

# Field Sports at Home and Abroad

## ALL THE RUNNING

What a buck he gave at the paddock gate!  
And how did the gay crowd banter  
What a hold he took all down the straight,  
When I shook him up for a canter.

At the starting post he was quick as a deer;  
I never saw one that could match him;  
When the flag went down he was two lengths  
clear,  
And I knew they would never catch him.

Those two short lengths he had changed to  
four  
Where the first fence crossed the hollow;  
He topped the twigs by a foot or more  
With the ease of a flying swallow.

Down in the dip he was eight lengths clear,  
You could neither hold nor bind him;  
The hoofs of the rest I could hardly hear  
When the next fence flashed behind him.

My tired arms ached as he tugged the rein  
In his slashing stride extended;  
The field strung out in an endless chain,  
And the pace was hot and splendid.

Faster and faster still he flew,  
When I felt his stride grow shorter,  
For the fence ahead was a fence he knew,  
And he knew that gleam meant water.

O, there's nothing matches an old hunt horse  
When it comes to a point of cunning;  
We had twelve good lengths to spare, of  
course,  
So well had we made the running!

The faintest check in his pace, that's all;  
One heave of his powerful quarter;  
A landing light as the snowflake's fall,  
And behind us glittered the water

A roar from the crowd; 'twas the fav'rite in,  
And a d—d cold dip for his rider!  
Then I knew my chance was good to win  
On this runaway rank outsider!

We charged at the wall full steam ahead;  
He's a horse in a hundred surely!  
We shook one stone from its mortar bed,  
And he shook his head demurely.

A mile to go; he was tireless still,  
And at each new fence grew bolder;  
But he slowed a bit as we rode the hill  
And I glanced across my shoulder.

There was only one of them I could see,  
A man on a chestnut filly;  
Then firelight took fresh charge of me,  
And I went with him willy-nilly,

At the final fence she came to his girth  
With the last game effort in her,  
But he drew away as his toes touched earth,  
And he landed an easy winner.

Though it's always good to ride in a race  
And to win it is always stunning,  
It's a prouder thing when you set the pace  
And make the whole of the running!

—Will H. Ogilvie.

## CHEETAH-HUNTING IN INDIA

"Alri!" And with a grunt I had turned over  
and was asleep again. But the faithful Yallo,  
himself a bit of a sportsman, cared for none of  
these things. Slowly and methodically he  
brought me back to consciousness and to the  
fact that for some reason or other I was to be  
called at 4 a. m.

Ah! the cheetah-hunt. To the uninitiated  
this suggests a jungle beat, with a fantasia of  
of sackbut, psaltery, etc., at one end, and three  
or four 500 express rifles at the other. In  
reality, it is a very different thing. The ob-  
ject is black-buck, and the cheetah plays the  
part of pursuer. At one time every Indian  
Rajah, with or without a penny to his name,  
kept a "kennel" of cheetahs for sporting pur-  
poses, but now owing one cause or another,  
only two establishments are kept up to the  
best of my knowledge—those of the Gaekwar  
of Baroda and the Nizam of Hyderabad; and  
it is to the former of these two native chiefs  
that we were indebted for our morning's sport.  
The cheetah is a very difficult animal to rear,  
as he has all the cotton-wool propensities of  
the greyhound or the racehorse. In fact, he is  
built on much the same lines, endurance being  
sacrificed to speed. Like all wild animals in  
captivity, he becomes more susceptible to dis-  
eases, and especially chest complaints. He  
does not compare favourably with the panther  
in personal appearance, for his skin is not so  
light and the black spots are not nearly so  
effective as the larger black rings affected by  
his cousin.

It was a dour morning for last night's  
reveler. The prospect was uninviting—dark,  
cold, and raw—a good eight or ten miles out  
into the country, and complete oblivion of hav-  
ing made any arrangements overnight. And  
when to my rescue came that sweetest of an-  
achronisms—a motor-car. Fancy going forth  
to hunt the wily buck through Indian jungle  
in a motor-car! True, the last two or three  
miles had to be accomplished on ponies, as  
even the directors of the Dunlop Company  
would have felt bound to burn their tyres,

more in sorrow than in anger, had they at-  
tempted the last piece of the road. We arriv-  
ed, to find an interested crowd surrounding a  
bullock cart, on which sat, sublimely indiffer-  
ent, His Highness the cheetah. Little cared  
he for the polite attentions of the ladies or for  
the somewhat personal remarks of the men on  
his emaciated appearance.

Except for the hood over his eyes, he look-  
ed like an abnormal specimen of the domestic  
cat; every moment one expected to hear a  
gentle purr. And yet there are times when no  
one, except his stable companion a small boy  
some 10 or 12 years old, will undertake to  
manage him. Eventually, some twenty or  
thirty enthusiasts had assembled, and among  
them some ladies, whose sporting instincts had  
been weighed in the balance and found want-  
ing. Have you ever seen a lady come out in  
a long skirt to walk up partridges after lunch?  
It is a piteous spectacle. One can picture so  
well the struggle that has taken place in Eve's  
mind, and how eventually fig-leaf vanity won  
the day. Today the primal curse has taken  
the shape of a number of white dresses, which  
must be visible to the most confiding of bucks  
at the distance of half a mile. However, after  
a severe reprimand from the M. C. (master of  
ceremonies, of cheetah hunt), they are per-  
mitted to follow in bullock carts at a respect-  
ful distance.

Gradually we emerge on to a good level  
plain of jungle, well covered with babul, a  
bush much resembling our blackthorn in gen-  
eral appearance, but, if anything, even more  
tenacious. And here let me add, for the benefit  
of the uninitiated, that "jungle" does not  
mean vast impenetrable forest, with monkeys  
and parrots chattering overhead, and rank  
undergrowth, 8 feet to 10 feet high, beneath,  
with snakes working themselves into coils on  
the right, and panthers screaming for our  
blood on the left. It is a purely negative term;  
any uncultivated plot of ground, in fact, may  
be dignified by the name of jungle.

In this special preserve of the Gaekwar  
there was not a blade of grass to be seen; it  
had all been burnt, according to the erroneous  
and strictly uneconomical native fashion, and  
yet large herds of these solely gaminivorous  
animals could be fairly described in the distance.  
The black skin of the buck could just be dis-  
tinguished from the fawn-coloured doe, but as  
yet no horns were visible to the naked eye.  
And now a plan of campaign must be ar-  
ranged.

Sun, wind, and cover must all be taken into  
consideration before the bullock cart can begin  
its slow perambulation. Smaller and smaller  
grow the circles, the buck still regarding the  
bullockcart with stolid indifference. Our  
friend the cheetah, still closely hooded, grows  
restless, and begins to sniff the air, but the mo-  
ment has not yet come. The buck must be  
looking the other way, or unsuspectingly graz-  
ing imaginary grass. Now! "Spots" is un-  
hooded, and after one look round, leaps quietly  
to the ground.

Who is there who has not spent a lazy hour  
watching a cat stalking some innocent wagtail  
disporting itself on the lawn; how well she  
avails herself of each vantage of cover, how  
flat and motionless she lies, when she sees her  
victim ill at ease? All this we now see on a  
grand scale. But the cheetah shows more  
impetuosity; maybe the pangs of hunger are  
to blame. Three springs and he is in the  
midst of the herd. North, south, east and  
west they scatter, and for one fatal moment our  
friend pauses in the midst of this embarrass de  
richesses.

A nice three-year old takes his fancy, and  
off he dashes in pursuit: a beautiful, smooth,  
easy action, not unlike that of a greyhound.  
The buck with his long, thin legs covers the  
ground at immense speed, and quickly disap-  
pears behind a thick clump of bushes. The  
cheetah is fast closing with him. Poor buck!  
no more will he go a-searching for the newest  
and daintiest blades of grass, no more indulge  
in fierce contest with a rival to the claims for  
fair Amaryllis—standing apart there in the  
shade. His hour is come—when suddenly the  
cheetah stops dead. What is it? There he was  
gaining a foot in every yard, and apparently  
as keen as ever hunter was.

Put a horse trained to 5 furlongs into a mile  
race, and where will he be? So with the  
cheetah, his powers of endurance are very  
limited, and he is of rather a sulky tempera-  
ment withal. Without difficulty he is recapt-  
ured by his diminutive keeper, and brought  
back in disgrace, with the expression, "I shan't  
play," plainly written on his face. And now,  
poor fellow, he is the object of much anathe-  
matizing: "Did I get out of bed at four o'clock  
to see this rotten show?" "The sulkiest brute  
I ever saw," and so on. However, the morn  
is young; the dew still glistens; the whole  
charm of sport lies in the uncertainty thereof.

Another herd is soon sighted, and the same  
careful process of stalking carried out. But  
this time the cheetah makes no mistake. From  
the moment his hood is lifted, he has set his  
heart on one particular buck. This time, as  
good luck will have it, the chase is in the open.  
He gains in every stride—now he is running  
level, and now he has made a spring at his vic-  
tim's throat. Over goes the buck like a nin-  
pin, but unlike that innocent toy of one's child-  
hood, up he gets again, and makes a last dash  
for liberty. But "Spots" is relentless; he has  
never really loosened his hold, and in another  
25 yards he has dragged down his quarry, and

by the time we arrive he is already engaged in  
sucking the life-blood from the victim's throat.  
And now a difficulty arises, for it is as much as  
a man's life is worth to try and take the buck  
from him now; he must be left in undisturbed  
possession for at least five minutes. Then one  
of two courses may be adopted. Either a long  
spoon is filled with blood, and is used as a lure,  
or else his attention is diverted to one of the  
hindquarters, which is quietly cut away from  
the rest, and he suffers himself to be led back  
again to the cart without casting a thought on  
the main body he is leaving. And so the sport  
ends. By this time the sun is high in the  
heavens and blazing fiercely, and during our  
return journey we are only buoyed up by the  
picture of a long glass, a long chair, and a long  
snooze.

The question which must inevitably crop  
up over the after-dinner cheeroot is, "Is it really  
sport?" To which I reply, that if coursing is  
sport, then so is cheetah-hunting. In this case  
the buck has more chance than the hare, for  
he has only one pursuer: also, if he can man-  
age to keep up a hot pace for some distance,  
the cheetah will tire and give up the chase, for  
he is not a stout-hearted animal. To Indian  
sportsmen there is a certain novelty in taking  
sides with an animal which one is accustomed  
to regard as an enemy. But the real charm,  
which must be seen to be appreciated, lies in  
watching the subtle movements of the cheetah.  
First the crouching walk, then the silent trot,  
finally the break into a magnificent series of  
bounds which show off the long lithe body to  
perfection. There is a grim silence about his  
movements. Like the ideal good little boy, he  
is to be seen and not heard, not even in the  
moment of triumph when he makes his final  
spring. The chase finished, the fun begins for  
the cheetah, but ends for the spectator. Only  
such people as will always go a mile to see a  
man who has been run over, or a case of sui-  
cide, would care to linger over the final scene.  
Like his first cousin the panther, he first drinks  
the blood from the neck, and then sets to work  
with less refinement on the rest of the body.  
There let us leave him. May he live long, and  
pull down many another buck before he him-  
self be cut off by the relentless Fate.—F. H. D.  
JOY, in Baily's.

## A DRY-FLY PROGRAMME

The trouts which I shall catch this summer  
are all great fair fishes. They shall number a  
hundred and one and they shall weigh 250lb.  
My average shall thus be, not 2½lb., because  
nobody credits these round figures, but two  
pounds and forty-eight one-hundred-and-  
oneths, a figure which bears on its face the  
stamp of very truth. I shall eat of these fishes  
thirty-four, my wife another thirty-four, and  
of the remainder I shall send two-thirds to  
people that we love. The third shall be placed  
with discretion where they may best further  
my professional ambitions.

The greatest of my trouts shall weigh 4lb.,  
for I would propose to Fortune nothing that is  
unimaginable, nor do I wish to overshoot my  
present furthest mark by any astonishing  
measure. I am still a comparatively young  
man, and the claims of coming years are not to  
be neglected. I profoundly pity that little boy,  
of whom one is always hearing, who takes a  
14lb. trout while fishing for eels. He is by no  
means to be congratulated, for he has practi-  
cally nothing to live for. He has caught his  
biggest trout. He had better take to golf at  
once. No, this summer I propose to do nothing  
which shall compromise my future. I will  
advance by no more than nine ounces.

I shall take this fine fish under the follow-  
ing conditions: I shall find him on a morning  
in early May. He shall lie on the glide below  
Crab Hatch, and at first I shall take him for a  
small bed of weed. But as I look about for  
other fishes there shall come a little ring in  
the water and I shall catch the gleam of a great  
yellow side that turns in the sunlight, and I  
shall crouch, with my heart leaping against my  
ribs. Then shall I deliver a very perfect cast  
and he shall come up, and I shall miss him and  
he shall flee into the depths of the pool, and  
by and by I shall go on. Early May is the  
wrong time for the taking of great trouts—  
this is what I shall tell myself. "Not until  
June," I shall say, "not until June will I snare  
this fish." And on the morrow I shall be ang-  
ling for him, but I shall not take him. And on  
the morrow. And on the morrow.

In July I shall slay him on a warm, moist  
afternoon following a week of great failure.  
For a week shall the smitten valley have swum  
in twinkling haze, for a week shall the wise cat-  
tle have dwelt all day beneath their elms, for  
a week shall the fool angler have crawled faint-  
ing beside a stream devoid of fishes. And lo,  
towards noon of the eighth day a change shall  
come, a greyness, a mitigation of the intoler-  
able glare. High overhead the blue shall grow  
all laced with filmy white. The downs shall  
recede, the birds begin to call. Hope shall  
whisper, "There is a sound of abundance of  
rain." And near two o'clock it shall come,  
softly, nor shall there be any thunder. And  
when I shall stand beside Crab Hatch the  
great one will be feeding and I shall take him  
at the first cast, and my soul shall sing while  
we battle in the heavy water of the pool.

I propose to take my second largest fish  
about ten o'clock on May 1 at the very bot-  
tom of the water and at my first cast. He is  
to weigh 3lb. 10z. Thus he will not be bigger  
than my now biggest, which would make a  
very inauspicious opening, but sufficiently

enormous to place me for my first day of  
fishing quite beyond the power of discontent.  
And I think that I will have a gallery; not a  
keeper, but a brother angler, some good fel-  
low who shall unobtrusively rejoice with me  
while we go in search of his own first trout.  
I would nearly always be alone when I grass  
a fine fish, but most especially whenever I  
top my weight; for the triumph on these lat-  
ter occasions should be altogether over one-  
self. It should be a pure and noble triumph,  
not to be muddled by that base joy which is  
inseparable from the act of landing a good  
fish before the eyes of another fisherman. But  
on May 1 I will have an angler beside me at  
the lower end. I would have that moment  
stuffed with every kind of pleasure, for last  
year I did not fish at all, and my appetite by  
May will be hard to glut.

This season I shall find that I have learn-  
ed to distinguish between the rises of little  
graylings and those of personable trouts. The  
sardonic dabchick shall dive in vain as I round  
the corners of my stream; the plausible vole  
no longer shall deceive my ear. And far up  
the stream I shall mark a break in the surface,  
and I shall only smile at the antics of a swift.  
And under the bank frogs shall burst with  
spite as I go unheeding on.

Touching the graylings which I propose to  
kill, I am not very particular as to their num-  
ber so long as it be above seventy, or their ag-  
gregate weight so long as it be generous. I  
put it roughly at 200lb., but I shall not com-  
plain if it be a little less. Nor do I insist on  
any single fish of any stupendous size. A 5-  
pounder will amply content me. The element  
of uncertainty (as it is called) is that which  
chiefly causes fishing to fascinate, and I were  
mad did I lay up a dull summer for myself by  
wholly rejecting this important feature of the  
sport. Thus on no day after June shall I go  
forth without owning the possibility of some  
great and unexpected triumph. I say after  
June, for I am quite determined that no gray-  
lings shall annoy me until they are takeable.  
There shall be no maddening five minutes'  
nursing back to life some fat, undesired, purple  
slug of a fish that has interfered between my-  
self and my legitimate prey; no anguished  
speculation as to how much longer the big  
trouts can go on rising. Nor shall I sweat  
blood while I fight the temptation to knock the  
brute on the head and be done with it. There  
shall be none of that. On July 1 the graylings  
shall begin to rise. Till then let them chew  
duckweed and keep in their place. During  
August I will hold carnival among them.  
September shall find them still greedy. Af-  
ter that they may do as they please, for I shall  
be gone.

My best day shall happen in the end of  
June. Three brace before lunch, one brace  
dapping in the Still Backwater before tea, one  
brace in the three Meadows just before sunset,  
and one brace fishing the mill pool while the  
sedges sail black out of the afterglow. My  
creel shall not contain the fishes which I shall  
catch that day. As I walk home there will be  
a 3-pounder in each wader. And I shall have  
returned trouts that other men would stuff.  
The mention of my waders reminds me  
that on no occasion during the forthcoming  
season am I to step too deeply in the water.  
My waders shall not leak at any time, and my  
brogues shall not come apart. All my tackle  
shall stand by me valiantly. All willow tips  
shall come readily away. My scissors shall  
never forget to come fishing. There shall al-  
ways be a red quill in my hand when I want  
one. The wind shall never disturb my flies  
over the surrounding meadow. My line shall  
never twist itself round the rod between the  
second and third rings, a feat which is so  
clearly impossible that I can never believe  
my eyes when it has been performed.

For the weather forecast, we are to have  
soft airs nearly all summer from the south  
and west, high-fresh weather. The big clouds  
shall troop slowly across the sky all morning,  
and then come to rest aloft to brood benevo-  
lently upon the valley. Such weather uplifts  
the soul, and my soul is by all means to be up-  
lifted this season. In the evenings we shall  
have fine displays in the west, and I have ar-  
ranged for a full moon every night. It is to be  
a great year for roses. The thyme on the  
downs shall blossom as never before. And  
some contrivance must be found for sending  
all the motor-cars by another road.

Rain shall fall mostly by night, and the  
lawn shall always be our dining-room. Tea  
shall always be ready when I come in for it.  
Always I shall find my waders turned of a  
morning. Such men as come to angle shall do  
prodigiously. No neighbour shall call upon us.  
The newspaper shall never fail, nor the carrier,  
nor the water supply. The fowls, too, shall  
lay for their lives, and oh, the succulence that  
must distinguish the strawberries.—W. Quil-  
liam, in the Field.

## THE KING OF THE WEIR POOL

My first sight of him was on Whit Sun-  
day, when I was lazing in a Canadian canoe  
in the weir pool with Jackson. We both saw  
him come out, a perfect leviathan of a trout.  
"He is fourteen pounds if an ounce!" said  
Jackson in an awe-struck whisper; "we ought  
to have a go at him tomorrow." With con-  
fidence I answered: "We'll have him all right  
That fish is ours. When we are old men  
our grandchildren will talk of the monster  
trout that you and I caught in Burley Weir



## Sportsman's Calendar

MAY

Trout-fishing good this month EVERY-  
WHERE.  
Steelheads still running in certain rivers.  
A run of small silver salmon or cohoes  
comes in May.  
Geese and Brant may still be shot.  
N.B.—At the request of the Game  
Warden, we remind readers that dogs  
running loose at this season do an im-  
mense amount of damage to nesting game  
birds.

Pool." "Have you ever caught a Thames  
trout?" broke in Jackson brutally.

As a matter of fact, I never had. And in  
the innocence of my heart I imagined that  
you fished for them as for their relations of  
Dart or Tavy, while Jackson, base deceiver  
that he was, thought the same. So we spent  
nearly the whole of Whit Monday flogging  
the weir pool with every pattern of salmon  
fly we possessed, with big chub flies, with lures  
beloved of salmon trout. The result of our  
labors gave us three fair-sized chub, which,  
of course, we had to return; but of trout we  
saw never a glimpse. Tentative inquiries,  
veiled beneath an assumption of knowledge  
that neither of us possessed, revealed the fact  
that to secure Thames trout you must either  
use live bait or a spinning minnow. Whit  
Tuesday saw us back at the weir pool with  
three or four different patterns of phantoms,  
and a fierce resolve to bring the monster to  
the net.

And here let me pause to sublimate a few  
pungent reflections for the benefit of the man  
who sold Jackson the spinning minnow that  
lured the giant to our undoing. Yes, Jackson  
did undoubtedly get into the monster. The  
fight may have lasted six seconds—long  
enough to give the startled Jackson a brief  
foretaste of what might have happened if that  
wretched phantom had played the game and  
allowed him to play the fish. His reel scream-  
ed—sweeter music than that wild fugue I  
know not—black came his line, at the end of it  
a useless, hookless phantom—at least, the  
flight of hooks was still there, minus every  
barb. We swore. I know that there was no  
justification for such a lapse of good manners;  
but, I freely admit, we swore. And, of course,  
our friend, with six barbs in his upper or  
lower lips, would not come again for more, like  
Oliver, of distinguished memory. To secure  
a brace of little jack, that had to be returned,  
was small compensation for such a blow.

The next day Jackson had to go back to  
town, and I spent the whole of the next seven  
days in useless efforts to catch the great fish.  
I got six jack one evening, and each time I  
struck home there came to me a tiny thrill that  
died on birth. "Is this he?" Of course, it was  
not. The sixth jack I murdered out of sheer  
savage rage. If there is a penalty for the  
crime, I will pay it cheerfully. Then I heard  
that a small boy fishing with roach tackle,  
with paste for bait, had secured a quite pre-  
sentable trout of 3½lb., not far from where  
I had myself seen the monster rise. This  
fired me anew, and I once more set forth on  
the quest, with the result that I netted a  
chub, that had as much fight in it as a port-  
manteau, of about 1½lb., and had the dubious  
satisfaction of seeing Master Leviathan again  
fling himself out of the weir pool, as though in  
defiance of my puny efforts. Needless to say,  
I tried him with every imaginable kind of lure,  
with as much want of success as always.

And so time passed until June 16 came, and  
with it the opening of the course fishing, and a  
positive forest of rods all up the towpath from  
Richmond to Oxford, and I daresay beyond.  
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