

and causing him to set every muscle to resist the merciless strain; then drawing his hunting-knife from its sheath at his side, he gave a succession of smart raps upon the but of the rod, sending an electrical thrill down the tense line, so surprising and startling that, despite his courage and pluck, he fled amain, in a series of short, irregular, zigzag plunges, and once more headed down stream.

Constant exertion and the incessant strain had evidently reduced his strength, and his career was now soon checked by a judicious use of the but; in addition to the weight of line he had to draw through the water, the shortened arch of the rod made it more difficult to uncoil the line from the reel, and he soon gave evidence of fatigue. Unable to continue his course, he came to a halt, still resisting to the utmost the strain applied to turn him, and in the struggle to maintain his place we could see the glitter of his silver side—sure omen of success to the cautious angler. To a steady, careful, persistent, yet gentle strain, he was forced to “give up the position;” slowly and unwillingly he turned his head toward us, and slowly but surely the revolving reel shortened the distance between him and his relentless foe. The victory now seemed to us to be won, again our mouths watered at the idea of our delicious breakfast, and we became impatient to see the full length beauties of this brave but conquered hero. Not so Charles. Past experience had taught him that in angling, more than in any other pursuit, there was “many a slip ’twixt cup and lip,” and that a salmon, especially, was never vanquished while he could wave his tail, more powerful in his death throes than in life. Carefully, but cautiously, he wound in the line, his eye never leaving his approaching prize; gradually the distance diminished, the brave fish coming in sideways, until he was within ten yards of the shore. Our trusty canoe-man, George, was ready, gaff in hand, and only waited a nod from Charles to wade into the water and end the battle. The feeble struggles of the exhausted monarch told that the favorable moment was approaching, and soon the weary waving of his restless tail was the only indication that the brave old warrior was still alive. The expected nod was given, and George cautiously approached the apparently exhausted captive. Waiting till Charles, by dexterous management, had brought the broad side of the fish directly in front of him, with gaff outstretched, ready to give the final *coup*, he made one step forward, but in his eagerness, placed his foot upon the round surface of a slippery stone, lost his balance, and in the instinctive movement to recover it, brought the gaff down with a splash within a foot of the quiet and unresisting fish. Quick as thought the apparently subdued prisoner darted up stream, making the rod bend and the reel fairly sing with the rapidity of its revolutions. With one glance of indignation at poor, crest-fallen George, our angler, who had never relaxed his care, even in the moment of assur-

ed victory, let the fish have his head, knowing that the strength of the current and the weight of the line would soon overcome this last effort of the courageous monarch. The result proved the correctness of his augury. Nobly the gallant fish held his way till at the very foot of the narrow channel near which he was hooked; he had now taken off the reel about thirty yards of line, and to draw this after him in the swift water of the rapid was too much for his exhausted strength. Poising himself a moment on the brink, he made an attempt to shoot the rapid, but being met by the opposing skill of his wary foe, who at this moment shortened the arch of his rod to its quickest curve, by pointing the but directly at him, he fell back, and was carried down by the current. When again brought to the surface, it was evident that fish nature could continue the combat no longer, and fairly exhausted by his last futile efforts to escape his fate, he turned his silver side to the sky and was quickly drawn in to the spot he had so lately left. Our friend Harry, who had watched the battle without a word, but with every feature eloquent with excitement, now seized the gaff, determined that no less worthy hand than his own should give the finishing stroke to this brave warrior. Wading within reach of the nearly lifeless fish, with sure and dexterous stroke he impaled him on the gaff, and walked ashore with the corpse of the gamest fish that ever gladdened angler's heart, or rewarded skill and coolness.

A hearty shake of the hand that had managed the prize so deftly, said all that was necessary between these old knights of the rod, who had, years since “won their spurs” and taken their degree in the “gentle art,” and we proceeded to inspect and weigh this noble specimen of a gallant fish. He weighed twelve pounds two ounces, was a finely formed male, and evidently not long in fresh water. Examining his mouth we found that the hook had dropped out of a “button-hole” in the side of his lower jaw the moment the gaff took the weight of the fish and relieved the rod from the strain—no better evidence of perfect handling could be given.

It was now seven o'clock; the battle we have so quickly fought on paper occupied over an hour, affording the keenest enjoyment and the most delicious excitement to both Charles and ourselves.

Inspecting his fly, Charles found that it was pretty well “chewed up,” and the link of gut on which it was dressed, so much frayed that it was not to be trusted in another encounter. Substituting another of the same pattern, our angler betook himself to his old stand, and again his glittering lure hovered over the foaming current. At the third cast a grise leaped clear out of water and literally took the fly “on the wing.” As if to meet the wishes of the angler, he shot out of the rapid into the quiet pool on the left, and evidently did not know that anything extraordinary had happened to him. He gave a few careless