

# Field Sports at Home and Abroad

## UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES

There is no doubt that in the Ballyvardeen Hunt we have one of the very oldest packs of harriers in the kingdom. This is a fact which has long ago been placed outside the region of argument; while it is also one of the many points on which the members dwell with intense pleasure. Hare-hunting is, to the older members, at any rate, the Sport of Sports. Sir Roger de Coverley himself could not have dilated in more entertaining fashion upon the pursuit of the hare than old General Aftermath, who, as Farleigh White often asserted, "knew the ins and outs of every damned hunt in the country, and was an infernally intelligent old devil."

The members seldom desire to hunt with any other hounds than their own, though occasionally they have a day with the Ballyvardeen Harriers, which hunt a neighboring country; while, more rarely still, they are seen at a meet of the Uppon Down Foxhounds. And whenever a Ballyvardeen man rides with another pack, he carries thither his Hunt uniform and an exclusive air. On both there is a delightfully old-fashioned stamp. And it is almost an unwritten law with the members that they should never ride hard when out with other hounds.

They go to these Hunts more as onlookers—always courteous and friendly it is true—than to share in the rough and tumble of new fields.

Some people aver that it is a hunt of old fogies, who, to keep themselves alive, have to allow new blood into their midst. These critics say that all the real sport is to be found at their dinners; that, so long as they can dine well, they are indifferent to the real rigor of the game. Well, after all, is anyone worth much who is unable to enjoy a good dinner?

And, therefore, four times during the season the members come together for a week's enjoyment. They have their own rooms at the Ballyvardeen Hunt Arms Hotel, which they make their headquarters, dining there together every night; while members come, at least once or twice during the season, from distant parts of the country; an odd one to hunt, but all of them to dine in the rare old Ballyvardeen fashion.

Amongst those who come to these reunions, no man was more popular than old Tom Macclise. Although little over sixty at the time of our story, he had always been called "old Tom." For some years he had lived down south; but unfortunately, as he expressed it himself, he "suffered from chronic poverty of blood—in the pocket!" This state of affairs did not prevent a thorough enjoyment of life; indeed, fortified by a sound constitution, and an unimpaired digestion, it seemed only to add to his happiness. No one had ever seen him "down on his luck." Big in body, and with an easy outlook on life, he let nothing disturb him; and his friends always exclaimed, "Ah, now, but he's a real Irishman!"

There was nothing during the whole of the year to which he looked forward with such pleasure as his week's outing with the Ballyvardeens. Unable, owing to this "chronic poverty," to hunt to any extent at home, he revelled in his annual meeting in "the Black North," where he was mounted by his friends, and feted by everyone. For fifteen years he had never failed to keep his tryst. And, once, some five years ago, on a cold January afternoon, he drove through the prosperous old town of Aughslatterick, and descended, along with a good supply of luggage, from Mike Rafferty's jaunty car, at the Ballyvardeen Arms. Here he was warmly welcomed by Johnnie Kelly, "the boots," and factotum, who, after a rapid survey of the guest, exclaimed:

"Ach! but it's meself that's pleased to see ye, sor! An' all's well at home? An' yerself? Ay, an' ye're not looking bad at all, at all; perhaps a wee thing thinner nor ye were. But shure, an' there's no harrum in that, saving yer presence. An' it's yer own ould room that's ready for ye, sor, so it is."

This, as it were, uttered all in one breath, was Tom Macclise's welcome to his hunting quarters. A moment later, being equally warmly greeted by Mrs. Mac Rae, the jolly-looking landlady—who handed him his customary glass of steaming whisky punch—he was ushered up to his room. Here he sank into a comfortable armchair, and waited until Johnnie Kelly had finished unstrapping his luggage and talking. But Johnnie was never known to really finish talking—so long as anyone made the least show of listening to him. So at last Mr. Macclise had to intimate to him that he was anxious to dress for dinner.

"By my word, sor, I know ye are! An' that's just why I'm no keeping ye a minute. An' would ye be having a wee drop more av the rael ould 'Killowen'?"

"No, no," said old Tom, resolutely, "not a drop more until dinner."

"Ach! an' I'm sorry to hear that, sor, an' I hope there's nothing wrong?" This with an anxious look towards the armchair.

"Nothing, nothing, except a bit of a headache."

"Ach! but we've all that betimes, sor; an' I'm goin' now; an' if there's anything else ye wish, remember, I'm always at the ind of the bell, sor."

Left alone, our friend rose from his chair, paced up and down the room several times, and then said aloud, "Yes, she's very ill, very ill; there's no doubt of that. But what could I do?"

Then, rising once more, he applied himself seriously to preparing for dinner. And "a fine

figure of a man" he looked, as he descended the old oak wainscoted staircase, and sought the ante-room, where many of the members had already assembled.

"Hullo! and it's old Tom himself; large as life, by Jove!"

"Why, Tom, old chap, but we're glad to see you!" rang out the deep, musical voice of the handsome and splendid-looking Dick Barry.

"A sherry and bitters? Buck you up, Tom! Here it is. I see to this all myself," said Farleigh White, who was under the impression that he—as he put it—"ran the whole d—d Hunt."

And, pleased as all the members were to see Tom Macclise, he was still more pleased to be once more in their midst. Indeed, any little worry that he had seemed now to drop from him.

But no worry could sit with us as such a dinner as the members now entered upon. The old club room had never seemed more cosy. The huge fire—which Farleigh White had, of course, seen lighted at the right moment—had become a mass of glowing embers. And a great cut-glass chandelier, with great wax candles, lighted up the room just sufficiently, and shone on the rare old sporting prints which covered the walls. It was a scene full of good cheer and the camaraderie that is in the very atmosphere of a gathering of hunting men. For, in the field and out of it, the goodfellowship and friendships of hunting men are proverbial.

Goodfellowship and good cheer could not be brown in more congenial soil than that of a Ballyvardeen Hunt Week, and the first dinner was, if anything, usually the liveliest of the whole reunion. All the news of the countryside; every bit of sporting gossip from all the hunting quarters in Ireland; and, of course, their own immediate hunting prospects, were eagerly discussed. But everyone has heard of the Ballyvardeen dinners; everyone has heard of the fine solid fare which, whatever kick-shaws may creep into the menu, are always to be found on the table. Then, too, their claret is deservedly famous. And, truly enough, as Farleigh White was certain to say, at least once during every dinner, "By God! the man who can't do with this food must have something wrong with his inside!"

And so, under the kindly eye of the venerable father of the Hunt, the evening wore away. Many a chaffing speech was made, and many a health drunk; while Dick Barry, a born raconteur, if ever there was one—told, with exquisite bonhomie, new stories, mingled with many evergreens. As one man said, "Dick's stories are enough to make a saint laugh!"

"Of course they are," said Farleigh White, "just look at old compositus there, laughing like a good one!" and he looked over at the Honorable Francis Fone's stern visage, now relaxed in smiles.

Well, the merriest evening, like "the weariest river," must have its end. And, no matter how fast and furious the fun had waxed, or how much good wine—and all the wine was good—had flowed, every member was able to light his own wax candle, and—carrying his liquor like a gentleman, sir!—march steadily up the shallow treads of the old staircase.

Just before this ceremony was reached, Johnnie Kelly sidled into the room, and, full of apologies, approached Tom Macclise, who, with anxious face, opened the telegram which was handed him.

"Why on earth haven't I had this hours ago?" said he, hastily crumpling up the thin paper.

"Well, it's hard to give the rights av it, yer honor; indade it's a long story; but it would seem that the telegram landed into the office, just at the last minute, an' it was a troifle overlooked. An' thin, wee Jim, who tuk it up, had another wan av the same for 'The Flowing Bowl,' and he was-loike detained there, sor."

This explanation much amused the members, who, with inquiring eyes, were regarding "old Tom"—who never seemed to receive telegrams or letters during his week's hunting.

"Well, I suppose it can't be helped now!"

"In troth an' it can't, sor. For if it's good news yer honor's got, shure an' it's nothin' the whaur in the keepin'—an' if it be bad, it's a pity ye've iver got it at all!"

"Good-night, gentlemen," said old Tom; and, walking over to the buffet, he took up one of the recently-lighted candles, and went off to bed with a very vexed look on his usually untroubled face.

"What the deuce is the matter with him?" said one.

"Never saw him down on his luck before," said another.

"Money!" said Farleigh White, "that's what's troubling the old beggar. I know it."

"A man of few resources, I'm afraid," said General Aftermath, who always turned to literature when troubled.

And now, "Good-night!" "Good-night!" all round.

Next morning gave us an ideal hunting day. And every one—at a not too uncomfortable hour—rose as fresh as the proverbial lark. Everyone, except Tom Macclise, who, looking still worried, received another telegram—and a letter—during breakfast. He had a funny habit of sometimes expressing his thoughts out loud; and soon began to mutter:

"Well, it's most unfortunate! Why couldn't she have held on for a bit?"

The others were sympathetic enough; but "a little bother"—either our own, or other people's—is of small account on a hunting morning; and so breakfast proceeded, as merrily and satisfactorily as the dinner had done. Then, after a smoke, and putting the finishing touches to their dress, the members clanked out to the large stable yard. Here, many of the older and stiffer horsemen awaited their turn at the huge mounting block. But soon all were up and away. And it was a fine turnout the thirty members made—every man in his buff-colored swallow-tail—as they climbed the hill from Aughslatterick and rode slowly out to Monkscourt. A few more sportsmen were found at the meet, and one of them said that Maguire had told him that he might be a little late. But Larleigh White, who was in command, said, "I'll wait for no man! not for the King himself!"

One moment more, and the level pack of old-fashioned harriers began to draw over James Heenan's farm. In a few minutes a hare was up. In the country of Uppon down every man who wishes to really see a hunt must ride. The gates are few and unfriendly, and the country is one of small enclosures and every variety of fence; and, therefore, nearly everyone makes an attempt to ride, even with harriers, where the necessity to do so is far less pressing than with foxhounds, so that practically the whole field made a very determined dash to get well away, and for ten minutes a pretty hunt followed. Then a check, and another ten minutes circle brought the sportsmen back to James Heenan's comfortable home-stead, where the hospitable farmer entertained the members to lunch. The run was now described as "forty minutes" like a steeplechase.

Refreshments over, a stout hare was soon found, and once more the Ballyvardeen men sat down to ride. This time their quarry ran straighter, and, as no real check occurred for a considerable time, many a rider was afraid he was in for too much of a good thing.

Tom Macclise, though no longer young, and welter-weight as he was, usually rode as if he feared he might never hunt again. But today, although mounted on one of the best of Dick Barry's horses—a big blood weight-carrier—he was nervous and hesitating. Now, when a hard rider begins to suddenly look for all the easiest places, and to shun a fall as if it were the grave, he is very likely to meet with some disaster. And, surely enough, down came old Tom at a very small bank, which broke when his horse kicked back at it. The horse rolled almost, but not quite, clear of his rider, who scrambled up with a badly-sprained ankle. However, he was able to ride back to the Ballyvardeen Arms without much discomfort, and that night at dinner was really in better spirits, in spite of another telegram and letter.

"Ah!" he said, "it doesn't matter much now!"

"What doesn't matter, Tom?" said Dick Barry.

"Whether I stay or go home; for I can't hunt for a week, the doctor tells me."

"Stay, of course!"—in a general chorus—"stay and dine with us; hunting's not every thing, old chap!"

"Well, you see, I'm afraid I ought to go," said Tom, looking red and confused, "You see, my wife's been—she's been—sending me wires and letters—to no end."

"Let her do it!" exclaimed Farleigh White, "let her do it! There's no wife like this!"

"Yes, yes, but—but," stammered Tom, "It's—well, you see—it's my mother-in-law!"

"Good heavens!" laughed everyone in the room, "Your mother-in-law! What next, Tom? Why, what's she done?"

"She's dead," very solemnly replied Tom—"died an hour after I left home."

"Ah! very sad! very sad!" murmured everyone, and sympathetic inquiries were made all round.

"Yes, that's how it is; my wife wants me back for the funeral; but—well—I don't know if I'd have gone before the end of the week—if—if—I could have hunted. But now," he said, with an air of fine determination, "I'm going, going at once!"

And all felt that, under the circumstances, it would have been scarcely seemly to have attempted to persuade him to remain.

When Johnnie Kelly heard of the reason of Mr. Macclise's sudden departure, he exclaimed, "By my word, an' he's a kind-hearted gentleman, for it's manny a man would be lettin' his mother-in-law bury herself!"—Hugh Henry, in Baily's.

## CANNIBAL TROUT AND THE FLY

To the fly fisher a problem distinct from others is set by what may comprehensively be called cannibal trout. The term is not quite satisfactory because all trout are to some extent cannibals where minnows or small fry give them an opportunity, and because most trout after reaching a certain weight acquire an increasing disregard for trifles such as floating duns.

They are, however, now and then to be caught with the fly rod and with what, by custom if not by right, may be termed a fly. Your minnow-feeding trout is an impetuous creature when he is at his meals. You may see him dashing about the shallows, causing quite a big wave as he goes, and apparently blind to almost everything but the chase in

which he is engaged. Trout are always less shy of human approach when they are feeding than when hurrying about after small fish. Nor at such a time do they seem to discriminate very keenly between the real and the false. A trout feeding on minnows in four or five inches of water is extremely likely to take a gaudy fly if you can place it before him in an attractive way. To his mind it probably represents a small fish, and he is usually willing to take it with the rest.

The choice of patterns for the capture of large cannibal trout is not a very difficult matter. Very few salmon flies are more at best than impressionist likenesses of small fish, but a good many are quite good enough for trout to take them. The Silver Grey and Dusty Miller are two of the best. The Alexandra has a big, if somewhat undeserved, reputation. The Silver Doctor is a killing fly, and besides these one or two gold-bodied flies like the Dunkeld are useful for a change. It does not really much matter what fly you use so long as it is showy and has a tinsel body. As for the size, in general, 1 in. from head to butt is big enough. Occasionally, in the strong turmoil of a Thames weir pool for instance, it might be advisable to try a much bigger size; a 2 in. fly is not too much for rough water. At times, again, a little pattern of say ½-in. is more likely to be taken, and it possesses the advantage of being adaptable to finer gut. You cannot use a 2 in. salmon fly on fine trout gut without giving risk of cracking it off in the air or striking it off in a flash.

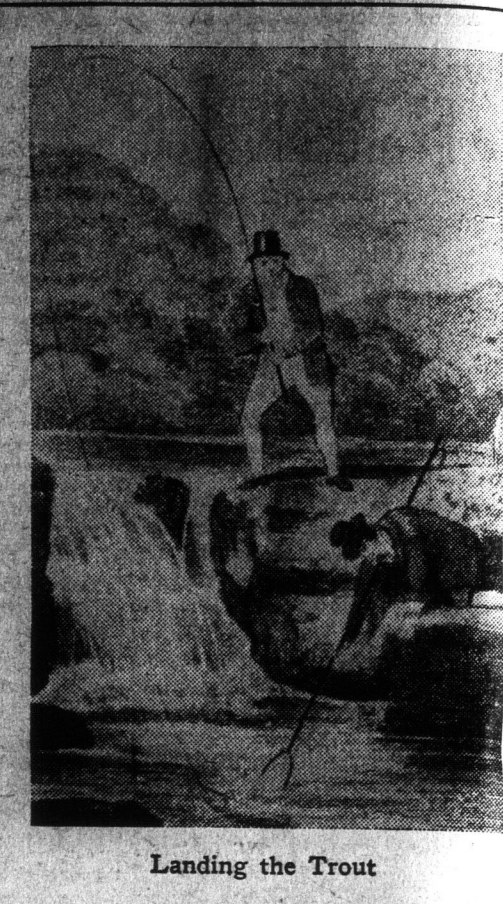
A powerful rod is wanted for this work and a heavy ungreased line. It is often necessary to cast a long way, and with a big fly at the end of the cast a light delicate rod snuffers. As a rule it is easiest to fish downstream, casting the fly across the river at an angle of 45 or thereabouts and letting work across to your own bank, keeping the line taut and giving the fly life by short pulls from the top of the rod. It is instructive to watch someone else doing it from the vantage point of a bridge if possible. The fly can be seen moving a few inches under the surface with quick jerks across the stream and looking very like some live thing.

Sometimes it pays to cast across or even upstream. In the last case you have to work the fly downstream, and, of course, have to gather in a yard or two of line with your disengaged hand, so that you may always be in touch with the fly, which must move rather quicker than the current. The gathering in of line is also useful in fishing in a lake, whether from shore or boat. A fish will often take within a yard or two of the boat or shore, and if the rod is high in the air and the line slack the chances are that he will not be hooked. Labor is also saved by the method and to "shoot" the rest at the next cast than to lift the whole of it.

Of course in all kinds of trout fishing it is well to study the feeding times of the fish, and it is more than well if you aim at success with big cannibal trout in a river, it is essential. Their feeding times are usually much briefer than those of their kinsmen, which is easily intelligible; a fish can more rapidly get its fill of minnows or bleak than of nymphs or flies, and being satisfied it feeds no more. Doubtless an odd trout or two may be picked up now and then by fishing in likely places, but much the best chance is offered by the regular feeding time. This is generally in the evening at about sunset or later, and it is wise to station yourself at a likely shallow and to make the most of it. Sometimes a trout will take with a rush and there will be no doubt as to his being hooked, he may at other times, especially as the light begins to fail, he may annex the fly so quietly that you are not aware of it. Then you raise the rod for another cast and realize that he has had it in his mouth for some time. And then you realize that he has gone. It is apt to be a tantalizing business. Still it has its difficulties, and its attractions, and sometimes its rewards. A lusty 4-pounder fairly landed with a fly rod is no mean triumph, and if you reflect that the fish would never have risen to a small fly in a whole season you have reason to be grateful to the lure that would raise him. Naturally, flies that ape minnows are not to be commended for streams where trout rise like gentlemen, but there are plenty of waters where what trout there are rise not at all, and these such flies have their justification. They are the alternative to the spinner, live bait, or worm.

## TROUT IN THE TRANSVAAL

The Transvaal Trout Acclimatization society acquired a new site for its hatchery at Potchefstroom some little while ago, and the scene of operations was duly shifted last year. A spell of very hot weather was unluckily experienced at the time of the change, and a large number of the stock fish either died or had to be turned into the Mooi reservoir to save their lives. Special efforts were made to repair the damage, and Mr. Harvey, manager of the hatchery, was able to get a new stock of trout fry from Perie. As these were the product of ova imported from the North of England hatchery by the Frontier Acclimatization society, they should do useful service in introducing new blood into Transvaal waters. The manager's report says that they have done remarkably well. Two cases of ova sent from New Zealand met with bad luck, but one



Landing the Trout

## Sportsman's Calendar

JUNE

Trout, Salmon, Grilse, Bass, and Char.  
The best month for Sea-trout.

of them produced a sufficient number of rain-bows for stock purposes. At the age of four months, it is stated, the largest fry measured fully 6 in.

The new hatchery promises to be a success, the water supply being of better quality and more even temperature than in the old one. The ponds are shaded at present by floating screens, on which watercress has been planted, and suitable marginal plants have also been introduced. Ultimately, trees will grow by their sides and help matters. Mr. Harvey speaks of the utility of fresh water snails, both as trout food and as scavengers. He has been able to get numbers of them, and has also introduced the fresh water shrimp. Crabs are a trouble from which English fish farms are luckily free; but water rats, sometimes of the same sort of mischief, i. e., "burrowing from one pond to another, and making channels for the escape of water and fish in all directions." The crabs make up for this to some extent, as they "when crushed, form a very good trout food." The hatchery has been quite free from disease, though a number of enemies levy toll on the little fish.

Of the success of trout in various waters not very much is said, though it is obviously satisfactory. The Mooi river, of which we have had such good reports in the past, is characterized as "disappointing," so, presumably, it had a bad season. The Dassies and Komati have given good sport. The Broederstroom and Helpmakaar, first thrown open last year, have done very well indeed, and seem to be full of fish. "This augurs well for the future of trout in the Northeastern Transvaal, as the above fish have all sprung from a small original stock, which were turned down a little less than five years ago." The society provides some fishing facilities for its members, which is as it should be. No additions were made to them last year, but the list of fishable waters, given early in the report, is already a pretty long one.

## HUNTING COYOTES ON ICE

Hunting coyotes on the ice with an automobile is something new for any part of the United States, or the world for that matter, but that's what Ed. Panning, Ed. Cook, John and Gene Ewalt did this week. On Tuesday evening they took the big Buick car, four-cylinder thirty, from the Cook and Panning establishment and went to the bottoms for a goose hunt. Along towards evening they saw a coyote start across the ice on the bottoms and took after it. The Cheyenne bottoms this fall contained more water than in any time for years, and there is practically a lake there six miles wide and 15 miles long, and which averages about a foot of water in depth, though in many places it is much more. The ice there is about six inches thick, and the big machine went across it safely. The boys caught the coyote, and had such a good chase that they hunted up another and ran it down. They used their six-shooters to keep it from turning too often, and when close enough shot it with shot guns. It was dark by that time, so they came home, and went out the next day for a real coyote chase. In four hours they got five coyotes. Ed. was driving, and he, as well as the others, says that it is the greatest sport in the world. The car had chains and skidded very little, though it takes a quarter of a mile to turn on the ice. It took good shooting to keep the coyotes headed right. Only one coyote got away, and he couldn't have done so if it hadn't been for the start he had. Some of the brutes developed a speed of 40 miles an hour. The incident is something that we believe never happened before and is not likely to happen again.—Wide World.

## RAMBLI

"No one," says yond his own indiv quite true, yet the fact embodied appear at a first gl is "individuality?" mine? For there a wholly similar if many points they others. So that characteristics and tion of the persona and that very diffe man intercourse so necessary. Man loves his kind, bec without his kind, an his mental wants, m with kindred minds, communing that his developed. It is by mind that great the ceived and wonderf

If we stop to th what a diversity of fact of this is borne i course of the day. upon this, and then of the many cate own individuality.

Take for instanc late in May, when m of spring in little amorous breath of senses for that fleet desires sweet as the of the sky all along with a golden haze the blue of the wes the zenith stretches soft fleecy clouds, it breaths that are ind Just now these crin rose, so that the sky the fairies or whate lieve in, had been s and apple blossom their place in spite of tion or any other "a plete the picture, an out the description y "silver sickle" of the tifully close proximi shining like a silver

Well now, haven your many acquainta same picture describ every night for nearl failed to notice it? A so sensible and pract maybe, but the sym placed, but level-head actly—level-headed, s never thinks to rais dane and the commo You have anothe sky smote upon your involuntarily and ma awe struck gaze he? "New moon eh?" he money in your pock you luck."

Then there is that often see him now. life is so full of th married, maybe, and take every moment of business. You would course, whenever you yourself over and ov not change the new o a million dollars or so of inducement, but— upon rare moments— contemplation but—y retained a few of the old associates, with w of the future as a ve of the same in a sense from what it has pr know where that old, passed those few mon night. Somewhere by and sky, his glass th self and the stars, br heavens which he br life-study, a study, w is, has not dulled his r made him the poorer n opened the door for beautiful dream-world

There is your cle young curate who, ve seldom calls the moon nesses, and "abhors paganism," nor yet whom you go to hear condemnation at the chapel, sparing neith Croesus, but a man y these two, a shabby preacher, who follows ciples did of old, or as to do at all events, ne ing remuneration, and ers, as devoted as the winter-time his plac shelter from the elem time, he preaches in th out-of-doors. He will set last night, a specia his God of the wind an and the laugh of little