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## A SUMMER MEDLEY.

I had certainly promised an article. There is a delightful vagueness about such a promise, which seems to harmonize with the lazy dreaminess of summer days, and frankly, my mind was not overburdened with the sense of something unaccomplished. Now, I shall make no assumption of special virtue, where virtue there is none, but to be candid, on one particular day my memories did seek to fashion themselves together into some coherence, and with an effort to be resolute, I summoned my scattered ideas, and analyzed them with some care to ascertain if in their substance was anything which might appeal to the undergraduate mind. We are such wretched specialists in this modern world that when my ragged mental paraphernalia arrayed themselves before my inward eye I shuddered at the horror that would seize upon the hapless undergraduate, who might wander into ten lines of an article distilled from that infernal brew. All the sins of my youth seemed to rise up within me—I was filled to the brim with ablauts, jods and umlauts—and other winged and horned creatures of modern culture flew like blind bats about the dusty rafters of my brain. Now, though our mind-chamber is more or less of a littered lumber-room, it still has this magic property, that by a faint letting in of the light, a gentle drawing aside of the curtains, the spectres that haunted us flee like affrighted owls, and the mellow rays of pleasant memories slant in through the latticed windows of the soul. But the reveries which flow in upon us at those rare intervals, which make of the mind a very garden of delight, wherein high thoughts may wander and stray at their own sweet will and wayward inclination—these reveries that steal upon sensation until we know not almost that we live from intensity of life—what are they but that rich substance of which the dreams are woven of immortal singers; and we, of coarser grain, with stumbling pen and faltering tongue can not avail to utter the first weak syllable of that which we would fain express. So knowing that I was powerless to lay bare to another's eye that book of my inner life with the spirit's seven seals upon it, in my human weakness I determined to throw high moods aside, and in reckless mundane humor resolved to go a-fishing.

I still had some guilty thoughts as we bowled along with an eight-knot breeze, that my promise was still unredeemed; for sentimental mystifications, like the above, are really trash, and apt, by reason of mixed metaphors, to prove but sorry models of rhetoric at the best. So for a time, as I sat at the tiller, I meditated a dissertation on fish. Now I am rather deficient in humor, and when I reflected upon the humorous capabilities of the situation (for three days I had been sailing to all the famous shoals on the lake for the particular fish in question,

and he still eluded me), I despaired of giving an appropriate treatment to the subject. So I threw aside the idea, and tried to see if I could be poetical, and satisfy your worthy Editor with something on clouds or waves—but that was almost as hard as the humor, for I had ceased to be a poet towards the close of my first year. And yet there was beauty enough around us, and delight in the keenness of motion as we cut through the blue sparkle of the waves.

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There was a heaviness about the piled horizon clouds, where they hung in massive banks above the western hills, and the loons were clamorous around us. "Seems like they was callin' wind," said Chris, my weather-wise and garrulous fishing-guide, pulling away at the charred remnants of a clay. "I rec'lect me and a party of folks from the city was out fishin' to the islands, mab'be along about August one year." Well, I need not repeat the story in detail—it was one of his interminable yarns that I had heard so often before, pointless, of course, and prosy, and quite innocent of any bearing upon the irrelevant subject of loons. I listened half patiently to the unimpeachable account of the number of fish they caught, and the number of drinks they drank, and thought with perhaps too complacent pity of the petty egotisms that filled the narrow bounds of his contented life—and as I listened I wondered whether modern fiction had not rushed to an absurd and unjustifiable extreme in overloading its pages with skilful studies of types from this little world—"animated animals," they are, I said to myself, impatient at the onslaught of dull, bucolic talk. "If our sympathetic modern novelists were really sincere in their realism, might not a stenographer furnish them with reams of the stuff I am listening to now—dull 'naud from a muddy spring," and so I mused in the harshness of my unhuman mood, with much besides, that need not be repeated.

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The loons had summoned the wind. We could see the great clouds gathering in the west, and straining every inch of canvas we raced in from the open before the storm should fall upon us. A gloom like night had settled on the hills, and low fringes of vapor-like sulphurous smoke swept on beneath the ink-like blackness of the heavier thunder cloud. There was little talking now. "Down with the main and jib," I shouted, and Chris leapt to the task, aided by two youngsters who were with us. The smaller, a child of eleven, crept beside me, shivering with fright. Still we held on under the foresail for the distant eastern shore upon which the sun's rays still fell, so that it seemed like a strand of burning gold over the savage green of the white-lipped water. Then the great roaring of the storm behind us drowned the noise of the ceaseless thunder, and in all