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SPORTING SKETCHES IN NEW BRUNSWICK AND MAINE.

A BUNCH OF SALMON TAILS FROM THE MIRAMICHI.

BY AN OLD ANGLER.

GENTLE reader, have you ever caught the speckled trout, or drawn the silver salmon from his native element? Ah! you *have* had experience; then you can sympathize with a brother angler while he recalls the triumphs of summers past and fights some battles o'er again. What! have you never enjoyed the delightful thrill of this exciting sport? Never fought and conquered the monarch of the stream, with naught but your slight rod and a slender thread, opposing skill and judgment to strength and cunning? Never experienced the delicious change from heated and dusty city life, to the fresh, cool, invigorating and health-giving life in open air, mid forests and rivers, woods and lakes; the sweet commune with Nature, in her wildest and most sublime, as well as in her calmest and most beautiful aspects; the cheery life by the camp-fire, with pleasant and genial friends; the glorious appetite, sharpened by vigorous exercise, and the still more glorious "feeds,"—salmon and trout fresh from the water, served up as none but sportsmen can prepare them? Then you have much to live for!

The days are lengthening, the sun is shining brightly, and shadows linger lovingly on hill and dale; the Ice-king has vacated his frost-bound throne, and gentle Spring sits on her throne of flowers. The laughing rills and smiling streams again woo the kisses of old Sol; the speckled beauties, waked to new life by this amorous dalliance, again leap in his rays and pursue the glittering fly: the noble salmon is seeking his summer haunts beside mossy rocks or in eddying currents, on the watch for his winged prey. Listen to my story and learn what pleasures Summer has in store for thee.

At earliest dawn one morning in July, Fred, Charles, Harry and Jim woke from sound sleep on fragrant couches of fresh fir boughs, in their comfortable camp at Burnt Hill on the Miramichi, and after a refreshing plunge in the clear, cool water, proceeded, according to a programme arranged the evening before, Fred

and Jim to the "upper casts," where the ice-cold waters of Burnt Hill Brook flow over a succession of small ledges into the main river. Charles and Harry to the "Pool," and the rapids of "Grassy Island," both within five minutes walk of the camp.

Morning had raised the mantle of darkness, and the ruddy glow of the Eastern horizon told our fishermen they had no time to lose, as their hopes of freshly caught salmon for breakfast depended on their skill in luring the monarch from his haunts amid the rocks which, at these points, break the quiet flow of the river into mimic waves and circling eddies. Let us accompany them, gentle reader, and see how salmon are conquered by doughty knights of the rod and skilful squires of the gaff.

Immediately in front of the camp, about twenty yards from the bank, is a flat-topped rock, that rises just above the level of the river, affording good footing and a splendid cast up, down and across the pool. Here we will leave Harry, who has waded to the rock, and is deftly casting a fly far down the quiet pool, and walk with Charles about forty rods further down the banks of the river, where Grassy Island divides the stream, and where the still waters of the pool rush swiftly through a narrow gorge on the hither side, broken into numberless eddies as it strikes the rocks thickly scattered below the island. A ledge, partially submerged, here extends from the shore to the very edge of the foaming current, enabling the sure-footed angler to approach so near that he can cast his fly well across the channel that separates him from the island, and also down to the nearest rocks at its foot. Here our friend Charles has betaken himself, and, with skilful hand, is making his fly dance in the eddy of "salmon rock." The sun has peeped above the horizon and given him an encouraging wink; he is using his best skill, causing his fly to fall with the lightness of the natural insect, allowing it to rest a moment, then making it flutter on the surface, and finally lifting it for a fresh cast.