land; while in your captor's memory will long linger a brief reflection of the grandest fought battle ever fought by a denizen of the deep."

FOX-HUNTING IN THE OLD COUNTRY

Heigho, the wind and the rain! How it continued to pelt against your chamber win-

dow last night, for what seemed hours, ere sleep brought oblivion, or the phantom of dreamland conjured up a fair dry country, where the going was all sound, and the fields grass, and how you blessed it! Yet here you are at 10 a.m., after a refreshing sleep and a good breakfast, looking out upon a landscape lit up by the rising sun that should make glad the heart of any man. It is Devon and Devonian weather all over! The wind is still west, but it is hushed to a mere zephyr, a breeze hardly enough to hurry along the few fleecy clouds yet visible in the dull blue-grey sky above you. The sun is already warm, and the earth is making haste to get rid of some of its superfluous moisture in the writhes of white vapor which hang over some of the lower "bottoms." The grass is green, velvety green, after yesterday's rain, on the sheltered sides of the combs; midges and ephemerae are sporting round the evergreens in mazy dances more suggestive of July than January; and the balmy air is filled with the song of thrushes. Add to all this the joyful baying of the newly unkenneled pack, as they greet their huntsman away across the park yonder, and you have a picture which it would be difficult to surpass in England, and which is certainly not to be equalled in any other part of the globe.

Jogging leisurely along the lanes to the meet, you overtake, or are overtaken by, others bent upon the same journey, some mounted, others on wheels, and a few, maybe, on the luxurious and time-saving motor. The spirits of all, as depicted in their faces, are as buoyant as your own, and the crowd assembled and assembling at the appointed rendezvous, when you arrive there, is a gay and light-hearted one.

The fair sex number nearly one in three of the equestrians, for the great majority of Devon ladies are keen hunters, and there are many more in carriages and afoot determined to see as much of the fun as they can in that way. Many farmers are also present, chiefly on the sturdy, short-legged horses of the country, and there is a fair proportion of boys and girls mounted on fine specimens of the famed Dartmoor pony, all eager to get to the business of the day. Hounds are clustered together round the huntsman under the shade of a clump of patriarchal pines at the side of the lawn, while hither and thither grooms lead saddled horses, whose owners have gone into the mansion in quest of that "breakfast" for which the ancient homes of England are famous on a hunting day. All are made welcome to the open door, while for such as do not care to dismount, and for the hunt servants, who, perforce, cannot leave their posts of duty, serving men trip nimbly amongst the crowd, dispensing from silver salvers that spur for the head which is said to equal two on the heel on such occasions. Ten minutes' law is allowed for late comers, and then the cavalcade moves briskly off towards the moor, for it is in that direction that the master has decided to draw today. Hounds are thrown into a thick plantation of oaks, running for nearly a mile along one side of a deep valley debouching from the hills, and riders make their way in procession along a lane running nearly parallel with the top of the wood, and which will presently lead them to the open moor. Most of them, that is, follow one another in that direction, hoping that the fox may favor them by breaking on that side, but some few elect to take the other side of the comb, trusting to luck that they may be the favored ones, or that if they have to cross the deep defile it may not be until it has lost something of its steepness as it climbs the hill. The covert itself can best be described as a sort of jungle. It is thoroughly typical of the country. The tall trees do not stand very thickly on the ground, and they are, of course, now bare of leaf, as is also most of the brushwood beneath them, but the whole is so thickly overgrown with ivy, that it looks almost as dense as though it were the middle of summer. Ivy and ferns cover most of the ground below, too, and with its steep banks, it looks almost an ideal place for a fox to lie in, but hounds draw on and on in all unexpected silence. A bit of gorse covers an acre or two of the far side of the comb, and this is tried carefully, as is meet, by the anxious huntsman, for does not the enjoyment of some hundred people depend at the present moment upon his ability to find a fox; but never a whimper breaks the ominous stillness, and in due time hounds reach the top of the comb, to meet many disappointed faces. Before moving to more distant coverts some outlying bits of furze and scrub are tried, but with no better result, and the disappointment is the greater, as it is well known that, than the ladies who own the coverts, there are no more loyal preservers. There is only one feeling among the assembly who now turn away with a longish trot over the moor before them, and that, sinking for the moment, the difference between the sexes, has been well hit off by the hunting bard:

"That man we all honor, whatever be his rank,
Whose heart heaves a sigh, when his horse is drawn blank."

It is a couple of miles or so to the next covert the Master has decided to try, but in crossing the moor there is a good deal of rough ground to be passed over, and one of those rock-strewn banks comes nobly to our rescue. Hounds have just passed it when a welcome view-holla rings out behind, and there, striding away across an enclosure below us, goes a gallant red rover who has just been disturbed by some passing riders from his slumbers in a snug corner of the bank bordering the moor. The change that holla works

upon the crowd is tremendous! Men are stampeding in all directions to obtain a start, and be with them, and if you aspire to be in the first flight, it behooves you now not to tarry.

"Foward" is the cry, and on the stragglers dash to join their flying sisters, who, already on the line, are skimming away like seabirds over the gentle swell that heads them "Bad-worthy way." Turning right-handed, however, before reaching the Warren, our fox sets his face to the hill, and as the flying bitches flash over the rough pasture, tied together as it were, and looking as though they might be covered with the proverbial handkerchief, everyone realizes that the prophesy of last night has been fulfilled, and that there is a burning scent, and we must gallop our fastest if we would keep them in view. Anon the Avon is crossed, no jumpy meandering brook, but a ragged granite-strewn stream which must be forded with caution, and after breasting the steep brae beyond, White Barrows Tor lies in front of us. Perhaps our quarry had thought to find shelter amongst the rocks here, but either the pace is too hot for him, or he disdains such low down devices, for he merely skirts the Beacon and holds on, bearing left-handed now and pointing in a direct line for Holne, the birth-place, it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, of Charles Kingsley. There are many tors to pass, however, and combs to cross before Scorrion is reached, and down one of the latter he turns, hard pressed, and finds a welcome shelter in its hanging woods. Here scent seems, unaccountably, to be not so good as in the open, and while the pack are puzzling it out, horses have time to get their wind on the bank above, and stragglers have an opportunity of making up lost ground. Our fox makes the best use he can of his local knowledge and natural sagacity; he seeks the thicket of the ivy covered slopes in the hope of starting a combe to carry his burden. "We are almost certain to change here," says one, who knows the country, and, dashing into the wood, he finds his way by an almost imperceptible bridge-path down the "combe" and pushes up the opposite bank, to view away the hunted fox or to turn hounds back from a fresh one. But he arrives too late to do either. A perfect rhapsody of music breaks out from the further end of the wood as our little ladies once more come to close quarters with their fox, and he barely saves his brush by dodging through and recrossing again the old earthen dyke and its accompanying entrenchment which encloses the covert from some small fields. He threads the bank for some distance, and gains a boggy piece of land beyond, which has once been an orchard, but in which the apologies for trees are now smothered and bedraped with lichen and "idle moss," and then dashes away in the direction of Buckfastleigh with hounds in hot pursuit.

He has shot his bolt, however, and ere another couple of miles have been traversed his knell is sounding in the shrill woo-woop which summons us to the corner of a narrow field where the obsequies are being performed. Gallant red rover! He has given us an hour and a half of exquisite enjoyment, in which all the dormant instincts of old hunting men have been revived in the breasts of half a hundred of his 20th century descendants, and even when we see his frail body broken up, and hounds fighting and snarling over the last of the "tatters of brown," we feel that victory must always be accompanied with something of regret for the vanquished, and our worst wish would be "Requiescat in pace!"

LICH NES.

A SEA TROUT RIVER OF NEW-FOUNDLAND.

Two pools particularly struck my eye, one about a mile and a half above our camp, the second a half mile further on. The two were very similar in appearance, a swift rapid at the head, broadening out into deep water, and the pool having on its south bank a rocky cliff twenty-five feet in height that overhung the water. We fished these pools rather carelessly and without success, and continued up stream. In one pool I hooked and lost a grise, and in a pool beside which we had our lunch I was lucky enough to kill a fine fish of eleven pounds.

Shortly after two o'clock we started on our return trip. In one pool we had not fished on our way up, I killed another salmon of about ten pounds, and in the first of the two pools I have spoken of, my companion rose and killed a nice ten-pound fish. Then Silver Mitchell climbed the cliff to take a look over the pool and no sooner had he cast his eyes over the water, than I heard an exclamation from his guide, who had gone up with him. From the other side of the stream I asked what was the matter, but it was like talking to two deaf mutes. Both men were staring into the pool and pointing out objects to each other. "A big one," thought I, "must take a look." I crossed above the rapid, climbed the rock, and looked at the water. And this is what I saw:

Below the rapid, where the water first began to grow clear and still, for a distance of probably thirty yards in length by about the same in width, were fish—not a straggler here and there lying lazily in the current, but hundreds upon hundreds as far as the eye could pierce the water. Fish as small as your hand, fish as long as your arm, they lay there, their nose of one lying alongside the tail of another, their tails slowly moving, their gills opening and shutting and their pectoral fins gently vibr-

ating. In the crystal water I could see every movement. At first glance I thought they were salmon and nearly fell off my lofty perch; then I got a good look at the fins and gills and saw they were trout. But what trout! To judge fish in the water is always uncertain, but the three of us picked out a dozen of those monster trout that we unanimously decided would go well over ten pounds, perhaps twelve. Little fellows of a pound lay side by side with giants that could have swallowed them heads and all and never noticed their meal. There was no swimming or hasty movement among that school of fish; they simply lay there in the current and abreast of it, lazily and apparently fully contented with life. Among them we singled out three salmon, all about the size of those we had caught, and the water was so clear that we could plainly see net marks on two of them.

I cast a dozen times and tried three other flies, but failed miserably. Twice one of the fish moved, but each time sank back to his accustomed position. I was at a loss, but I must have one of those trout. Leaving the seven giants alone for a few minutes, I turned my attention to the rest of the water and began to cover that portion of the pool where I knew there were fish, though I could not see them.

In desperation I determined to scare the denizens of that pool even if I could not catch them. I discovered in my fly box a great big blackdose that had been given me the year before by some optimistic angler. It was an old-fashioned affair tied on a single hook with the antiquated gut loop, and the feathers were decidedly the worse for wear. It was a fly that no self-respecting fish should have touched, but mark the result. "No sooner had the fly swung across the first of the deep water than there was a boil on the surface like the wake of a man-of-war. A huge black showed for a second and I was fast to something big. For an instant I thought it was a salmon, and I chortled with joy, but then the fish came to the top and I saw it was a trout, and a huge one! Although my rod was a strong, stiff one, I was afraid of this trout, and treated him very gingerly. It took me the best part of five minutes before I got that fish to bank, and he was so big that John had to gaff him. I had caught my big trout at last. An ugly-looking fish he was, too, all head and savage mouth, a fresh-water shark. John and I put him down at nearly seven pounds in weight, and when we reached camp the scales were put in requisition, he pulled down six and three-quarter pounds.—From Forest and Stream.

FISHERMAN'S LUCK

Is there such a thing as luck in fishing? Most people believe in Fisherman's Luck, either according to the ancient adage or the contrary. I know here at home I am considered a lucky fisherman; in fact it has been asserted without noisy contradiction that I could catch fish on dry land—all owing to my belief in my so-called luck. I was going fishing one day this summer, and on my way to the boat landing met a fellow-townsman who greeted me smilingly and remarked: "I bet you catch some fish." I enquired why, "Because you are so lucky. I never saw you go but that you brought home a mess."

So you see a person must live up to his reputation and in order to do so in fishing must have all the luck on his side. I caught some fish that day and one exceptionally fine bass, and with my usual luck met the fellow-townsman on my way home and showed him the catch. He looked pleased and said: "I would go fishing if I were as lucky as you are."

Now, let us get down to the root of the matter and see what this so-called luck of mine amounts to. We will take this day of which I have made mention. The lake I fished is a bit of water that can be fished to advantage only two or three times in a season, and that is when the water is at a certain stage, and I know that stage—never going there unless the water is clear. Again, the water must be neither too light nor too muddy—the best time being when it is a coppery color that will show the bait well, but not so clear as to make the angler too prominent. Then there must be a light breeze. I do not care if the sun shines or not nor from what direction the wind blows, but I must have the other conditions right. This day was the right kind of a day for that lake, so I knew I would catch some fish. There was not to my mind any element of luck about it. It was a combination of circumstances that I had learned by years of study must occur to make that lake a fishing success, and when the combination was secured I reaped the advantage of my silent studies.

Arrived at the lake, all places look alike to the tyro; but I do not fish any place, hit or miss, as my inquiring friend would have done. I followed a line of action it had taken years to learn, and here was what was called my good luck in choosing spots to fish. First I went to the high bank, anchoring about 30 ft. from shore, and began to fish from there. It did not look at all fishy, and the ordinary angler would have passed it over. Why did I stop? Was it luck? No. I knew 20 ft. nearer shore lay a huge sunken tree trunk that it had taken me six months to locate; I knew this tree rested at the foot of a slight reef; I knew there was a tree at the north end of the lake, a dead stump at the south end, three elms on the east bank and a hickory on the west bank. I knew if I got in the centre of the cross-lines of these four landmarks, I could cast just to the spot where the bass frequented when the water was

at the stage and in the condition it was on this day. But it had taken me many a long day to find that sunken tree and reef and not a few shiftings of my anchor, to find the right spot to cast from, and when the right spot was found Nature furnished the guides to hit it right ever after.

Our predictions were right. We caught some bass casting over the tree and then pulled up anchor and moved up the lake. Here was a marshy point. One place looked as good as another; but to the south of the point, in a line with a cottonwood on the east bank and an elm on the west bank, was a sand reef which was located by two more friendly trees north and south. It makes a lot of difference which side of a reef you fish on. You may go along slash-fashion and get your bait within two inches of the edge of the reef and not get a bite all day; when, if you had gone the two inches farther and dropped over the edge of the reef, you would have had a fine day's sport. The anchorage spot here was also determined by the same process and we picked up a few fish and then away again. This time to a little bay where a farmhouse on the hills was one point and a large willow on the east shore another. After locating our position we fished what had been the best hole in the lake and did not get a bite. Now this was bad luck for fair. "The average fisherman would have pulled up anchor and gone some place else. What we did was to pull up anchor, row to the spot where the fish should have been and ascertain the cause of failure. It is just as important to find out the cause of failure in a known spot as it is to learn the cause of your success, as it saves you many a profitless mile when out for a day. The cause was soon determined. The place had filled up with mud when the ice had gone out in the spring and what had been a nice sand hollow for years was now a shallow mud flat and the fish had sought out a new spot somewhere else. The rest of the afternoon was spent locating new spots, for some of the good places change every year, and when one was found it was mentally located by imaginary crosslines with prominent shore marks that would keep it in mind for the next trip. If I had trusted to luck do you think I would have fared as well? If you had gone there, a stranger, could you have done as well? Hardly.

The successful fisherman must learn just such little things as these on his home waters, and his guides must possess the same knowledge in regard to theirs; and then, when the night comes, he knows it was not luck that filled the creel but an actual possession of knowledge that it takes years to learn and a gift that cannot be taught by words or lessons alone.—E. K. Stedman in Sports Afield.

THE "BARKING-DOG" METHOD OF SHOOTING.

The following description of shooting in Finland with the aid of a barking dog by a correspondent of the "Field" should be amusing reading to some of us who know the habits of certain species of grouse not unknown in British Columbia. In our old prospecting days when the provision bag was not to get rather too light at times such a barking dog would have been very useful indeed, but for the purposes of sport we certainly prefer the more silent breeds. "The real sportsmanlike method of shooting" birds over pointers or setters is, of course, adopted by the well-to-do classes here; but many people hunt them with barking dogs, and this, when properly done, may be good sport. The method is as follows: The dog—the reddish-brown Finnish Spitz—roams hither and thither through the forest, but always following its master. As soon as a bird flies up the dog follows it till it "trees," when the dog takes up a position under the tree in which the bird is sitting, and by incessant barking, calls his master, who creeps stealthily towards the tree till he gets within range—by no means an easy task in late autumn—and shoots the bird on the wing in its flight from the tree. As already stated, this is somewhat difficult late in autumn; the bird does not stay so well for the hunter. It is then often necessary to shoot with a bullet. In the latter part of summer, on the contrary, there is nothing so easy as to get near a bird which has treed, after which it is only necessary to find out its position—a difficult matter sometimes—stare the bird by shaking the branches, and shoot it as it flies. But the shooter who only thinks how soon he can fill his game bag has no scruples about shooting birds sitting the moment he sees them. But of all our feathered game which roost in trees the hazel hen suffers least from this way of shooting, for when started by a barking dog it very often takes flight at once."

It is often asserted that the more one handles firearms, the greater his respect for them. Proof of this is found in the great scarcity of accidents on well regulated rifle ranges and trap-shooting grounds. Millions of shots are fired annually in competitions at flying targets, without accidents of a serious nature, and on the rifle ranges where group and individual shooting is carried on at the same time, annihilate an army. In the majority of all the cases that have come within notice during the past quarter of a century—and they have been remarkably few in number—those who have been injured violated all the rules of safety and were themselves to blame. If equal care were exercised in the hunting fields the number of casualties would dwindle.—From Forest and Stream.



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