Autumn Salmon Fishing in British Columbia

Written for The Western Home Monthly by W. R. Gilbert

Speech

Talk happiness. The world is sad enough Without your woe. No path is wholly

Look for the places that are smooth and

And speak of them to rest the weary ear Of earth; so hurt by one continual strain,

Talk faith. The world is better off

Your uttered ignorance and morbid

If you have faith in God, or man, or self, Say so; if not push back upon the shelf Of silence, all your thoughts till faith

No one will grieve because your lips are

Talk health. The dreary, never-ending Of mortal maladies is worn and stale; You cannot charm, or interest, or please By harping on that minor chord—disease. Say you are well, or all is well with you, And God shall hear your words and make

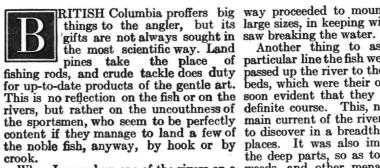
E. W. Wilcox.

Of mortal discontent and grief and pain.

clear.

shall come;

them true.



I landed and sought for the initiated Waltonian on the banks of the beautiful would be no difficulty in netting me a few into a mystic blue. Salmon, but to catch them with a rod We soon found that we were not the with an expressive shrug of the shoulders three Indian squaws in it, who were busy,

RITISH Columbia proffers big way proceeded to mount both, selecting things to the angler, but its large sizes, in keeping with the fish that I

Another thing to ascertain was the pines take the place of particular line the fish were taking, as they fishing rods, and crude tackle does duty passed up the river to the far off spawning for up-to-date products of the gentle art. beds, which were their objective. It was This is no reflection on the fish or on the rivers, but rather on the uncouthness of the sportsmen, who seem to be perfectly content if they manage to land a few of the noble fish, anyway, by hook or by places. It was also important to know the deep parts so as to avoid rocks and when I passed up one of the rivers on a lovely autumn day and saw the fish breaking water in all directions, I could find nobody among the civilized community, that had even heard of the river being fished with a rod and line. When I landed and sought for the initiated vations.

The river was closely wooded on one stream, I was equally unsuccessful in side with shapely rocks bedecked with discovering that particular product. Even shrubs and berry bushes. Behind them in the native Indian Reserve, where the was a fine range of mountains, some high mighty hunter was supposed to be enough to be snow-capped, which peeped tabernacled, I met with little encourage- out here and there, through breaks in the ment. If it was fish I wanted, why, there forest, others so far distant as to fade off

and line!—that device was dismissed only anglers—we passed a dugout with



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vet this river is within a stone's throw of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and every traveller to the far West crosses it by means of the railway. A little conceit is a useful thing, and I confess to possessing a sufficient dash of that commodity to determine to go my own way about things. I was fortunate enough to obtain the attendance of an Indian, who aided and abetted me in my scheme, although a rank sceptic as to the methods I pro-

He had a broad steady boat, eminently adapted to the river, and though a paddle sufficient resistance, to assure me that I would have been more in keeping with the traditions of his tribe, he handled a pair of sculls with ease and efficiency. The first essential to successful salmon fishing is to know your river, and I proposed to row down stream, with the object of afterwards, as the big spoon was flashing picking up such information as I could on its silver and gold in the bend of the river, the subject, although necessarily in a the rod was again brought into play, and superficial way. It was quite evident this time the hooks had got a firm hold. from what I saw, that the river was deep, and if not sluggish, at least slow moving. fifty yards and then stopped suddenly, There were no rapids or swirling eddies and tugged at the line in the fashion that suggested the advisability of mount- known as jiggering. I gave him a little ing a fly. My knowledge too, of the slack, which he used in diving, going spring salmon discouraged the application straight down several feet. Although the of the highest form of angling, as, so far river was very deep it is advisable to keep as its history goes, that particular species a salmon as high up in the water as does not patronise it. There was nothing possible. I could not effect this at a for it, therefore, but trolling with a spoon distance, and the Indian backed the boat or minnow, and as I was well provided down until I got close to the quarry. with most forms of these lures. I straight- recovered all the line possible and applied

"still" fishing with hand lines for nothing larger than trout. I asked what bait they used, and was informed that it was salmon roe. I judged from the depth of the water that fifty or sixty yards of line would not be too much for trolling, and firmly fixing the rods athwart the stern of the boat, awaited not the dawn, like Ulysses, but developments. The first of these declared itself in the snarl of the reel, the line for the same cause shooting across the stream. I seized the quivering rod, but on raising it, there was not had got hold of anything tangible. What often happens in other countries happened on that particular occasion in British Columbia—the fish had effected its release on the first run. Ten minutes

The fish continued to run for about