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B O D I N E S;

OR,

CAMPING ON THE LYCOMING.

A COMPLETE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO "CAMPING OUT."

BY

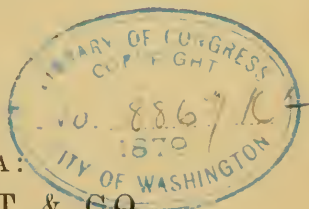
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EDITOR OF "THE BISTOURY."

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1879.



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TO

S. S. HAMLIN, Esq.,

MY CONSTANT COMPANION IN THE SCENES HEREIN DESCRIBED,

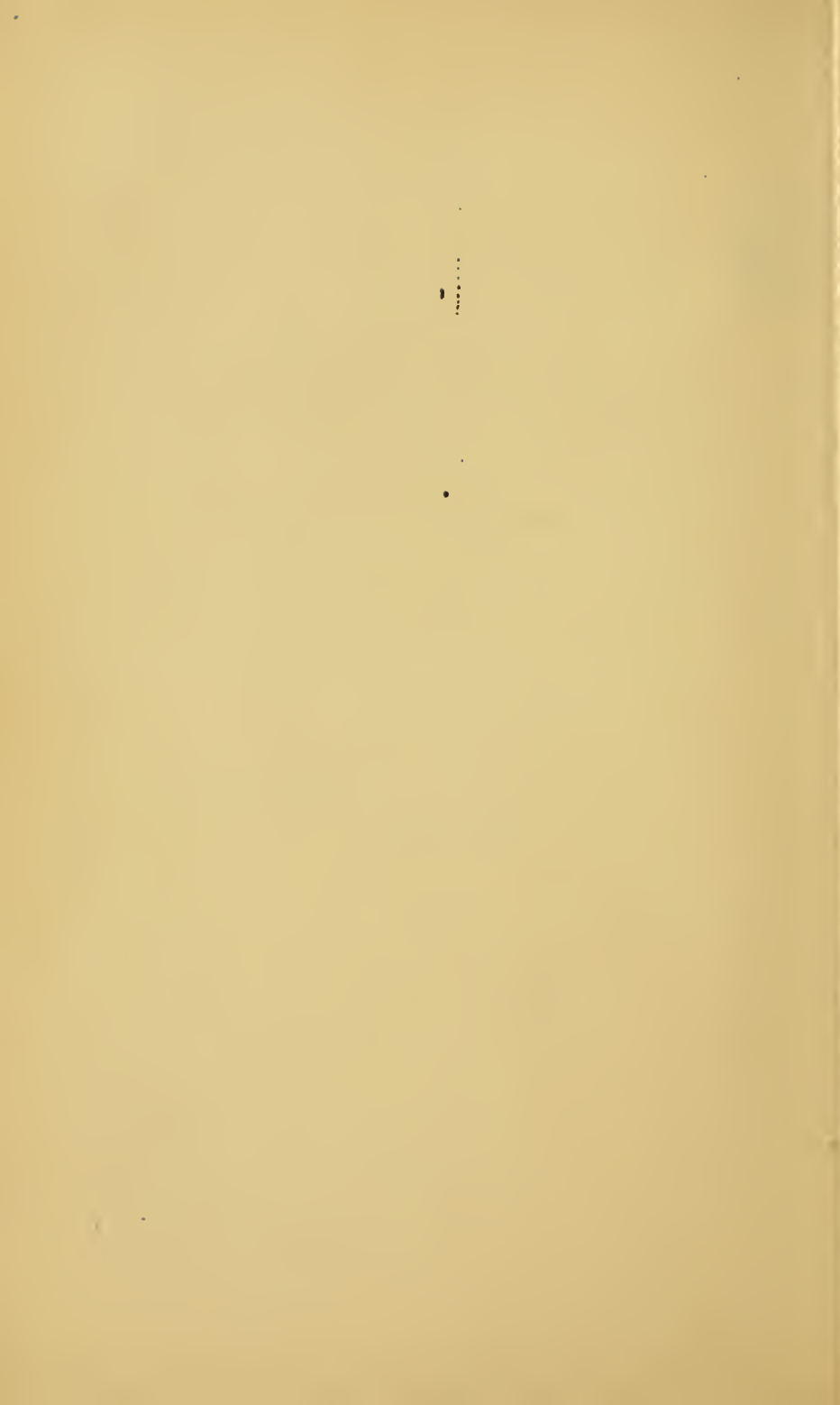
IN MEMORY OF THE MANY HAPPY DAYS

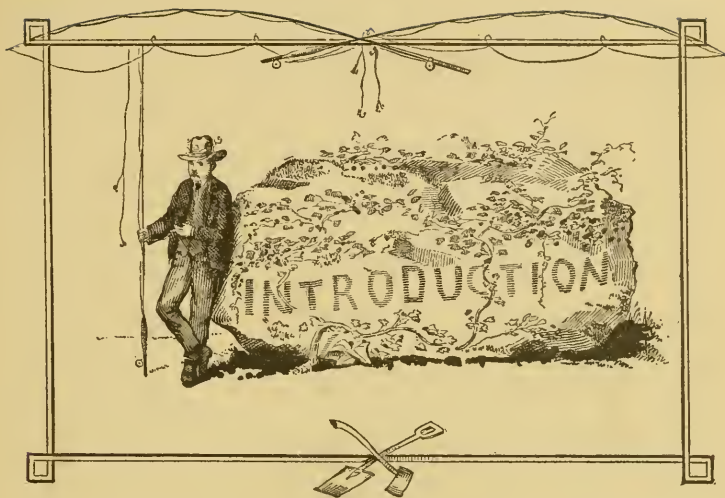
IN CAMP AND STREAM,

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY HIS FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

ELMIRA, June, 1879.





I YIELD to no man in his admiration for the wild and grand scenery of the almost inaccessible regions of the Adirondacks, or the roaring, rapid salmon rivers of the Canadian frontier. I delight in the long voyages by canoe, and the laborious "carries" that are encountered in the Maine and North woods, when making excursions into the deep and quiet recesses of those grand old forests. I can enjoy "roughing it," with frying-pan, tin cup, coffee-pot, and blanket strapped in a pack upon my back, and follow my guide cheerily through the tangled underbrush, and slide down the steep declivities into the stream

below, rupturing cuticle upon hands and knees, and count it fun ; yea, most glorious sport, when trout are there to welcome my trailing flies, and the sun to lend his golden beams, illuminating and revealing the many and varied beauties with which our mountain regions abound. Such excursions are delightful, beyond my ability to portray, even were I so disposed. But this is not the field I propose to enter : the charming witchery of such a life has been most fascinatingly told by Mr. Hallock, in his "Fishing Tourist," and by Mr. Murray, in his "Adirondack Tales," two books that are unsurpassed in the literature upon out-door life and sports.

The mission of this book is widely different, —intended to teach all who would enjoy a sojourn in the woods, that it can be accomplished nearer at home, at points accessible by rail, and upon mountain streams whose cascades, glens, majestic forests, singing birds, and lovely ferns and flowers are not surpassed anywhere in the regions to which these books refer ; and whose trout are as sprightly and of sufficient size and number to satisfy the reasonable demands of any follower of Izaak Walton.

If in these unpretending sketches I can quicken

the desire of any of my readers to experience many of the pleasures herein narrated, and have clearly pointed out how it may be accomplished inexpensively yet comfortably, if not luxuriously, I shall have achieved a work not wholly valueless, while to the more pretentious angler I hope to give some hints that may aid him in future excursions.

What follows is a truthful record and the actual experience of two ardent fishermen, who, for eight years, during the month of June, have camped upon the banks of the beautiful and picturesque Lycoming Creek. What we did and how we lived I now propose to tell you.

Is the theme one likely to enlist your attention?

If yes, read on; our trip commences.



CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—Bodines	13
II.—The Preparation	27
III.—Paraphernalia	44
IV.—On the Stream	68
V.—Shorty	83
VI.—The Loyalsock	100
VII.—Other Streams	116
VIII.—Fly-Casting	131
IX.—Visitors	145
X.—A Chat with Charles	161
XI.—Rainy Days	178
XII.—Ralston	191
XIII.—Sunday in Camp	208
XIV.—Around the Camp-Fire	226
XV.—Cuisine	244
XVI.—Idle Hours	265



DESIGNED BY FRED. E. MURRAY.

FULL-PAGE.

PAGE

View of the Camp	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
The Slope Wall—Landing a Trout	76
Shorty and Boy	86
The Tea-Party	106
Hamlin catching a Deer	134
George announcing Dinner	147
Dixey in the Thunder-Storm	185

TAIL-PIECES.

The Vine Stub	26
Fireplace	43
Wading Shoes	67
Fly-Book	82
Shorty's Hat	99
Rustic Dining-Table	115

	PAGE
Frogs scrutinizing a Fly	130
Camp-Stool and Trout	144
Jim Crow	160
A Chat with Charles	177
Charles with String of Suckers	193
Dutchman Falls, at Ralston	207
Hounds giving Tongue	225
Creel and Lunch-box	243
Turning a Flapjack	264
Homeward Bound	279

BODINES.

CHAPTER I.

BODINES.

A Description of our Camping-Grounds.

“‘BODINES! BODINES!’ What a queer name for a book! Where under the sun did you run across such a title as that?” methinks I hear you exclaim upon picking up this modest little volume and reading the gilt inscription that ornaments its face.

Well, I’ll tell you; then perhaps you will not think it so strange, after all.

Just fifteen years ago my piscatorial friend prevailed upon me to “go a-fishing.” At that time I had never thrown a fly nor caught a trout,—a circumstance that has been and ever will be a lasting regret. When, in my leisure moments, I chance to think how many of my days were passed without having been familiar with this delightful recreation, and how I sought sport and rest at the seaside resorts with com-

panions no wiser than myself, I can but deplore the fate that did not bring me in contact with my good friend earlier in life. But the invitation finally came, and I at once acceded to the proposition, when a-fishing we went,—to Ralston, in the State of Pennsylvania and on the Northern Central Railway, distant from Elmira just fifty-one miles, and then, as now, a famous resort for those skilled in the gentle art.

At this delightful spot I obtained my first glimpse of the Lycoming Creek, and captured my first trout in its crystal waters. As the circumstance is recalled, I well remember the delights of that day,—how Hamlin and I fished through the “Sugar Bottom” side by side, he stopping momentarily to teach me how to make a cast, to rescue my leader from an overhanging tree-top, or to cut a fly from some inaccessible region of my clothing; how he would raise a beauty at almost every cast, and land him too, while I would do just the reverse continually. I remember how vexed I became at having the trout jump to my flies, while I was utterly unable to hook them, or, if I did, how they would be tossed into the highest tree-top, or sent spinning half-way up the mountain, through the vigorous jerk of my inexperienced arm.

“Don’t jerk so hard; you will certainly take their heads off!” was Hamlin’s constant warning note; but it required all the day to learn that it

was not the quick and strong strike that hooked the wary fish.

At noon we returned to Mr. Myer's hotel, Hamlin with his creel full of trout, and mine—well, never mind; would rather compare catches later on in the season. But one thing I remember both of us to have had in equal degree at least, and that was a splendid appetite. And right here let me declare that Mrs. Myer did satisfy that craving for a trout-dinner perfectly. It was many years ago: since then I have eaten trout at various and sundry places; but yearly have I found myself returning to Mrs. Myer's table to enjoy the trout that she knows so well how to prepare.

Many were the days that my friend and I passed upon the creek in this neighborhood before I became proficient as a fisherman; but when that time did come I believe I lacked not enthusiasm for the sport, whatever may have been my shortcomings in skill at casting the fly. In the numerous excursions made in following years with those two famous fly-fishermen, Hamlin and Sanders, they never succeeded in enticing me farther than Astenville, a little deserted mining-village two miles below Ralston. A trip through the "Sugar Bottom" and the deep pool back of Astenville always filled my creel, when I would wade ashore and foot it up the railroad to Ralston, leaving my two friends to fish on down

as far as the "Slope Wall," which mystic spot seemed to be the one bright Mecca in travelling toward which their feet would never tire. But enough was quite a plenty for me, and, notwithstanding their frequent solicitations, their glowing accounts of the stream, of the scenery, flowers, rocks, and ferns they encountered upon the route, I could not be inveigled from my favorite haunts about Ralston. Finally, one day, more to satisfy my friends than to gratify any curiosity or anticipation of pleasure upon my part, I skipped the Sugar Bottom and waded on down the stream with them to the famous Slope Wall. The creek was open, wide, and free from overhanging trees or bushes,—which so much interfere with fly-casting;—the banks were sloping, grassy and bountifully studded with wild-flowers, while the forests on either hand were alive with merry singing-birds. Many delightful pools afforded us abundance of sport upon our way, and numerous were the fine fish taken at the mouth of Pleasant Stream, three miles below, and at "Powell's Pond," a little farther on. After leaving Powell's the creek turns abruptly to the left, into a narrow channel, through which the water tumbles swiftly down, forming quite a cascade, that soon becomes lost in a shady, placid pool nearly half a mile in length. Going ashore,—it being too deep to wade,—we took the right bank and jogged on down until we arrived at another rapid, that

carried the water directly against a stone wall that seemed to be about nine feet high and perhaps eight hundred long, built as a protection to the railway running along its top. The strong wall received the water and turned it to the right, sending it along its entire length, a bubbling, swirling, foaming mass. From between the huge stones of which the wall was built all manner of ferns, grasses, and mosses grew, with here and there a more pretentious bush, its green boughs drooping gracefully into the seething water below. Across the railway an immense mountain lifted its hoary head, whose sides were covered with stubs of massive hemlocks that were noble trees before the fire passed through, leaving desolation in its path. Considerable time had elapsed since the conflagration, so that where all had been dark and gloomy, Nature now wrought brightness and beauty. Young underbrush springing up covered the blackened surface with a green carpet that contrasted finely with the dead trunks that rose majestically from among them. To our right could be seen, through the straggling limbs of some grand old buttonwoods, a cultivated field, in which a number of native boys and girls, who seemed to be merry with their work, were planting corn. Beyond was a high mountain, covered with balsams, hemlocks, spruces, pines, beeches and maples, whose varying foliage was arrayed right

royally in the morning sunlight. In front of us the stream went dancing on until deflected against a high bank, in which the kingfishers had constructed their habitations, the owners thereof chattering, from the stubby limbs of a dead tree, their displeasure at our visitation; and here was the Slope Wall, with all its delightful surroundings. Over this rapid we cast our flies, and a right merry time we had in landing one another's fish. The deep pool above, the water in front of the wall itself, and the ripple by the high bank have afforded us capital sport from that day to this. A mile below this point the creek again turned to the right, forming another delightful cascade that dashed against some huge moss-covered rocks that ages ago lost their balance and slid from the steep mountain-top above to the stream below. To the right was a long deep bayou, into which flowed a branch of the creek that had taken a short cut and followed the foot of the mountain, so forming an island that extended to a point just where the two streams met. Upon this narrow high point of ground were growing two splendid pines, and a little farther up the slope, on still higher ground, two immense beeches and an elm, the great, long, crooked limbs of the first two reaching to the water's edge on either side, while the elm threw its gracefully-drooping branches between, casting a shadow so dense that we could not

resist the silent invitation to come ashore and rest.

“What a delightful place to lunch!” Hamlin said.

“Capital!” Sanders replied; then, examining his watch, hanging his creel upon a limb, and leaning his rod against the trunk of a tree, added, “It’s about noon; let us have our luncheon here: this is the coolest spot I’ve found to-day.”

So, we spread our eatables upon the bright green grass, under the beech, and laid ourselves out in comfortable but grotesque positions about them.

Just before us, looking toward the point of the island and between the trunks of the two pines, was a long, deep, and quiet pool. The right bank was formed by an almost perpendicular mountain, densely covered with hemlock, spruce, pine, and tulip-trees, under the green branches of which were seen laurels, rhododendrons, and ferns in one interminable jungle. Overhanging the pond were hemlock boughs, the ends tipped with bright new shoots that contrasted effectively with the darker branches beyond. Upon the water, not a ripple disturbing its glassy surface, reflections of the trees and mossy rocks, as well as of the old mill and railroad bridge, which crossed the stream farther down, produced a most charming effect. Farther to our left were other mountains, cleft to allow the passage of a

smaller stream to swell the waters of our quiet pond.

Immediately across the creek and to our left, among a clump of willows, loomed up, high into the air, an old stub, limbless, weather-beaten, and densely covered with a clematis-vine that shot out its curling tendrils in every direction to the very peak. From the spot where we were reclining, it was sharply defined against the clear blue sky that was opened to view from the cleft in the mountain, giving us a picture that required no Claude Lorraine mirror to intensify.

Our dinner despatched, we lighted our cigars, seated ourselves upon the grassy knoll under the great beech, and took in the lovely surroundings.

Sanders (always in search of a cool spring from which to slake his thirst) wandered up the bayou a short distance, when we soon heard him exclaim, from somewhere among the tangle of willows which covered the bank:—

“I’ve found a spring; come have a drink!”

We rose, followed the direction of his voice, and soon came to a delightfully cool spring, bubbling from among the roots of an old leaning beech that stood by the edge of the water. We all stooped down upon our hands and knees, and partook freely of its inviting waters; then, standing erect and gazing about upon the beauty of the scene, exclaimed, almost in chorus:—

“Oh, what a place to camp!”

Returning to the grand old beech, we seated ourselves again until our cigars were finished, then waded across the creek and through the willows, to find ourselves in a meadow through which was meandering a clear and crystal brook; and there, in the centre of a sloping grassy plat, with the railway and quaint old cabin that served for a depot in front, the sombre mountain, that had lost its bright hues in the evening shadows, for a background, and at the foot of which lay the quiet pond; below, the roaring dam, near which tottered the old saw-mill, that seemed uncertain which way to fall,—there, in a little grove of cherry, apple, and locust trees, stood an old-fashioned dwelling, that spoke to us plainly, by its weather-beaten sides and moss-covered roof, of the days of long ago.

The chimney was of heroic size, built of stone, half in-doors and half out, while great rents exhibited themselves in its broad top, which appeared above the ancient roof. At the gable-end, on one side of the chimney, a small window peeped out, with diminutive lights of glass, half concealed by a woodbine that clambered over its face to the roof above. To the front a little porch projected a few feet beyond the battened door, and over it climbed a wild rose, that shut in and adorned its sides. To the right of this porch was another small window, like its mate on the end, above each still more contracted ones,

that lighted the second story. Roses, hollyhocks, and peonies dotted the green lawn here and there, and among them stood a tall wooden pump with a long, curled, iron handle, that terminated in a large, many-angled ball. In the trough that conducted the surplus water into the grass was lying a venerable and toothless dog, who cast his bleary-eyes toward us and made an effort at barking, failing in which, dropped his head and lazily lapped his drink. Entering upon the lawn by the garden gate, I inquired of my companions, who now came within speaking distance,—

“Whose house is this?”

“BODINE’S!” was the prompt response, as all three drew near its entrance.

Upon a short bench nailed between one of the posts of the porch and the side of the house, we espied reclining a tall, elderly, smooth-faced man, with his coat and hat off, quietly smoking his pipe. As we approached, he rose, with a merry twinkle in his gray eye, and extended his great bronzed hand to my companions, bidding them welcome. After their salutations they turned to me, when Sanders, with a flourish of his hand toward the man, simply said,—

“Squire Bodine, doctor;” at which he gave me his hand also, and the memory of that grasp causes me to squirm even now.

“Walk in, gentlemen, glad to see you all. Good day’s fishing, I hope?”

The last remark with a rising inflection, to indicate the interrogative.

We severally assured him of fine success, and then, while my eye rested upon the mill-pond and the foam rising from the dam below, I remarked,—

“You catch fine trout there, doubtless?”

“Yes, sir; in the evening, or early in the morning, we have splendid fishing, both above and below the dam. I have taken many a two-pounder on a black gnat just in the edge of the evening,” the squire replied; and then immediately added, “We had lively times here with big trout when I first moved to these parts.”

“How long ago was that?”

“Just forty years,—long before we had any railroad; the stage used to run along that mountain road yonder, across the pond” (rising, and pointing out its direction). “It made regular trips then between Williamsport and Elmira, and people would sometimes stop here to eat a meal of trout. Why, I could run down below the dam there, any time, and catch fifty trout—nice ones, too—in about half an hour’s time.”

After much pleasant conversation with the squire, from which we learned that he was at once justice of the peace, postmaster, station-agent, and school-commissioner, supper was an-

nounced, when we entered the cosy old house and partook of a hearty meal prepared by his good wife and daughter Kate.

All this fifteen years ago! Many changes have occurred in and about "Bodines" since then. The old house has given place to a new one. A new station and store-house has been erected opposite the mansion, in which Harry Green keeps a neat little store that has become a great convenience not only to fishermen, but to the farming and lumbering community round about. The steam whistle on Robert Innes's large tannery now echoes from hill to hill and reminds us that the old valley has taken upon herself new enterprises. Several comfortable dwelling-houses are dotting the green sward in front of the squire's premises, giving the place quite the air of a little village. The creek has cut new channels for itself through the meadow. The high bank—the abode of our kingfisher friends—has been washed away, until the creek is ready to break through into its old channel, now occupied by the bayou next the mountain. "Slack's Run," that comes murmuring down through the cleft in the mountains, empties itself into the pond lower down, and has changed its name to "Bloody Run," by reason of two murders that have been committed upon its wild banks, since the peaceful days of yore. The old Slope Wall is greener and more lovely, while its

swirls and pools still afford the skilful angler abundance of sport.

The picturesque point where we first stopped to lunch has become more beautiful, by reason of the improvements originating there during every June that finds us promptly upon its cherished banks. The bayou is larger, deeper, and filled with monstrous suckers, that go solemnly nosing about upon its pebbly bottom. The pond, with its rocks and overhanging trees, is grander. The stream, with its rapids near at hand, wider and more musical. The willows across the way, taller, shutting in our delightful little retreat from the observation of passers-by. The old stub with its beautiful vine, alas! has fallen, but the vine itself has been trained to another tree, while graceful ferns are growing from the mouldering ruins of the fallen monarch. The stately beech has a mound about its trunk, covered with maiden-hair ferns, violets, and exquisite mosses. A pathway leads down from between it and a fine elm, to its left, either side of which is flanked with a row of immense ferns and Solomon-seals. Docks are built upon the bayou side, in the shade of the mountain where we land the boats in our excursions to and from the farm-house. The two pines on the extreme end of the point are more stately, and lean gracefully to either side, giving a better view of the pond. Indeed, our island has become a little paradise, in which I have

written what follows; while wife and friends have spent many happy days in its cool shade and peaceful quietness. My children have played and romped among its wild-flowers, and bathed in its refreshing waters, renewed health and vigor keeping pace with their happy play. Piscatorial friends, who figure so largely in these pages, have kept me company here, and joined, most heartily, in making our camp-life a time of perfect enjoyment and rest. In this immediate neighborhood have transpired most of the scenes which are herein portrayed. Under the branches of its lovely trees, surrounded with flowers, birds, and the melody of its rippling waters, have I spent many enchanting hours. What better name, therefore, can I give my sketches, dear reader, than the one nearest my heart, charming, lovely, dear old

“BODINES”?



CHAPTER II.

THE PREPARATION.

How to make your Tents and other Camp-Fixtures—Supplies.

OUR camp-ground could not be more conveniently located. We are high enough to escape any inundation from a sudden rise in the stream; a spring near at hand, and a large body of drift-wood lodged within easy reach. Good water and plenty of firewood are two essentials for comfortable camp-life. The farm-house chimney is visible from our abode, whither we can paddle our canoe and secure fresh milk, eggs, butter, bread, or almost any article of food required.

Such a location is indispensable, if you mean to take wife and children with you. But if gentlemen alone go, then it is not so important; for one can live in the woods upon bacon, coffee, and biscuit, provided the fishing is good enough to warrant such a deprivation. But, as for me, I must confess to a liking for good, nutritious food, a comfortable bed, and pleasant surroundings, even if I do not capture quite so many fish. My friend Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, who has spent some time with me in camp, and who is a skilful

fly-caster and a fine shot with the rifle, says I do not "rough it" enough, that my bill of fare is too good, my equipments too numerous, and my grounds too near civilization, to make the change from home-life sufficiently marked.

Therein we differ. I cannot eat bacon,—I don't like it. I can't lie on the damp ground,—it gives me rheumatism. I don't want to go into the wilderness, where a letter or a telegram cannot reach me in a month,—I have a wife and children, and must know that they are well. I must not go far from home, to be gone two or three months,—my business engagements will not permit it, neither can I afford the expense. I must have good food, a comfortable bed, and dry quarters, because I am a dyspeptic!

Now, there exist thousands of men, precisely in my predicament, who will be glad to know how I overcome all the objections enumerated. For such, more particularly, are these pages written. So much, then, by way of introduction to what follows.

The first thing, naturally, to be sought for is a good tent. I have tried a variety of kinds and sizes, and give my preference to a large and roomy one to sleep in. An ordinary wall-tent, eight by nine feet, is too contracted in which to live for a month. Of course, it can be done, but a larger one is much more preferable and not very expensive. I use a tent twelve by eighteen feet, five

feet high at the eaves, and nine feet to the ridge-pole. Such a one gives room upon one side for two large beds (holding four persons), and a writing and reading table on the other side, with plenty of space for sitting and lounging purposes. Do not buy your tents: the manufacturers ask far too much for them; make them yourself. I will tell you how. Mark out a diagram on your barn floor like this,

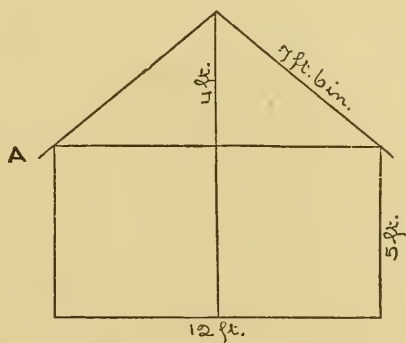


DIAGRAM OF TENT.

and I will show you how to construct a tent, twelve by eighteen feet, that shall be water-tight and cost you less than thirteen dollars.

From the diagram, it will be seen that you will require six strips of yard wide "duck," twice seven feet and six inches long (or fifteen feet), making in all thirty yards. These must be sewed in a double seam, overlapping each breadth one inch. Make a hem one inch wide upon the two

ends that form the eaves. Through this run a rope the size of an ordinary bed-cord; at every breadth work an eyelet to receive the cords that hold the tent to the pegs. The cord running through the hem prevents the material from tearing. The price of the duck should not be more than sixteen cents per yard, making the roof to the tent cost four dollars and eighty cents. You will now require for the two ends twenty-one and one-third yards of heavy unbleached muslin, worth eight cents a yard, costing one dollar and seventy-one cents. Cut this into four strips seven feet long, and four more nine feet in length. Lay the two long ones in the centre, and the two short ones on each side of them, over your diagram on the floor, and cut off the corners so as to have them fit into the gable of the roof. Sew them together, except in the centre, where they may be joined for about four feet from the peak, and there "stayed" well with an extra piece of cloth, to prevent ripping or tearing. This opening in the centre pieces forms the entrance to the tent, and may be made still more secure by sewing an extra piece of muslin, five feet long, over this slit, fastening it only at the top. (This is optional.) This done, one end of your tent is now formed. Serve the remaining four pieces in like manner for the opposite end, then sew them to the roof.

You will next need twelve strips of the same

material, five feet long, for the sides. Sew six of them together for each side, overlapping the seams one inch, as in the top, and when done, hem it one inch wide at the bottom. Pass a rope through this hem, and work eyelets at every seam. Sew the sides thus formed to the top, so as to allow it to project three inches, as seen at A in our diagram.

This requires twenty yards of goods, costing one dollar and sixty cents. Now sew your corners together, and work large button-holes upon one of the centre end pieces, from the ground to the eaves; on the opposite one sew large wooden buttons, so that the ends can be buttoned together in case of a storm. Next, you will need a fly. For this you will require six pieces of muslin eighteen feet long, which, when sewed together and hemmed in the same manner as the top, with rope and eyelets in same localities, will form a shelter over the entire tent, projecting fifteen inches beyond, to carry the water free from the sides. This fly should not touch the tent's roof by a foot, except where it rests upon the ridge-pole; it catches the first shock of the rain, and prevents its falling through the real roof in a fine spray. It also keeps your tent cooler when the sun falls upon it. For this, thirty-six yards of muslin are necessary, costing two dollars and eighty-eight cents.

You now have

30 yards of duck @ 16c.	.	.	.	\$4.80
77 $\frac{1}{3}$ yards of muslin @ 8c.	.	.	.	6.19
Necessary rope, say	.	.	.	2.00
				<hr/>
				\$12.99

your tent complete thus costing you less than thirteen dollars, not estimating your labor at anything. Indeed, so much pleasure will be found in constructing your own tent that thirteen dollars should be credited to it for the fun you have had. In that case, it has cost nothing, but, upon the contrary, you are at least one cent ahead on the transaction. I must further add that all these seams can be sewed upon a sewing-machine, with Clark's No. 40 spool cotton. The seams being double, are sufficiently strong to resist any strain to which they may be subjected.

When searching for a tent of this capacity, we were asked eighty dollars for it by a manufacturer, and of no better material than the one we made ourselves. Seven cords, ten feet long, will be required, with one end tied in the eyelet made at every seam along the eaves. Marline or tarred rope, about a foot long, must be tied in the eyelets at the bottom of the tent, to hold it to pegs which will be driven in the ground to hold the sides perpendicular. Your fly will also need four ropes on each side, about fifteen feet long.

Now, make a strong brine, using all the salt the water will dissolve, and plunge your tent and

fly into the pickle, where it may remain two or three days. At the end of that time remove it, and spread it on a line to dry. Then go over it with a very thin whitewash, made from fresh lime, putting the solution on with a whitewash-brush. When dry, your tent is ready for use,—will never mildew or rot, and will be ready for service during your natural life. When you take it to the woods, a ridge-pole eighteen feet long can be cut, together with two upright poles nine feet high, with a fork upon the small ends to receive and hold it in place. The pins and stakes are to be had in the woods in like manner, so saving trouble of transportation. Three persons can pitch such a tent in twenty minutes, or less. Place the ridge-pole under the centre of the roof so that each end of it rests in the peak in a crotch of a pole. Then one person at each end can do the raising, holding the pole in place, while the third drives the pins and fastens the ropes. But it seems superfluous to teach any one how to pitch a tent. I will guarantee you will be able to do it in some shape, so go ahead and try.

If you need a tent for your servant, sew three pieces of ducking together, fifteen feet long. Hem and work eyelets across the ends. Mark out your diagram on the floor as for the large tent, only making this one in shape of the letter A. Estimating your ridge-pole to be six and a

half feet high, and the sides of your tent reaching the ground, you will require two strips for each end six and a half feet long, with corners cut to fit the gables. These, when sewed in the ends, and left open in the middle, at one end of the tent, will give you an A tent six by nine feet on the ground, and costing less than three dollars and fifty cents.

As it is certain to rain more in the woods than when you are at home, you would better prepare another "fly," made of striped awning-cloth, of about the size of the fly to your tent, and made in the same manner. This will serve you as a dining-room, when stretched over a ridge-pole, supported by two forked poles planted in the ground to hold them firmly. These poles should be ten feet high, and the eaves of your roof should be at least five feet from the ground. Your table (made of drift-wood, always to be found on a stream, or of branches of trees of about an inch in diameter, laid close together, and nailed upon suitable cleats, supported by four legs driven into the ground) should be placed in the centre of this canopy. If you do not take camp-stools, make them, by boring four holes in pieces of slabs, or blocks of wood that are always at hand on all habitable streams of this day, and drive legs into them. For this and other camp purposes you will need a saw, one and a half inch auger, hatchet, a four-pound axe, and a

quantity of nails. With these implements you can construct a home and furnish it comfortably, and even elegantly, in two or three days, and enjoy every moment of the time you are so employed.

Now, who's going? If you take your wife and children,—which we recommend, as they can be perfectly comfortable in such a tent, and will grow strong and happy in the open air,—we advise you to locate on the bank of some stream, in a shady wood, near a farm-house that can supply you with bread, butter, milk, and eggs.

If a party of four gentlemen are going to spend four weeks in trout or other fishing, select a dry spot under some large trees, near the best fishing-pools, and take with you the following necessary utensils:

2 long-handled frying-pans.

A coffee-pot.

A tea-pot.

A long-handled 8-quart boiler (in which to boil your potatoes and to heat your dish-water).

A dish-pan.

A small tea-kettle.

A wire broiler.

6 common knives and forks.

1 butcher knife.

1 long-handled iron spoon.

1 long-handled iron fork.

1 dozen tin teaspoons.

$\frac{1}{2}$ dozen tin table spoons.

12 tin plates.

12 tin cups.

1 2-quart pail (for milk).

1 4-quart pail (for water).

2 bars soap.

4 dish-towels.

6 toilet-towels.

Combs and tooth-brushes.

These are all that are absolutely needed, but other useful articles can be added. My own kit consists, in addition to what I have here given, of—

Another frying-pan.

A Dutch oven.

3 covered, tin, 2-quart pans (for serving stewed tomatoes, potatoes, etc.).

1 dozen small “puff-pans” (used as sauce-dishes).

A jack-lantern.

A shovel.

The extra number of plates are necessary to place your potatoes, fish, bread, and other articles upon at table, while the cups are used for sugar, salt, syrup, etc., as well as for drinking your coffee and tea.

Place your tin cups in your coffee-pot and tea-pot, and these inside your dish-pau; putting knives, forks, and spoons in the unoccupied spaces about them. Your tea-kettle should go

inside your four-quart pail, and your dozen plates on top. Your own ingenuity will teach you how to pack them all snugly. Make a strong box of inch pine boards, four feet long, two feet wide, and two feet deep. Bind the ends, all the way around, with iron, and strengthen the top in same manner. Attach the lid to the box by means of long strap-hinges, and two strong hasps in front to hold it down. Eight inches from the top, at each end, bore two one-inch holes, through which put a piece of inch rope, wrapping the ends together on the inside, so as to form handles by which to lift it. In the bottom of this box, pack the following provisions, which will keep four hungry persons four weeks, as well as any visitors that are likely to call upon you to enjoy your hospitality :

12 lbs. wheat flour.

20 lbs. corn-meal.

4 quarts beans.

2 bushels potatoes.

1 peck Bermuda onions.

5 lbs. rice.

10 lbs. dried fruit (peaches are best).

10 lbs. ground coffee.

5 lbs. black tea.

25 lbs. granulated sugar.

10 lbs. salt pork (in which to fry fish).

10 lbs. dried beef.

16 lbs. butter (in cröck).

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. black pepper.

$\frac{1}{8}$ lb. red pepper.

2 lbs. candles.

5 lbs. soda crackers.

2 quarts pickles.

1 sack salt.

1 package matches (tightly corked in bottle).

1 box baking powder.

1 box saleratus.

To this add a quantity of bread and biscuit, and rely upon some farm-house for a fresh supply.


Your sugar should be placed in a wooden sugar-bucket with cover, to be found at all groceries. Your coffee and tea may go into tin cans, as well as your flour and corn-meal. The tin cans used for fancy crackers, to be had of your grocer, will be very convenient for packing such articles, and will fit nicely in your camp-chest. After your provisions are in the box, throw your potatoes and onions in among them, to fill up the vacant spaces, then pack your cooking utensils, with axe, saw, hatchet, auger, and nails, on top, together with two bars of iron half an inch thick, an inch and a half wide, and as long as the box. Your box will contain them all and your large tent also.

You can add to this list canned fruits, tomatoes, corn, etc., with some jellies and jam, that taste very well in the woods. We have only

given a list of what seems to be necessary. If you smoke, do not forget your pipes and Vanity Fair tobacco. Do not take cigars. They soon become damp and do not burn well.

Erect upon one side of your tent two bedsteads, constructed in the following manner: Drive six green stakes into the ground, forming two rectangles, end to end, four by six feet. Cut two straight saplings twelve feet long, and nail them to the three stakes on a side, about eighteen inches from the ground. Across these nail "slats," formed of round poles, of as near the same size as possible, and across the ends other poles, to serve as "head-boards." This gives you two bedsteads, foot to foot, upon which you can place two ticks of suitable size, filled with straw from the nearest farm-house. If you are away from civilization, where straw or hay cannot be obtained, gather a quantity of hemlock or spruce boughs, pile them up a foot or more deep, over which spread a blanket or comfortable; or, better still, cut off the larger stems and fill the tick with the small, delicate boughs, and you will have a bed fit for a king to rest upon. In a large trunk or box you can pack six comfortable, four sheets, and four pillows,—all the bedclothing required, even should the weather be cold. A comfortable placed over a straw or hemlock-bough tick makes a luxurious bed. Once in two or three days at least the beds and

bedding should be spread in the sun, else are they apt to grow musty.

Near your dining-room, pile up a lot of stones about a foot high and four feet long. Build a wing on each end two feet long, cover the stones with sod and earth (here comes in the shovel), so that when it is finished you will have a fire-place shaped like this .

Now place your four-feet bars of iron across the top of this, upon which to set your frying-pans, your coffee- and tea-pots, and your boiler, making one of the most convenient arrangements for out-door cooking that can be devised. Under these bars of iron, protected by the banks of stone and sods to the rear and on either side, hot, glowing coals are always kept, over which fish, flapjacks, potatoes, coffee, and other food can be conveniently cooked; beside, the bars are great economizers of wood, enabling you to cook without burning your face or scorching your utensils and food.

If your neighboring farm-house has ice, sink a flour-barrel in the ground to its top,—boring a few holes in the bottom for drainage,—and place a large chunk of ice in the bottom, covering the top with a board or blanket. It will keep a week in this manner. If a barrel is not to be had, dig a hole two or three feet deep and stone it up, where you can keep your milk, butter, and fish cool and fresh, even without ice.

Near the fireplace should be constructed a sort of kitchen-table, with rack for hanging pans, pots, and other cooking utensils. This can be quickly done by driving four stakes into the ground, nailing cleats across them, and covering the tops with saplings of equal size. On one edge drive nails, to be used as hooks upon which to hang the frying-pans, etc. This will be very convenient in all your cooking and dishwashing work. Take a piece of ticking about four feet square and cover its surface with pockets. Hang this upon the side of your tent. You will find it an excellent place in which to deposit articles of various kinds,—pipes, tobacco, letters, magazines, needles, thread, twine, buttons.

Suspend a pole lengthwise of your tent by means of twine tied around the ridge-pole. Let it hang down a foot or two below the top of the tent. Over this hang your extra clothing or other articles that need to be put out of the way.

Under one corner of the dining-room canopy place your camp-chest, and in the bottom arrange cans of flour, coffee, tea, sugar, etc. Roll the bread up in an old table-cloth that should be taken along for the purpose, and lay it also in the chest. Construct a shelf near the top of the chest, upon which place other articles needed for the table. By this arrangement they are kept dry. You can never tell when it will rain in the woods, and it is better always to be ready for it.

Under your table, which stands in the centre of the canopy, make a shelf, upon which place plates, knives, forks, spoons, pepper, salt, tablecloth, and napkins. Below this, on the ground, make a bin for potatoes and onions. Everything now but pans and kettles (and the wet will not injure them) is housed and out of the way.

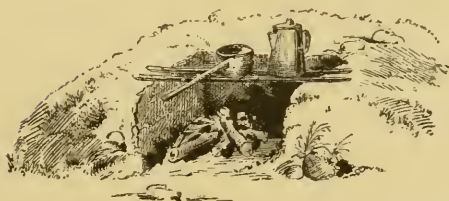
Against a tree—one as straight as you can find—make a rack in which to stand your rods, so that they may not be blown down and broken. This saves the necessity, also, of taking them apart after each day's fishing.

Many other little conveniences will suggest themselves and keep you employed when feeling so inclined. Benches can be made about the fireplace, upon which to rest when enjoying the camp-fire at night. Ornamental brackets, manufactured out of laurel-roots, will serve as adornments for the tent-poles. Wild-flower gardens can be arranged to beautify the "door-yard." In short, there is no end to the things you can do for the amusement of yourself and friends.

You are now ready for housekeeping, when, I'm sure, you will be able to entertain and amuse yourselves in various ways aside from the delights of fly-fishing.

Fortunately, our fancies and inclinations are not the same, else would this be a stupid world in which to live. While Hamlin, Thad Jr., and I did the fishing for camp, Robert, the book-

dealer, and Charles, the ex-banker from Brooklyn, worked like Turks in and about the camp, constructing comfortable rustic settees, chairs, and other articles of furniture. But what we all did, and how, and when, and where, must be learned from what follows.



CHAPTER III.

PARAPHERNALIA.

Rods, Boats, Dress, Fly, Books, and a Baby.

“It is really funny to read the advice of sundry scribblers upon the selection of fishing apparatus and camp equipments, when it is clearly evident that it emanates from persons who have had little or no experience in camp-life, or with the articles they recommend,” Charles remarked, upon throwing down a book in which he had been endeavoring to interest himself for an hour or more.

“Why, confound them!” he further added, “they are a lot of stupid ninnies who try to guess what is needed for camp-life, and then, forthwith, parade their supposed information in print, while they exhibit their wares for sale, without having the most remote knowledge of what they’re writing about, or the practicability of the abominable contrivances they seek to place upon the market.” Delivering himself of this righteous opinion, he turned out of his hammock, took a large sponge from its peg upon a tree, and proceeded to souse his face, neck, and head with the cool water of the creek.

"Palmer is right," interposed Hamlin; "and one of the articles that should be interdicted in camp is a split bamboo rod. I wouldn't give a cent for one for our use. They will do very well for a day or two of fishing in fair weather; but just stand them up against a tree, where they take the rain, dew, and dampness, for a month, and they will be found soon to lose their elasticity and springing qualities."

"Well, they don't stand dampness very well, that's a fact, Hamlin," I respond. "Just look at mine, for instance." And I held my best bamboo for inspection.

"Yes, crooked as a ram's horn, and quite as useless. I tell you, they are good for nothing for a long trip in the woods. They are not reliable.* A pretty fix you would be in, if off' in the wilderness, somewhere, with a rod that would curl up like a watch-spring every time it was rained upon!"

"Well, how do you like that 'whip-rod' of mine?"

"What, the one woven all over, from tip to butt, like a whip?"

"Yes."

* Since this was written, I have had an opportunity of testing a split bamboo that has withstood the camp test. It has been resting against a tree for four weeks,—in all sorts of weather, and retains its elasticity perfectly. It is the octagon fly-rod made by W. L. Hoskins, of Owego, N. Y.

“Not a whit better than your bamboo. There’s no use talking; these fancy rods, gotten up to be strikingly new and novel, will not stand actual service. Now, your whip-rod, as you call it, was elegant when you first brought it down here, but the dampness has swollen it, stretching its woven jacket, until now that it is dry it fits like a shirt on a bean-pole; rendering it good for nothing, like all the rest of them.”

“I think any rod loses its elasticity if not properly protected with varnish,” I suggested.

“True enough; but how much varnish does it require, pray, for ‘proper protection’? To my certain knowledge you placed three good coats of copal varnish upon every one of your rods before we left home, and it does seem to me *that* would be enough to render any sort of rod impervious to water—except a split bamboo.”

“I’m afraid you are prejudiced against bamboo rods, Hamlin. You must admit they are very strong and light?”

“When dry, you should have added; but you can’t always rely upon clear weather when lying out in the woods; therefore, I say, they are unsafe.”

“Toot! toot!”

“Halloo! There comes Chandler, the Philadelphian. That is his signal; he’ll be here in a few moments. I guess he’s at the big pool around the turn, and notifies us of his approach. We’ll

just take his opinion on the rod question; for the sorts and kinds that have not passed through his hands are not worth considering."

"Here he comes now. Halloo, Chandler! How are you, old boy?"

"Nimble as a cat-bird; how are all the campers?"

"Well, and glad to see you. Come ashore, and join in in this discussion on the rod question."

"What is the point of difference?"

"Why, Hamlin here, who is always suspicious of anything new in guns or rods, you know, is inclined to place a poor valuation upon the split bamboo rod; thinks it won't stand moisture, and is therefore untrustworthy as a rod for daily and constant use."

"Well stated, doctor. I'll stick to that declaration until I find better bamboos than you have yet wielded!"

"Hamlin, your proposition is not without force. I must confess that I never feel perfectly safe to be out with a split bamboo and not within reaching distance of my bundle of ironwoods. But then, I know good fishermen who could not be persuaded to use any other sort. Now, here's a bamboo that I have fished with all the morning, from Ralston to this camp, and I must say that a lighter and more elastic rod I never had in hand. But I rarely get it wet, and when I do, am careful to wipe it dry before laying it away.

Then I give it two good coats of the best copal varnish as soon as the fishing season is over, and another one in the spring, before I use it. These rods need to be protected from moisture. If water gets into the glued seams they are ruined."

"Not only that," interjects Hamlin, "but if you should break a tip, you can't sit down and mend it on the stream, as you do your lance-wood."

To this Chandler only partly assented, and gave his opinion :

"The best rod, I think, I ever owned is one made by myself, of ironwood, cut right here upon this stream. It has a curled maple handle, twelve inches long and an inch and a quarter in diameter, at the grasp. This grasp is five inches long, and behind it, at the end of the handle, slopes down to seven-eighths of an inch, to receive rings of that size that hold the reel. The peculiarity of this rod is, that it has a short first joint and a very long middle one: this arrangement brings the elasticity where it belongs, on the middle joint. The first joint, from the handle to the end of the ferrule, is twenty-one inches: it is made of ironwood; and, where it joins the handle, is half an inch in diameter, tapering to twelve thirty-seconds of an inch at the opposite end. The second joint is forty-six inches long, tapering from twelve to eight thirty-seconds of an inch, and is also of ironwood. The tip is of split bam-

boo, forty-seven inches long, tapering from eight to two thirty-seconds of an inch. This makes a rod of about ten and a half feet in length, weighs eight ounces (the maple butt being the heaviest part), is delightfully elastic, of an even spring from butt to tip, will cast a fly as far as you desire it to go, and is capable of landing a four-pound trout—when you hook him.”

“That’s what might be termed getting a rod ‘down to dots,’” observed Charles, who all this while had been an attentive listener, and who at once inquired,—

“What are the dimensions of that rod *you* made, doctor? I like the hang of that pretty well.”

“I use a very limber rod, you know, Charles; one that is called ‘logy.’ I think you can cast a fly with much more ease with a ‘slow’ or very limber rod than you can with a ‘quick’ one. My favorite rod, therefore, is made much like Chandler’s: with the same heavy grasp, short first joint twenty-four inches long, half inch in diameter at handle, and tapering to ten thirty-seconds. The second joint is forty-three inches long, tapering from ten to six thirty-seconds of an inch. Both these joints are of ironwood, while the tip is of lancewood, and is forty inches long, tapering from six thirty-seconds of an inch to a point. This is a much more limber rod than Chandler’s, and would not suit many fly-casters; but, as

before remarked, it is adapted to me and my style of casting, exactly. I find that almost all fishermen have their own ideas as to how a rod should hang, and how stiff or limber it should be. No rule, therefore, can be given by which a rod can be constructed to suit all hands. I think, however, Chandler's and this rod of mine are fair representatives of the two classes of rods that might be styled 'quick' and 'slow.'"

"Do these measurements include the ferrules? and where do you amateur rod-makers procure them?" he again inquired.

"Yes, the measurements include the ferrules, which can be obtained, in sets, of all dealers in fishing apparatus. The handles are turned out of curled maple at any wood-turning establishment, while the ironwood joints are worked out with a plane until the dimensions are nearly right; then a rasp and sand-paper are employed to complete the work. The ferrules are fitted tightly and put on with any good cement. The rings or guides for the line are best when stationary; that is, the stays and rings should be in one piece, so that the ring always stands out from the rod, giving a freer delivery to the line. They are easily made, with round-nosed pliers, out of German-silver wire."

"That's a good arrangement, too," observed Hamlin; "the line never sticks, necessitating a strong jerk to free it, as occurs in the loose ring."

“Greenheart makes a very good rod. I notice manufacturers are using it now quite extensively. They claim that it is more elastic than ironwood, hickory, ash, or any of the woods usually employed, save perhaps lancewood. The trouble with lancewood is, it is so very brittle that it will not always stand a sudden or severe strike.”

“I am not so sure of that, Chandler. I prefer a lancewood tip to any other, and I very rarely break one. When I do, it usually occurs from carelessness. It is more apt to be broken by thrusting its point against the trunk of a tree as you are winding your way through the woods, but I cannot recall an instance where one was broken while landing a trout.”

“You have been more fortunate than I, then. I now use split bamboo tips to all my rods.”

“Chandler and I made ourselves each two rods of ironwood this season, Hamlin, without any ferrules, and I like them very much. You get the full spring of the rod by splicing the joints, instead of putting ferrules over them; and then they are much lighter, and never stick when you want to take them apart. Wait a moment; I'll run up to the tent and bring you one. Now, there is a little rod, ten feet and six inches long, without a ferrule upon it, and weighs only *four ounces*! The handle and first joint are in one piece, of ironwood, just five feet and six inches long, while the tip is of lancewood, five feet long.

It is not an inconvenient length to carry, you see, and I wonder that rod-makers do not supply them. Where the tip fits to the second joint the ends are bevelled accurately, and wound with thread. It is done almost as quickly as you can put a ferruled rod together, and is always in order. I have still another that goes together with one ferrule, where this one is spliced. It works very nicely, but has not the elasticity of the spliced one."

"I should think it inconvenient to hold the two pieces in place while you are wrapping them."

"Not at all, for, sec, I have wrapped a small piece of brass at the butt end of each splice, so that the sharp points of each end slip under this fastening, holding it quite securely, without any wrapping. It is a short job to secure it now, with a waxed thread, and how beautifully it bends! Try it."

"That is a little daisy, and springs splendidly. I should like to fish with it some day."

"All right, Hamlin; take it along; you will enjoy it, I'm sure."

At this point Charles approached the group from the direction of the tent, holding a copy of *Forest and Stream* in his hand, and glancing over the advertisements, delivered himself as follows:

"I don't know much about your rods, but here is a matter that I am interested in, and that is, boats. I have examined all manner of folding

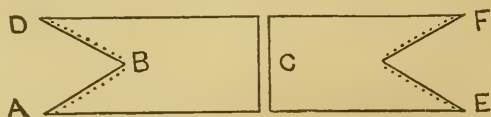
and other portable boats, and I do think they are in the main an abomination. Now, look at that canvas folding-boat of the doctor's there! What a looking thing it is! Awkward, bulky, leaky, and weighs over eighty-five pounds. The framework is heavy, weak, and exceedingly troublesome to adjust, while as to real portability, it has no advantage over a full-length canoe. What will you take for it, doctor?"

"Will sell it cheap, Charles; take it at your own price. But I warn you beforehand that it is the most useless thing in the shape of a boat I ever encountered. I have owned another sort beside that one, have examined others, and must give it as my unprejudiced opinion that all folding and portable boats are complete and utter failures, certain to disappoint the expectations of the purchaser. After devoting considerable time and money to the selection of a portable boat, I know of nothing that will answer all the requirements better than a light cedar canoe of about thirteen feet in length. Such a boat can be carried in the baggage-car of a train, or any reasonable distance in the woods by two persons, and will carry them in return when the water affords a passage. A canoe of this kind is to be had for about twenty-five dollars of the various makers, whose advertisements can be found in the sportsmen's papers.

"I have made quite a convenient boat, to carry

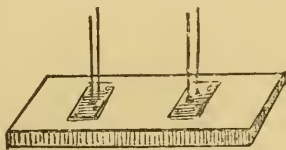
in a wagon, for fishing upon mountain-ponds, where there are no boats, or to carry down the river several miles when fishing for bass.

“It is made of galvanized sheet-iron, in two pieces, one piece fitting inside the other, occupying a space when so packed of twenty inches by six and one-half feet, and weighing about forty-five pounds. You can construct one yourself in less than half a day, at a cost of not more than seven dollars. Procure two pieces of light, galvanized sheet-iron, six and a half feet long and three feet wide. Cut a V-shaped piece out of one end of each of them, so that the apex of the triangular piece will be eighteen inches from the square end. Give me a sheet of paper and pencil; I will mark out a diagram for you.

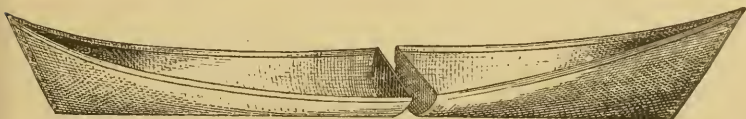


“There. Cut in from A and D to B just eighteen inches; serve the other piece in the same manner. Then place their ends together, as at C, and you will know how long the boat will be when finished. Take your pieces so cut to a tinner, and have him turn over the edges (A to E and D to F), so as to receive a No. 0 galvanized iron wire (keeping the two pieces separate). This stiffens the edges and makes the boat firm,

so that no ribs are required. Now fold A on to D, and punch holes through the lapped edges, and rivet them securely together with iron rivets (don't use copper ones: the galvanic action will rust the iron), first having smeared the edges with thick red lead. Bring the two corners at C within twenty inches of each other, and rivet an end of the same iron into it, shaping it to a half-round, and turning up a flange of an inch all around, through which to drive the rivets. Smear this with lead as before. One-half your boat is now completed. Treat the remaining piece in the same manner, only cutting off an inch from the square end, so that one part will be an inch shorter than its mate, enabling it to set in it "spoon fashion." When completed, place both square ends together, and make a pine seat, with two prongs screwed to its under surface, so as



to slide over both ends of the two parts, holding them securely together. Your boat is now finished, and will look like this:



It will be thirteen feet long, will carry two or three persons readily, and will float like a duck. The points are sharp, and the centre flares to twenty inches, giving it great buoyancy."

"What becomes of it if leaky or in any manner it is filled with water?"

"It will go to the bottom, of course; but there is no necessity for filling it with water. It will not tip over easily, and is as safe as any canoe, if properly handled. I do not recommend it as a plaything for children, but it can be made perfectly safe for them even, by putting air-tight bulkheads in each end, which would serve also for seats, at the same time rendering it impossible to sink the craft."

"How do you propel it?"

"With paddle, as you do other canoes. Oarlocks can be riveted on the sides and oars used if you desire."

"Where are the materials to be had, and what do they cost?"

"Of any hardware dealer. The iron, thirty-six inches wide, should not cost more than twelve cents a pound, and weighs about one pound to the square foot. Galvanized iron rivets cost about thirty cents a pound, and the large wire about three and one-quarter cents a pound. If the wire cannot be obtained, galvanized, have it tinned. This can be done in a few minutes at any tin-shop, and prevents rusting. The boat

should be painted some shade of green inside and out, which will render it less conspicuous upon the water.

“A light frame-work of wood—a sort of trellis—can be placed in the bottom of the boat, to step upon and protect the iron from injury.”

“While we are on this subject of equipments, do tell me how you came to devise that uniform of yours, and what are its advantages?”

“What, my fishing suit, Charles?”

“Yes. You look like an overgrown school-boy just let out for recess, in that roundabout.”

“It is a very comfortable rig, nevertheless, Charles. This jacket I had constructed out of one of my cast-off Scotch tweed coats. I had the tails cut off, and fashioned like a regular school-boy’s roundabout, as you say. These pockets (three rows on each side) are convenient for carrying various fishing appliances. This little pocket, even with my shoulder, on the left side, is where I carry my watch, so that it need not get wet in deep wadings. I learned that lesson several years ago in wading through the deep hole back of Astenville. It was in the evening; I saw large trout rising in the deep water next the mountain. To get at them it was necessary to wade to my armpits. I was so interested in casting for, and occasionally capturing one of them, that my watch was entirely forgotten and completely swamped. It cost me seven dollars

for repairs; and this pocket, high and dry on my shoulder, is the result of that experience. This large pocket, in the skirt, over the hip, is where I carry my gossamer waterproof cape, which I use in a rain-storm, to keep my shoulders dry. The one on the inside of the left breast contains my fly-book, and the one on the opposite breast, my tea and sugar pouches. The trousers are made to button tight about my ankles, so offering less resistance to the water when wading. But I pride myself most upon my shoes. Just look at them !”

“Yes, I see; much like a gunboat, and as heavy in proportion. What under the sun have you so many hobnails in them for?”

“For two reasons: to prevent slipping upon the slimy stones, and to give them weight, so as to afford a firm footing in swift water.”

“But I should think they would tire you in carrying them about.”

“Not at all. Their weight is not felt in the water, and I even prefer them as a walking shoe on land. In having your wading shoes made, be sure to get them large enough, with great, broad soles, and very low and broad heels. If your heels are high, your shoe when wet will surely run over. Never employ shoestrings. Have a wide lap coming over the front of your shoe, to fasten on the outer side with three buckles. Have the shoe run up the ankle at least twelve inches

from the bottom of the heel. See that there is plenty of room to admit your trousers, so as to buckle snugly about your ankles. This makes the perfection of a comfortable wading shoe."

"Why are those nails driven in the heel in the shape of the letter U?"

"Examine Hamlin's. You will find an H on his, and Thad Jr.'s are marked with a T. I will tell you why:

"Once Hamlin and I concluded to fish Pleasant Stream from its source to its mouth. We employed Mr. Stull, a liveryman of Canton, Pa., to drive us from that village, over the mountains, to the head-waters of the stream. A man by the name of Chase, who kept a hotel in the village, volunteered, with a chum of his, to go as guides and show us where cabins could be found in which to lie at night.

"After a delightful ride over those picturesque mountains, during which many beautiful hills and valleys were traversed, we finally struck the stream, at its very head, late in the afternoon. Our self-appointed guides, fishing-rods in hand, struck boldly out to lead the way. In twenty minutes they had disappeared down the stream, and we saw nothing more of them until next day, about lunching time, when they hove in sight to inform us that they had found the cabin, had slept in it all night, and were surprised not to find us there in the morning. In the mean time,

Hamlin and I had lain out in the drizzling rain through the entire night, the 'guides' having taken no measures to look us up.

"We declined any further offers of assistance from them, concluding to take care of ourselves for the rest of the expedition, as we had been forced to do the night previous. We laid out upon the banks of the stream another night, and expected to make Crawford's (a farm-house, about four miles above the mouth) on the third night. Two or three miles above Crawford's the stream divides. Hamlin took the right-hand branch and I the left, expecting to meet at the junction below. I reached the spot first, waited a while, but no Hamlin came in sight. I shouted; no response. I examined the sand about the shore, and found fresh tracks made by hobnailed shoes, and water dashed over the stones where the fisherman had gone ashore. I naturally concluded he was ahead, and proceeded to follow down the stream. I fished rapidly, and looked anxiously around every turn in the creek, but saw no signs of my friend. I shouted again, but no response came back to me. Evening was coming on, so I quickened my step, which was soon increased to a double-quick. I examined the footprints again and again, only to be confirmed in the opinion that he could not be far off. So I finally reeled up my line and devoted all my energies to overtaking him. Tired and foot-sore from my long

and rapid tramp, I reached Crawford's at candle-light, to find that Hamlin had not been there. I then ordered supper for two, and retraced my steps, three weary miles up-stream, where I found him at last, seated by a camp-fire upon the bank, a brush in each hand, vigorously fighting mosquitoes, and waiting for me to come *down*. He had concluded I was still up the stream, and that we would be forced to remain out another night; so had selected a camping-ground, and was patiently awaiting my coming. Upon my assuring him the farm-house was not far away, we at once 'broke camp,' and started for Crawford's, and supper; both of which we reached about ten o'clock.

"After supper, we were put to bed in the loft of the old house, where we would have rested well enough had it not been for a disturbing circumstance, which is worth the recording right here. It clearly shows that 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.' Hamlin thinks something of the kind brought a doctor to that particular house just in the nick of time; for a baby was born that very night, in that very house,—a boy baby, too,—with a pair of lungs that did him no discredit, but the diligent exercise of which frightened my friend from his bed to seek safety, through the gable-window, on the ground below. When I returned from my professional duties, leaving mother and

child 'as well as could be expected,' my bed-fellow had flown. I found him soon after, however, perched upon a big rock, in the middle of the creek, fighting midges with tobacco-smoke from his blazing pipe, and mosquitoes with willow-boughs, which were flying right vigorously in each hand. Upon seeing me, his first salutation was in the form of a question, which I thought had considerable determination in its rendering:

“‘How far is it to Bodines?’

“‘Six miles,’ I replied.

“‘Let’s go!’

“‘What! to-night?’

“‘Certainly; you don’t suppose I’m going to follow you around practising as a gynæcologist, do you? Say, what the deuce is the matter with that youngster?’

“‘Nothing at all, I can assure you; contrariwise, he is as sound as a nut.’

“‘Glad to hear it; was afraid he had broken a leg or something, he screamed so like fury. But come, let us be moving.’

“‘No, no; we will go to bed again, and take an early start in the morning.’

“But all my arguments and persuasions were in vain. He would not enter the house again. I finally carried him a blanket, and left him lying under a tree, at a safe distance from the house, with a fire near his feet and a smudge at his head, and there I found him sound asleep at daybreak.

"Before we went away, I entered into a conspiracy with the father of that interesting child to allow me to name it. The privilege was granted. I so informed my friend upon our way down the stream.

"He looked troubled, but ventured to ask,—

" 'What did you call it?'

" 'SAM!'

" 'Thunderation!' was all I heard, as he plunged into the stream and began a vigorous whipping of its waters.

"Before leaving, I inquired who had passed down the stream the evening before, and was informed that 'Shorty' was only five minutes ahead of me, making most excellent time in order to reach home before night. I had followed the tracks of *his* hobnailed shoes during that entire afternoon, which circumstance led to the initial letters on those heels of mine. Now, when I see a track, I examine the heel-mark, and, if it exhibits an H, I know Hamlin is not far away. Since the adoption of this device, we have never passed each other upon the stream without knowing it, and I have not taken a wild-goose chase upon an unknown track."

"Does not the letter fade out soon in the sand, thus confusing you?"

"Not at all. It remains fresh and distinct for three or four hours, a much longer time than it is needed. I have seen the imprint upon dry

stones, from the wet heads of the nails, an hour after the wearer had passed."

"Well, that does seem like a good arrangement."

"Indeed it is. Every man is labelled in this camp, so that we can trace him out in a short time if he does not put in an appearance at the proper moment."

"Anything else new about here? Because if there is, I want to make a note of it," remarks the Brooklynite.

"Yes; several things. Let me call your attention to the fly-book which originated in this camp, and, like most really useful inventions, grew out of a necessity. My first fly-book was one of those expensive Russia leather concerns, with parchment leaves. It always was an inconvenient and bulky monstrosity, until I waded too deep in the stream one day, getting it completely soaked, when it became hideous in form and proportions. George hung it on the line to dry, and when that desiccating process was complete you couldn't close the contrivance with the blow of an axe. The leaves were as wrinkled as a cow's horn and immensely more crooked; they stuck out in every conceivable direction, describing all possible geometrical angles and figures that were neither graceful nor becoming in a well-arranged fly-book. We subjected it to a pneumatic pressure of twelve thousand

pounds to the square inch in one of Chandler's book-presses without in the least disturbing its bristling propensities. So we gave it to Jim Crow to play with, who knocked one of his eyes out upon its sharp corners, and then abandoned his project of demolishing it; in fact, it was the only article I ever saw Jim tackle that he could not tear to pieces at one sitting. I then devised this fly-book, which has not only proved to be a convenience and pleasure to me, but likewise to my numerous fishing friends, until now, scarcely a fisherman can be found on these streams that does not possess one. It is, as you see, made of an ordinary old-fashioned sheepskin 'pocket-book,' such as you can buy at the book-stores. It occupies a space eight by three and one-half inches, when closed, having a pocket in each end, and a sort of flap arrangement on each side when open, to carry bank-bills. These flaps I have cut in two and sewed up the sides, forming little pockets, in which I carry my leaders, gut, waxed thread, and so on. Directly in the centre of the book I have stitched sixteen leaves of delaine, first having 'pinked' their edges to prevent fraying. In the centre of the leaves are passed small open rings, so that one-half of the ring is upon one side of the page and the other half upon the opposite one. I now hook my flies through the delaine, at top or bottom of the page, and put the looped ends through the ring, which holds them

nicely in place. The superiority of this fly-book over all others consists in its cheapness, compactness, and flexibility, as well as the protection afforded to your flies in the softness of the fabric upon which they rest, the absorption of moisture from the hook, and the ease with which they can be removed and replaced. A very handsome book of this character can be purchased for one dollar. A yard of delaine, costing thirty-five cents, will make the leaves, while your saddler will pink them for you for five cents, when you will be in possession of a fly-book infinitely superior to any of the ten- or twelve-dollar ones that are sold in the fishing-tackle shops.

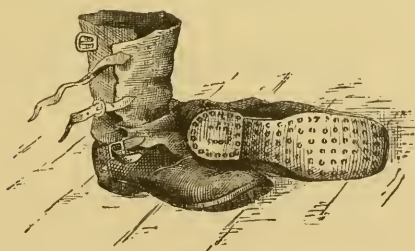
“If the delaine is purchased in different colors—white, blue, scarlet, orange, etc.—the beauty of the book is increased and your æsthetic nature satisfied. About each end, have a broad, elastic band fastened to the book, which will hold it snugly in place, and is more convenient than tie-string or buckle.”

“Well, trot out the rest of your inventions: let us have them all while you’re at it; for fifteen years’ experience as a fly-fisherman and ten as a camper-out must have taught you many useful lessons that we of less experience can avail ourselves of.”

“At some other time, Charles, I will take pleasure in showing you my creel with lunch-box attachment, my travelling-tea-pot, and tea

and sugar bag, which invariably accompany me upon an all-day fishing-excursion. But just now the shadows are beginning to fall upon the pools, the flies are bobbing over the surface of the water, and a fine rise out yonder notifies me that we had better be up and doing if we desire to avail ourselves of the evening fishing. There! Thad Jr. has already captured one in the back bayou: I hear his shout. Let us be going. Come, Hamlin, suppose we go to the slope wall this evening, and see if you can raise your 'buster' under the beech. Supper at eight to-night, George; we will cast as long as we can see."

"Ay, ay, sir!"



CHAPTER IV.

ON THE STREAM.

The Sport of Fly-Casting—How Trout are Caught.

MEMBERS of the various professions, shopkeepers, and others whose occupations confine them within-doors from year to year, suffer after awhile from nervous prostration, induced by inactivity of the digestive apparatus, which soon originates the many ills for which the medical man is constantly asked to prescribe. To persist in these sedentary pursuits, with the sole intent of adding money to the purse or increased knowledge to one's profession, is frightfully injurious to the health and intellect. In what manner these harmful consequences are developed, I cannot stop to discuss, since the fact is sufficiently apparent to every individual whose labors confine him to office or store, year after year, without a season for rest and recuperation.

Those who have tried the various fashionable resorts as resting-places, and have returned to their homes almost as much exhausted as when they started away, skeptically inquire,—

“What shall we do?”

The same prescription made by the angler's

patron saint, good old Isaak Walton, centuries ago, coupled with all its delightful pleasures, retains its efficiency even to the present time, and fits our case exactly,—

“Go a fysshynge!”

To the inexperienced angler, having in mind the reed pole, coarse line, bob and sinker, with which he jerked high into the air, from some neighboring pond or bayou, the unsuspecting bullhead, the demure and rooting sucker, or the less pretentious “shiner,” using for the allure-ment of these humble representatives of the finny tribe the angle-worm, fresh and squirming, perhaps such advice will come unappreciated and will be unheeded. To such I say, have patience to follow me a day fishing, that you may learn whether the sport reveals its attractions to you as it does to me.

Fish, you must know, particularly when those fish are trout, will not always rise to a fly, nor dive for your writhing worm. They are moody, are these spotted denizens of the mountain streams, and doubtless have their moments of hunger and times of satiety as well as the folks on shore. Do not imagine you will catch a trout at every flirt of your flies, or that they will fairly dislocate their cervical vertebræ in their anxiety to fasten themselves upon your deceptive hook; for I assure you they won't do anything of the sort.

I have seen a pool alive with jumping trout, feeding upon a yellow fly, in the edge of the evening, when the most delicate and skilful casts I could make (notwithstanding my artificial device closely resembled the natural one) would not entice a single one of the cunning little scamps to fasten himself upon my hook. I have bobbed my most captivating fly before the very nose of some sly old trout peeping out from under log or rock, and have watched him wink his eye in scorn and derision at my little game, but never once offer to leave his hiding-place, while he eternally wiggled his restless tail and flapped his pectoral fins, in intimation that he would say, if he only could, "No you don't, old fellow!" Again, I have caught that same wary trout in an open pool on a nondescript fly, as it fell with a noisy splash from an unskilful cast.

"You can't most allers tell wen they're a-goin' to bite," said a native fisherman to me on the stream one day.

It requires patience, perseverance, and an unruffled temper to make a successful trout-fisherman. If you possess these qualities, accompany me to our camp-grounds, where you will receive a hearty welcome from the jolly campers there congregated. If you have the "blues," just come out among the greens and get rid of all your mental disquietudes. Nothing like nature to quiet a fellow's nerves, set his stomach to

acting, and so place him fairly upon his legs again.

“What do we do to busy ourselves in camp?” do you ask?

Hail Columbia! what do we *not* do? Why, we get up at five in the morning: awakened from our refreshing slumber by the soft gray twilight falling upon our tent-walls, throwing a gentle halo round about us, and faintly illuminating all within. Then the wood-robin, the earliest of the morning songsters, begins his melodies, defying all our efforts at imitating his sweet, flute-like notes. The robin red-breast soon sets up his carol, and is at once joined by the many warblers with which the woods are swarming; and such a medley of songs as is kept up for the next two hours is alone worth a journey to the woods to hear. During the bird concert we arise and bathe our faces in the cool, running water with which our island is surrounded, don our fishing suits, prepare our rods and lines, and adorn our leaders with the flies to be used in the day’s sport. This completed, George, our cook, plays a tattoo upon a frying-pan, indicating that its contents have been placed upon the table, and our breakfast of trout, boiled potatoes, flap-jacks, and coffee is in waiting. While we eat, the sun comes peeping through a notch in the high mountain, lighting up the sky with its golden beams, casting brilliant colors upon the charming landscape. How many

tints of green we see in the foliage about us! How exquisitely delicate are the bright new tips of the hemlock boughs, and how they do bespangle the mountain-side!

Above our heads are the broad, green leaves of the water-beech, upon the under surface of which dance and twinkle silver and golden beams of light, reflected from the rippling water at our feet. Soon, the sun mounts higher in the sky, throwing his rays into the dense forest of the mountain, lighting up the firs, beeches, maples, and tulip-trees, revealing the mass of beauty lying at their feet, in the shape of ferns, mosses, and brilliant wild-flowers that raise their saucy little heads to salute the morning sun, even as do we! While we feast upon the viands before us and regale our eyes with the beauties of nature, now and then a nimble trout leaps from the water that goes rippling along upon either side, until it splashes and glistens against the lichen-covered rocks in the deep pool below. How his silver sides sparkle in the sunlight! and how eager we become to test our skill in bringing him to creel, as he again and again essays the same movement, in his efforts at catching a dragon-fly that goes bobbing along over the surface of the dancing rapid! Squirrels climb timidly out upon the slender branches of the maples overhanging the bayou in quest of the ripe seeds hanging there, and wink at us with

large, inquisitive eyes, while flirting their graceful tails above their backs. Chipmunks go scampering about the camp, fearlessly gathering the crumbs thrown them, while Squire Bodine's ducks dive to the bottom of the deep pool for the potato-peelings that have found lodgment there. Kingfishers chatter from the limbs of a dead stub across the creek, and young crows caw, gurgle, and splutter somewhere in the depths of the forest. Glorious, is it not, to sit at breakfast with such surroundings?

The meal despatched, we smoke our pipes and lay out the trip for the day. The fishing-ground is chosen, when away we go, in our comical-looking suits, with rods, creels, and landing-nets be-decking us, increasing the oddity of our attire. As we stroll leisurely up the stream, stopping here and there to admire a flower or listen to the note of some strange bird, all the old songs of our school-boy days are rehearsed, making the welkin ring with our joyous shouts. (Hamlin has always insisted that this is not a correct analysis of *his* feelings: that *he* shouts and sings to let off superfluous steam; we accept his amendment and pass on.)

But see, there's a rise! Yes, another still! Yonder, under the limb that trails upon the surface of the water. See him! He jumps again!

"Go for him, Hamlin; you will be sure to take

him. He seems just in the humor for that leading fly of yours."

Our skilful friend descends the bank, steps carefully into the water, that no ripple may reach the trout and give him warning of his danger. Slowly he unreels his line, sweeps it back and forth through the air, until the required length is obtained, then lands the gossamer leader, with its tiny flies, directly over the spot where the trout was seen to rise to the natural fly. Gently, deftly, are the deceptive feathers manipulated over the old trout's lair, until the perpendicular rod necessitates another cast. Again is the line in the air, describing a graceful double curve, far in the rear of the anxious fisherman, who, with every nerve alert, every muscle quivering with anticipation for the next throw, projects the leading fly safely under the low-hanging bush. A splash, the dull thud that answers to his strike, and the merry rattle of the reel, at once reveals that the game is hooked. And now what a fight ensues! how the delicate, six-ounce rod bends as the frightened fish endeavors to reach the cover of a pile of drift-wood near at hand! Failing in this, he tries the swift water beyond, and unreels a rod or two of line while dashing madly down the rapid. Oh, how he *does* pull! and with what anxiety the fisherman watches the result! every nerve in his body quivering, lest the delicate leader may part or the hold upon the mouth

give way. Now he dives to the bottom of a deep pool, and stubbornly shakes his head while trying to entangle the line under a stone, or to fray it off upon the sharp edge of a sunken rock. Then we observe, from the sudden, spasmodic jerks upon the rod, that he is endeavoring to tear himself away, when Hamlin anxiously shouts, with head turned imploringly toward us, while great drops of perspiration chase each other over his flushed cheeks,—

“Come, stir him up for me, doctor; he’s sulking.”

I hasten to the spot, casting a handful of pebbles into the pool; when away he goes again, making the reel run in his mad flight, carrying with him nearly every inch of line before reaching the lower end of the pool, where he tries to dart under a huge boulder, seeing which, Hamlin turns the butt of the rod toward the fish and stops the reel. My eye rests upon the rod as it bends from tip to butt, wondering the while whether it will or can stand the strain; but just then the fish leaps into the air in response to the bend of the elastic rod, or perhaps to show us what a beauty he is.

“He’ll weigh a pound at least, Hamlin; hold him steady.”

“I’ll hold him if the tackle will,” is the response; and again the trout leaves the water and shakes his head desperately to free himself from

the hook. Darting back and forth across the stream, striving here to dive under a root, there to circumnavigate a rock, he cuts the water with the taut line, lashing it into a spray that reflects the prismatic colors of the bright morning sun. But now his dashes become less frequent, his struggles not so desperate, then the magnificent fish is slowly reeled toward the fisherman, the graceful, yielding rod displaying a perfect arch under the weight of the nimble beauty, until he abandons the fight altogether, and displays himself calmly, upon his side, on the surface of the water. I place my landing-net under him, and carry ashore the trophy to his delighted captor. There, lying within the folds of the net, upon the clean, green grass, his beauty of form and color is commented upon, and size and weight estimated.

“A pounder, as sure as fate, Hamlin!”

“Yes, he’s certainly fourteen inches long, and quite fat. How the fellow did pull, though! I thought I had at least a two-pounder when I first struck him,” he replies, stooping to unfasten the hook before consigning him to a tuft of grass in the bottom of his creel.

Perhaps a dozen more are taken in the same manner, first by one, then by the other, at various points along the stream, when, concluding our morning’s catch sufficient to satisfy our craving for food and sport, we seat ourselves upon the



THE SLOPE WALL.

"I place my landing-net under him and carry ashore the trophy."

[Page 76.]



bank, in the cool shade of a friendly tree, and watch the kingfishers in their piscatorial exploits, agreeing that their pleasure is not unlike our own, after all. We note, too, when our feathered rivals in the fishing business dive from their high perches into the water after the small fry, they invariably come to the surface with the game in their mouths; our only wonder being how the deuce they chatter in that comical manner with a mouth full of fish!

On our way to camp we stop to gather laurels, rhododendrons, violets, daisies, forget-me-nots, and a hundred other beautiful flowers with which the banks of the stream abound. We examine the birds'-nests that are ingeniously secreted in tufts of grass and among the low bushes; watch the birds feeding their young, and notice the queer habits of the various species while they frolic in their native wilds. On the high bank, we lie down and peer into the water, through an opera-glass, observing the curious forms of insect life that swarm upon the pebbly bottom of the creek. There, we see strange little worm-like creatures, crawling about with bundles of sticks upon their backs, or with a coat of mail, constructed of minute pebbles, glued together in some mysterious manner. This becomes their armor, we find, to protect them from the fish, particularly the lazy, long-nosed suckers, that are constantly turning them over in order to get a nip at them.

Some, bursting their chrysalid shells, float to the surface of the water, rest a moment, pluming their delicate wings, and then take their flight to join the myriads of similar insects flying through the air. To sit down, or, better still, to lie down, and watch these wiggling little creatures transforming themselves into graceful and brilliant flying insects, often rivalling the flowers in gaudy colors, is a diversion of no mean description. Many an hour have I amused myself contemplating the habits of the multitudes of beetles, moths, and aptera that can be found everywhere in the open air. Not a stone, blade of grass, leaf, or flower but has somewhere upon its surface a living creature, whose movements are full of interest and instruction.

While thus employed, we hear the sound of George's tin horn echoing from hill to hill, a signal that dinner is ready and awaiting our presence. Hastening to camp, we find a panful of trout, done beautifully brown, steaming hot potatoes, with their jackets on, coffee, the aroma of which greeted our olfactories long before our eyes rested upon it, and some bread and butter such as only a farmer's wife can supply,—these all ready, with George standing by, in neat white jacket and clean apron, eager to supply our wants. Dear reader, how such a dinner is enjoyed! I can give you no conception of the wholesome appetite that is engendered by living

thus in the open air; I can only urge you to try it, and experience the great delights in store for you.

After dinner, we lie off in our hammocks, read the daily papers that come to us by the morning train, smoke our pipes, and entertain any callers that may chance to seek us out. At other times we beautify our camp-grounds in various ways until five o'clock arrives, when we again enter the stream and cast the fly for the larger trout that are hidden in the deeper pools. It is then we take to our boat: one of us seated in the stern, paddle in hand, the other in the bow, with rod and line, ready to cast for the first "buster" that indicates his whereabouts by an accommodating splash. In the quiet pond, each rock, tree, and shrub finds its counterpart, and the blue sky, with its fleecy, flying clouds, occupies the centre of the picture. So perfect is the reflection that it is no easy matter to determine where the real object and its reflection join. Floating listlessly along in the cool shade of the great mountain, how peacefully quiet is all nature about us! not a breath of air ruffles the fair pool or disturbs a leaf upon the hillside. Even the birds are quiet, for they, too, are taking their evening siesta. Silently the shadows are creeping up the sides of the western mountain, the sombre hues below intensifying the brilliancy of the grand old hemlocks lighted up with the

golden rays of the setting sun. Soon they, too, fall into shadow, and then we bestir ourselves to throw for the large trout, now upon the lookout for the multitude of flies and moths that disport themselves upon the surface of the water as the evening shadows entice them out.

We have not long to wait, for just under a shelving rock a "bright fox" has fallen into the water and is flapping his gauzy wings right vigorously to regain the airy regions. Immediately we see a boiling in the smooth water, which sends out circle after circle of gentle wavelets until broken against the sides of our canoe. I turn the bow, and, with a light sweep of the paddle, place my companion within reaching distance of the spot. One throw of his graceful line, and, before the deceptive fly fairly lights upon the water, the old trout has left his retreat and bounded into the air, grasping the morsel within his jaws. A play of a few minutes, in which he makes a noble fight for liberty, brings him within reach of the landing-net, when he is consigned to the bottom of the boat to await companions soon to follow. And a glorious evening we have of it. No more quiet now: the old hills are made to ring with shouts and songs at the capture of every beauty that comes to our flies. The moment a large fish is struck, Hamlin's favorite song is heard ringing clearly out upon the evening air:

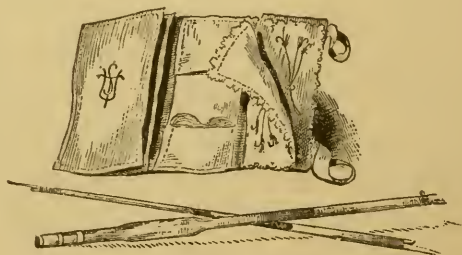
“ A gay old trout from his hole came out
To see what he could see ;
A boy found it out, then snaked him out,
And brought him, a trophy, to me,”

sung with a vehemence and gusto proportionate to the size of the fish captured. When he is alone in the boat, I can always determine accurately the number of trout taken by the numerals used in another of his ditties, which runs something like this :

“ Oh, lovely is *one* trout !”

with the emphasis upon the “one.” But what the other lines are I have never been able to ascertain, the only variation being in the “one,” which he changes to “two” or “ten,” according to his success. So, quickly passes the evening, until the shadows grow darker and darker, merging into complete blackness and night. Then we paddle home, to the music of the whip-poor-will, the singing of the tree-frog, and the occasional tappings of George’s tin pan that summons us to supper. A jack-lamp illuminates our dining-hall, where we soon turn our attention to the corn pan-cakes, with maple-syrup, potatoes stewed in milk, and a good cup of tea. These despatched, we seat ourselves about the camp-fire, smoke our pipes, talk over the incidents of the day, and listen to the unfailing serenade of the whip-poor-will. Presently the moon

appears in the heavens, lighting up woods and water with a radiance most enchanting. Hills and dales that are full of beauty by day have many added charms when bathed in the soft, silvery light of a full moon. As we sit and gaze upon her face, reflected from the mirrored surface of the pond, the night-hawks skip merrily along, feeding upon the insects that had entertained us during the day. At last the plaintive note of the whip-poor-will is hushed, the shrill screech of the night-hawk sinks into silence, and all nature settles down into that peaceful stillness only experienced in the wild-wood. Then we seek our comfortable beds, where we rest and chat until soothed into drowsiness by the ripple of the running water, the melancholy hoot of the owl, and gentle whispers of the wind through the pine-tree boughs. The responses to our questions grow fainter, less full, and finally fail altogether, when a snore in the direction of my companion's bed announces that he has already said "Good-night!"



CHAPTER V.

SHORTY.

A Native Fisherman who takes 'em on a Fly.

EVERY neighborhood possesses its "character,"—a chap who from some peculiarity, some oddity in dress, manner, habits, or style of speech, renders himself conspicuous among his fellow-men, so that he stands out in bold relief, a target for the ridicule of all with whom he comes in contact.

Such a man is Shorty,—additionally styled the "Shark of the Stream." So ostensible are Shorty's traits of character, that he is perhaps as well known, by name at least, as any denizen of the Lycoming valley. Where he originally came from the Lord only knows, for his own version of his life is so conflicting and crammed so full of startling incidents and blood-curdling situations, as to more than occupy the full measure of time allotted to any half-dozen of the long-lived backwoodsmen of this epoch. Had he never existed at all, much less in the lively manner we are forced to acknowledge he does disport himself, the streams of the Lycoming region would be far more populous with trout, and afford a

correspondingly increased amount of pleasure to the true sportsmen who seek these waters for recreation.

We had heard of Shorty and his depredations upon Pleasant Stream, with nets, set poles, outlines, and other abominable contrivances for slaughtering the fish of this most delightful of all trout streams; but it was years before we encountered him face to face in our excursions thither.

One day in early June, Hamlin and I were casting the fly upon its banks, being bountifully rewarded, not only in the large number of trout taken, and in their gamy quality, but also by our picturesque surroundings. The stream is broad, clear of brush, and comes tumbling down between two lofty mountains, whose moss- and fern-covered rocks, and immense hemlock, pine, and beech trees, are a sight to behold, while its cool, crystal waters sparkle and ripple over many little cascades in a manner that would at once delight the eye of any lover of nature and make him bless the day that brought him to the spot. Hamlin and I were casting our flies over the same pool, and my rod being rewarded with a fine, large fish, we were both devoting our energies to land him. My companion was in the pool, waist-deep, seeking to thrust the landing-net under the fish that was calmly floating on the surface of the water, an indication that he had

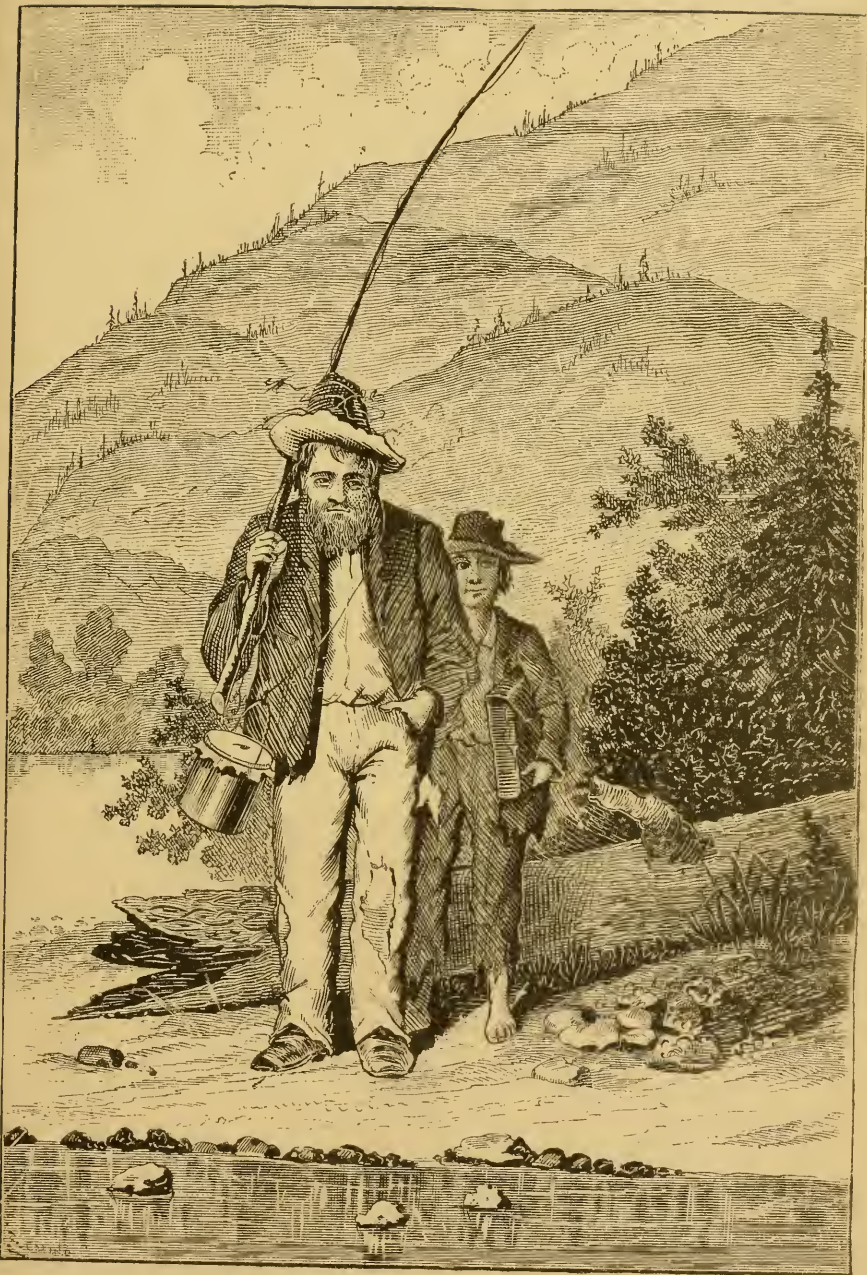
abandoned the struggle and was ready to be lifted into the creel. But, just as the net touched his silver sides, a spark of electric energy seemed to be imparted to him, when away he dived again, this time making toward Hamlin's legs for a harbor of safety, causing that individual to make sundry comical plunges to escape from the entanglement. The fish was soon reeled in again and quieted down, the net once more placed under him, only to stir him up to renewed exertions of sprightliness. This time he got the best of Hamlin, tangling him up in net, leader, and trout in such an indescribable manner as to tax our ingenuity to the utmost to unravel him.

The trout was darting hither and thither, between Hamlin's legs, then my own, while both of us were diving for him with our landing-nets in the most frantic manner, when with one last, desperate effort, in which he seemed to bring the force of all his previous jumps into one, he made a leap clear over my net, and landed safe and free in the pool beyond. Hamlin looked at me, I looked at him; and before either of us could make an exclamation, the bushes suddenly parted on the bank, and a voice, followed by a man, greeted us, saying,—

“I knowed you'd lose 'im. I caught one bigger'n him, over on Pine Creek, once, and he mixed three on us up just as this 'un did you fellers, and jumped clean over my head and

knocked my boy down. That 'un there" (pointing to his young hopeful of about thirteen years of age, who sat shivering and grinning from the bank on the other side).

As the fish had departed, we turned our attention to the new-comer, who presented himself so mysteriously and unannounced in our presence. He was a man of about fifty years of age, short of stature, with a small, round head, densely covered with long, shaggy, unkempt hair,—an equal mixture of auburn and gray,—while whiskers of the same bountiful supply and of like hue, almost concealed a pale and plump face. His eyes were blue and bright, mouth large, and well filled with tobacco-stained teeth that were exposed by the broad grin wrinkling his cheeks. He wore a black coat, threadbare, and abundantly patched, while his trousers (what was left of them) exposed a once white shirt, from front and rear, and a well-bronzed skin at the knees. This uniform was topped out with a black slouch hat, profusely ornamented with artificial flies, which seemed to have been collected from the back leaves of the fly-books of all the fishermen who had visited this stream for the past two years. On his shoulder rested a pole that evidently had been cut in the woods, while in his hand was an old, six-quart tin pail, covered with a dirty rag, a hole cut in the centre, through which to thrust his trout, when captured in the



SHORTY AND BOY.

mysterious manner known only to himself and the boy on the other bank; and this was "Shorty." We knew him from the description given of him, from his introductory story, from his tin pail, and boy with the plethoric black bag, which he said contained lunch, but which we suspected was the receptacle for his most taking fly,—*a net.*

The wind was blowing from the north somewhat cold, and, it being about time to take our nooning, we concluded to build a fire, cook our trout, and in the interval interview Shorty. He watched our preparations, divined what we were about, and, catching up his pail in one hand and pole in the other, exclaimed,—

"Oh, if you'r'n want of a fire, one that 'll cook yer fish and toast yer shins too, jest cum this way, and I'll show ye un. Ye see, I allers starts *my* fires jest off ov the stream a ways, so I won't be bothered with nobody that happens along."

Following him through the dense underbrush for a few rods, we came to a bright, glowing fire, built under an old hemlock stump, that was fanned into a glowing coal in the brisk wind that was just then blowing. While preparing our fish for the roast, Shorty watched the proceedings, and, with mouth watering at the prospect of so luscious a meal as seemed to be in prospect, observed,—

"I reckon them trout 'll be mighty good

cooked that there way. I never seen it done so afore. That buttered paper is to keep 'em from burnin', I s'pose. Now I calkerlate that's a heap sight better way than to cook 'em on a stick, and burnin' ov 'em."

"Yes; trout are very delicious when prepared in this manner, Shorty. Do you fish upon this stream much?"

"Do I? Why, Lor' bless yer soul, I've fished this yer stream from top to bottom for nigh onto twenty years now, and I knows every rock on its bottom, and every stump and root on its shore."

"You catch many fine fish, no doubt; take them all on a fly, I suppose?"

"Indeed I does. Nobody on this 'ere stream has no bisness with me a-fishin' with flies. Why, ye only jest oughter a-bin up here this mornin', afore the wind got to blowin'; why, I ketched—well, ye kin see"—(uncovering the six-quart pail for our inspection, revealing it more than two-thirds full of trout, from one inch to twelve in length)—"I ketched every blessed one on 'em in less'n a hour. I never seed 'em jump so; why, I took 'em four and five at a time."

"Four and five at a time!" exclaimed Hamlin, who had just lighted his pipe, and was holding a burning ember aloft, to catch the direction of the wind. "Why, man, how many flies do you usually attach to a leader?"

“Oh, sometimes ten and sometimes twelve, accordin’ as to how they’re a bitin’.”

“Ten and twelve flies at a east! Hail Columbia! Why, you must throw a whole out-line,” observes Hamlin, with a sly wink and a characteristic spit over his left shoulder.

“How many fish can you take here in a day?” I inquired, while carefully covering the roll of prepared trout with the burning embers.

“Well, the biggest hull I ever made was three years ago, out o’ that ere hole ye see yonder. I jist looked into it off ov that rock that hangs over it, and counted one hundred and twenty-two busters, every one on ’em weighing mor’n a pound. Now, thinks I, them there trout are mine, every one on ’em; so what does I do but jest throws the hole full of brush, so as no other feller could see ’em or ketch ’em out, and then went to feedin’ ov ’em.”

“Feeding them? What for, pray?”

“Why, ye see, I wanted to git ’em all; so I feeds ’em to make ’em kinder wanted to the place, ye see. Well, I fed ’em every night and mornin’ fur——”

“What on?”

“On—on—let’s see; what *did* I give ’em?” (scratching his head and looking into the fire, as though in search of something to feed those trout upon.) “Oh, I fed ’em on chicken innards, and mighty fond of ’em they wus, too. Ye would o’

laughed yersels nigh unto death to see one big feller tackle one ov them long innards and start to runnin', with about fifty more a-pullin' at the t'other cend of it to get it away from him, jist like I hev seed a parcel ov pigs a-doin' manys the time."

"But it seems to me you must have slaughtered a good many chickens to have fed your trout twice a day in that manner."

"Yes, I did; but ye see we live purty much on chickens in the summer, does the old 'oman and me and the six childrens, and then we raised 'em on purpose."

"Oh, I see."

"Well, as I was a-sayin', I fed 'em twice a day, and arter they got so they knowed me, I would feed 'em up stream a little higher, every day, until I led 'em 'round into that little run ye see a-comin' in jest 'round yender pint. I built a brush dam acrost the mouth ov it, and put in a board to shet the water off wen I wanted to. After I got 'em in there, don't yer see? I had 'em tight. I jest shet down that board, and picked out every blessed one on 'em with my bare hands!"

"But I cannot see any fun in that sort of fish-ing, Shorty. Why did you not catch them on a fly, and so enjoy it?"

"That's all werry well for you fellers what's got lots o' money and nuthin' to do to talk about.

But when a poor feller like me, with a big family a-dependin' on 'im for sumthin' to eat, why, he's got to——"

"You don't mean to tell me you ate them?"

"No; ye didn't let me finish. I sold every one on 'em, alive, to Mister Drake what's got a pond down the road, and he give me a hundred and fifty dollars for 'em in cash!"

"Pretty good price that, Shorty."

"Well, I dunno; one on 'em what weighed nigh onto four pounds had only one eye, and that 'un was right in the middle of his forrid,—jest as true as I'm a-settin' here,—and it did make him look mighty comikel, I can tell ye."

"A regular Cyclops," we interposed.

"Yes, he was a sly chops, for a fact; why, his mouth was bigger'n that," placing the palms of his two hands together, and separating them as far as the wrists.

"Shorty, what fly are they taking to-day?" inquired Hamlin, who seemed inclined to divert him from the stories that were becoming somewhat of an infliction.

"Well, I dunno, but 'pears to me the great dun is as good as enny," at the same time removing his hat and passing every fly, with which the band was covered, between his fingers.

"Of whom do you purchase your flies? I see you have quite a collection," was the next query.

"Oh, my 'oman makes all *my* flies."

"Indeed; let us look at them," we both replied in chorus.

He passed over the hat, and, taking a seat nearer, commenced expatiating upon their relative value, as he pointed out each fly with a long, bony finger.

"That 'un there," he said, pointing to one of McBride's grizzly kings, "that 'un she made yesterday, and I reckon on its bein' first-class, cause I took a whopper with it this mornin' already."

"Where did you procure the feathers?" we ventured to inquire.

"Them speckled ones?"

"Yes; and the hackle, too."

Reaching down into his dirty pocket, his face assuming a somewhat puzzled expression, he took out a quarter of a yard of the most villainous-looking plug-tobacco, placed one corner of it between his strong teeth, yanked it back and forth, much as a dog would a wood-chuck, until the desired quantity was secured within his mouth. Then, after working his jaws vigorously for a few moments, expectorated a quantity of black-looking fluid over Hamlin's leg into the stream beyond; and, slapping the plug upon his thigh, replied,—

"Them purty little speckled uns I got offna woodpecker, and that what you calls a hackle offna woodcock."

"Good gracious, doctor, do let him alone!

he'll try to make us believe this stream will reverse its current by to-morrow, and that we must stand on our heads to fish it; come, let up," observed Hamlin, while he rose and scratched among the coals for the package of trout placed there twenty minutes before.

"Come," he further added, "the trout are done by this time, the tea cool enough to drink, and I'm as hungry as need be for the occasion."

So we spread our luncheon upon a log that lay conveniently near, using clean, flat stones for plates, and fell to eating. Shorty watched the proceedings, as did his boy, who deposited his black bag on the bank across the creek and drew nearer, wiping his mouth with his hat and looking wistfully in the direction of the edibles. I could not resist his imploring gaze, but took a slice of bread, bountifully covered with butter, and garnished with a steaming trout, and held it toward him, saying,—

"Come here, you young scalawag, and have a bite."

He approached shyly, bending his body forward and, reaching as far as his ragged-clad arm would permit, grabbed the morsel, much as a trout would have taken a fly, and disappeared into the brush.

"Hev ye forgot yer manners?" Shorty observed, looking after him; but it was too late, the boy had gone out of hearing, and was doubtless

satisfying his hunger unseen. Hamlin supplied Shorty with a like piece, which he devoured ravenously, grunting his satisfaction between each mouthful.

"Shorty, where do you live?" I asked, after an interval of quiet.

"Jest down here aways; ye see them pine-trees down there about a mile?" using his pants and sleeve for a napkin, as he rose, pointing in the direction indicated. "Well, right there's a bridge that goes acrost the creek; my shanty's there, in the clearin'."

"What do you do for a living?"

"In summer I raises pertaters and corn; fishes, and sells my fish to city chaps what comes here a-fishin' and ketches nothin', and shoemakes in the winter."

"You make enough to support yourself and family, do you?"

"Oh, yes; easy. Why, I makes as high as twelve dollars a day sum days, a-fishin'. I keeps all the fish me and the boys ketches, and when I can't sell 'em to the city fellers, I jest runs down to Williamsport, and gets fifty cents a pound for 'em."

"What, such little ones as you have there in your bucket?"

"Yis, sir; they all counts in a pound."

"It's a shame, Shorty, to take those little fish from the stream; you will soon ruin the fishing."

"Yes, you city fellers all says that; but I allers notices that you never throws 'em in yourselves. They all says them little uns is so sweet to eat, you know."

"But no *true* sportsman will do that, Shorty."

"Well, I dunno: it 'pears to me what you calls yer true uns never comes this way, then."

"I'm sorry our city sportsmen set you so bad an example, Shorty; but tell me, do you never fish with anything but a hook and line? for, you see, I'm a little skeptical about your being able to catch a hundred of those little trout—less than two inches in length—upon a hook. I have always found them the hardest to capture with flies the size of those you wear on your hat."

"That may all be; but me and my boys ketches 'em easy enough." Then, twisting off another chew from his enormous plug, he stowed it away under his cheek, giving his face the appearance of a person suffering from *ranula*, and prepared his mouth for another squirt; at which symptoms Hamlin shifted his seat, fearing, doubtless, that the aim might miss and the shot bespatter his legs. He then added: "Oh, sometimes we puts out a few set-lines at night, and ketches some nice ones that way."

"Indeed! How do you set them?"

"Why, I takes a line about so long," indicating three feet between his extended hands, "and ties it to a branch of some tree that hangs

over a deep hole, and puts a live minney on the hook. His wiggling is too much for a big trout: he just goes for it, and swallers 'im hull. Then I has 'im; 'cause the limb bends just like a pole, and he can't tear hisself loose, ye see."

"How large a trout did you ever catch in that manner?"

"It is nigh onto five years now, I reckon, since I ketched a reg'lar walloper that way. He weighed three pounds fifteen ounces and three-quarters! By golly! I *did* want to make him weigh even four pounds, but Squire Bodine weighed him and shaved him clost. It was a dark night, and the eels were a-runnin' powerful strong. I set a hook on a riff near my house, and along came a eel, just thirty inches long, and swallered the hook, and a while afterward that big trout tackled Mr. eel and swallered him; so next mornin' I had 'em both."

"Was the eel alive?" I innocently inquired.

"Alive! In *course* he was; and the way he must o' stirred up that trout's innards was a caution! I reckon he was awful sick to his stummick."

"Well, I should say so. You do catch eels here, then?"

"Oh, yes; frequent. I ketched one last fall that weighed four pounds, and I swar to goodness if a big trout didn't try to swallow him, and got ketched at it hisself. He took Mr. eel tail

on, and the minnit the eel felt sumthin' a-ticklin' of his tail he just curled it around so"—indicating the bend by a crook of his finger—"and ketched him through the gills, and held him there till mornin', when I got the two of 'em!"

"If I were you I'd keep a lot of eels on hand, Shorty, and set them every night; they beat the 'eagle's-claw trap' all to pieces," Hamlin observed.

"Well, I was a-thinkin' o' that there myself, but the're so blessed slippery a feller can't do much in the way of a-trainin' of 'em."

At this, Hamlin looked at his watch, remarked that it was three o'clock, that the wind had gone down, and if we desired to catch any fish that day we had better be at it. So, I rinsed out our tea-pot, hung it to my creel-strap, lighted my pipe, and was ready for a march down the stream. At this demonstration Shorty also rose, looked up and down stream for his boy, and, not seeing him, gave a peculiar whistle through his fingers. Presently the lad, with the black knapsack on his back, broke covert, but seeing us, retreated into the bushes again.

Hamlin and I entered the stream, unreeled our lines, and, with a good-by salutation to Shorty, passed on, leaving him watching us from the bank. After turning the first bend in the creek, we were surprised to see Shorty there, and when we came within hailing distance he shouted at

the top of his voice, so that he might be heard above the roar of the cascade,—

“Say, you uns, I forgot to ax ye, doesn’t ye wanter buy my trout?”

“Buy your trout! You whimpering, shivering scoundrel, what do you take us for?” Hamlin cried, with supreme disgust depicted upon every line of his face. “We are not pot-hunters, you miserable shark; get out!”

“Well, ye needn’t git mad about it; I didn’t know but what ye *might* buy ’em; but I didn’t see no flask a-hangin’ over yer shoulder, I must say, but thought, maybe, ye carried it in yer basket.”

“Flask! flask! What’s that got to do with it?” Hamlin inquired.

“Oh, a heap. I allers notices that them fellers whot carries their basket under one arm and a flask a-hangin’ under t’other have more luck a-drinkin’ than they do a-ketchin’ ov fish, so I allers sells ’em my trout, and gets a good price for ’em, too,”

“That’s all right, Shorty; but we have no use for your fish; we are out for sport only, not to see how many trout we can destroy. By-by.”

“Good-by, surs. When ye cum this way agin ye will most allers find me here on this stream, sumwheres about, a-ready to build fires or do any other work ye may stand in want of.” Then, with an awkward flourish of his gayly-trimmed

hat and an attempt at what resembled a bow, he quitted us; and as the willows closed behind him we heard his voice above the roar of the rapid,—“Y-o-u John-nee!” to which a ghostly response came from somewhere up the stream,—“Hal-loo!” We passed on down the cascade and left father and son to the contemplation of nature--and the defenceless fish.



CHAPTER VI.

THE LOYALSOCK.

A Tea-Party—A Lost Trout—And a Ducking.

“WHAT do you say, boys, to taking the nine o’clock train for the Loyalsock?” Preswick asked, as we were all seated at the breakfast-table one beautiful morning.

“I’ll go, for one,” Sanders replied.

“So will I,” added Hamlin.

“Perhaps I had better join you too, and so complete the quartette. I have not been there for two years, and am anxious to try the Hoagland branch again. We had excellent fishing there, you remember, Hamlin.”

“So we did; and a beautiful stream it is, too.”

“How had we better go?” Sanders queried.

“My advice would be to drive over from Canton,” Preswick suggested.

“Very good; if we mean to go this morning, better fly around and get ready. George, place a luncheon in all our creels while we pack our rods.”

“Is a change of raiment necessary?” asked Hamlin.

“Certainly; we will need dry clothing when we come in at night. Let each man take a satchel containing an extra shirt, trousers, drawers, and stockings, going in light marching order, that we may not be burdened with baggage.”

Breakfast finished, all set to work preparing for the trip. Charles and Robert agreed to keep camp while we were gone, declaring they would find sufficient amusement in carving canes and pipes from the laurel-roots, or in embellishing the grounds. By nine o'clock, dressed in fishing suits, and with all necessary equipments, we were in waiting at Bodines station for the train to carry us northward to Canton, distant twenty miles. We telegraphed from Ralston for a team to be in readiness upon arrival of the train, and when we reached the village, an hour later, the horses were ready, prancing before the vehicle in which we were to be transported over the mountains.

The distance from Canton to Warburton's (at whose house fishermen usually stay, it being conveniently located between the Hoagland and Elk Run, while the Loyalsock is a mile lower down) is sixteen miles, most of the way being up and down the steep and rough mountain-sides.

The scenery is of a varied and wild character, with now and then charming views along the route. The first mountain encountered was so precipitous as to necessitate our footing it. We

reached the top nearly tired out, and were willing to sit down and enjoy the distant landscape. Away to the east, as far as the eye could reach, hill after hill was seen densely covered with hemlock and spruce. Now and then a clearing could be observed, from which the blue smoke curled aloft, indicating the whereabouts of the toiling backwoodsman striving to convert the stony, rugged wildwood into a productive farm.

Upon the way down the slope, we occasionally encountered a rude farm-house, from which, dirty, ragged children peeped coyly out upon the unusual spectacle of a conveyance containing persons to them unknown. The scantily-clad women ceased from their labors in the potato-patches near the huts, and leaned lazily upon their hoe-handles, gazing stupidly at us until we passed out of sight. Ugly dogs ran after the vehicle, barking their dissatisfaction at our intrusion upon their lonely domains; sheep scampered wildly down the road in front of us, lashing their woolly, stubby tails and kicking a cloud of dust in our faces; crows flew, screaming their fright, from the stumpy meadows, and did not stop until the mountain beyond was reached, where others joined the flock, taking up the note of alarm, making the woods ring with their abominable clatter; blue-jays flew from tree to tree, setting our teeth on edge with their file-saw notes, and hawks, soaring among the clouds, sent down their disapproving screech at

the intruding strangers. So we jogged along, varying the entertainment with an occasional walk of a mile or two, the team meantime floundering among the stumps and bowlders with which our pathway was obstructed. Three o'clock found us at cross-roads, both leading, in different directions, to the Loyalsock. This spot is of some note,—to the fisherman,—because of its marking the beginning of the Hoagland branch, represented by a modest stream in the meadow close by. In the fork of the roads is a small storehouse-looking structure, with a rude sign over the door, on which is written in uncertain characters,—

SHUNK PEN

We stopped and speculated upon the significance of such a name, wondering what sort of a pen it could be. Many theories were advanced, none of which exactly fitted the case, bringing us to the reluctant conclusion that a post-office must have once existed here, under the name of “Shunk,” and that the “Pen” was intended for an abbreviation of Pennsylvania. This seemed to be the most satisfactory solution of the problem, notwithstanding our inability to divine a use for such an institution, unless under patronage of the sundry wild animals and birds encoun-

tered by the way. However, "Shunkpen"—as we have since named it—was one of our objective-points, consequently Hamlin and I took to the stream, while Sanders and Preswick went farther down, all agreeing to meet at Wilbur's, four miles below, about dusk. The creek is small at the point where we first struck it, but bountifully stocked with small trout,—only now and then a large one appearing. Two miles farther on, the stream widens and deepens, displaying numerous cascades, at the foot of which deep pools are formed, where we were amply rewarded with fine fish.

Our two companions were awaiting us when we arrived at Wilbur's. Their creels were well filled, and they were delighted with their afternoon's work. We met upon a rude bridge that crosses the creek near the Wilbur mansion, and debated whether it would be best to seek supper and lodging there or go four miles farther on, to Warburton's. The house was not attractive: it was built of slabs; had an immense stone chimney that looked as though it would tumble through the roof upon the slightest encouragement from any strolling zephyr. The gable-ends had a few slabs missing, and the roof could not strictly be called water-tight. The stable was in even worse condition; but the driver having inspected it,—pushing against one corner,—concluded it might stand until morning, if

nothing unforeseen happened. We therefore shouted for the proprietor, who promptly presented himself, and from whom we elicited the following replies :

“ Can you furnish us with tea and lodging here to-night ? ” we inquired.

“ Wal, maybe we ken ; we’ve got two beds aloft, ye ken hev, and I reckon the old ’oman ken make yè tea, if ye likes.”

“ Have you hay for the horses ? ”

“ No, I hasn’t no hay.”

“ Oats ? ”

“ No oats neither.”

“ Straw ? ”

“ Nary a straw.”

“ What under the sun have you then that we can feed our horses ? ”

“ Wal, I ken cut ye some grass ; that’s what I feeds mine.”

“ You have horses, then ? ”

“ No, not exactly ; but I keeps steers.”

While this conversation was transpiring, Sanders entered the house, and, having inspected it, returned, reporting that we might possibly survive the night in the rickety concern, but that the undertaking would be somewhat hazardous.

We finally concluded to accept the situation rather than risk a ride over rough roads, through the dark woods, to the retreat farther on. We all entered the house therefore, deposited our

luggage, and then took seats upon the grass outside. The woman busied herself preparing the tea that Preswick had ordered for the party, during which time he interviewed the man of the house.

"How came you here?" he inquired.

"Same as you'uns; fishin'."

"These your children?"

"No, them boys are not mine; them's hern."

"Your wife was a widow, then?"

"S'pose so; I cum here, found her without no man, so I stayed ever since."

At this juncture the woman appeared at the door and made the announcement,—

"Yer tea's cooked."

We promptly entered the domicile, seated ourselves about the clothless table, when there, in the centre, stood a pot of tea—and nothing else!

Preswick pushed himself from the table, looking aghast at the spectacle of the lonely tea-pot; and, with his eyes riveted upon it, inquired,—

"Gracious! Have you nothing else?"

"Why, no. Ye said ye wanted tea. If ye'd sed ye wanted bread too, I could a cooked ye's sum."

Consternation was depicted on every face of that hungry party at this astonishing announcement.

"Have you nothing at all to eat in this house?" urged Hamlin.



“We hed our suppers afore night, and et up all the bread, an’ we hev’n’t been to Canton for nothin’ for nigh unto six months now; so’s we’re purty much short ov eatin’ truck,” she replied.

There was nothing left us but to laugh over our misfortune, which we did right heartily.

While sipping the execrable decoction of herbs that she called tea, one of the party thought of our forgotten creels and the luncheons George had prepared in the morning. They were at once brought in, the several packages spread upon the bare table, exhibiting a supper the like of which the poor woman probably never saw before, and at which she gazed with hungry and wistful eyes. We ate our “*tea*,” cracked jokes, spun yarns, then retired to our former positions upon the grassy sward for the evening smoke.

Our pipes finished, we re-entered the house, asking to be shown to bed, upon which the man took the dingy lamp, directing us to follow him. This we did, up a ladder, through a square hole in the ceiling, to the mysterious regions above. Reaching there, our beds were pointed out,—one upon a clumsy, well-worn bedstead, the other, flat upon the floor. The only lamp in the house was left us, and then lots were drawn for the elevated bed. The prize falling to Preswick and Sanders, Hamlin and I took the one on the floor, in reaching which he stepped upon an unsupported end of a floor-board, and but for the timely assistance

of the rest of the party would have fallen upon the cooking-stove in the lower apartment. He was at once righted, however, and order and quiet restored. Bivouacked upon straw beds, sleep claimed us until awakened early in the morning by the odor of frying pork. We rose promptly at this prospect of a breakfast, secured a footing upon the tilting boards, dressed, and climbed down the ladder to perform our ablutions at the well, outside.

The breakfast was a great surprise. It consisted of fried salt pork, boiled potatoes, milk-biscuit, and good butter. Upon inquiry as to where these supplies came from, we ascertained that the proprietor of the house had walked to Warburton's the night before, laying in a sufficient stock to furnish this lavish meal.

Our horses fed upon freshly-cut grass, the bill paid,—a Godsend to the family,—we adjusted our rods and entered the stream, distributing ourselves at various points along its course.

The day was fair, the water clear and low, necessitating long casts and careful wading to avoid disturbing the pools.

Early in the season, the trout lie upon the ripples, feeding upon the larvæ of insects found clinging to the stones of the creek, and are watching for any food that may be passing upon the surface of the water. Then, they are taken very readily, but little skill being required to keep

the flies in proper position upon the surface of the swift current. In the latter part of June, however (the time of our visit), the larger trout are to be found in the lower portions of the deep pools, where the water breaks over to form the ripple or cascade, and are best taken by fishing up the stream instead of down. By wading through the swift water below, and casting a long line, throwing the flies lightly upon the still water above, this advantage is secured: being in the rear of your game you are not so easily seen, and are certain to fix your hook in the upper jaw of the rising fish, and the firm hold renders his escape less likely.

Being desirous of reaching Warburton's, our headquarters, the team and baggage were sent there, while all hands fished down-stream, reaching our destination in time for dinner, with creels showing a fair catch for a half-day casting with the current.

Approaching the house, we saw Sanders coming toward us with a magnificent trout struggling within the folds of his landing-net. Reaching the bank, he tossed it upon the ground before the group of fishermen. It was a beauty, about sixteen inches long, and floundered about until its sides were covered with sand. To remove this Sanders carried it to the creek for a wash. He stooped down upon one knee, and, while looking in our faces, detailing the fight made in landing

the fish, gave it two or three rinsings, when the trout, with a flop, flew from the jolly fisherman's hand, and, to his extreme mortification, swam slowly but surely into the deep water of the pool. The shout of merriment that greeted the fisherman's ears from the observers on the bank did not soothe his feelings in the least.

"Great scutt! who would have imagined he could travel off in that manner after lying upon the bank so long!" was his quiet observation.

None of us knew precisely what "great scutt" meant when translated into English, but as that was a choice expression of Sanders's, only used upon extraordinary occasions, we concluded that it had "a heap of feelin' in it."

This circumstance was not permitted to fade from the memory of the individual most concerned; whenever he came in view upon the creek, during the expedition, his attention was secured by a "toot! toot!" when the hailer would stoop down and go through the motion of washing a fish, Sanders always turning his head to seek consolation by industriously casting his flies. The story reached his friends at home also, who stoop toward the sidewalk to give him the mystic signal as he passes along; and to this day the memory of it is not permitted to escape him as did his glorious fish.

In the afternoon the party divided: Sanders and Preswick fishing up the Hoagland, while

Hanlin and I resorted to Elk Run, all agreeing to meet by the dam, on the main creek, at dusk; there to throw for larger game.

Elk Run proved to be as pretty a stream and as full of trout as the Hoagland, so that we met at the rendezvous at the appointed time, boasting of our success.

In the midst of our sport under the dam, where large trout were rising to our flies, we were hailed from the bank by a man seated in a two-horse wagon. My name being called, I went ashore, to meet an old patient, and an enthusiastic fisherman, in the person of Mr. Wm. Cooner, of Watsontown, who drives yearly to these waters, spending a month at Hillsgrove, at the house of J. J. Saddler, four miles below, on the main stream. He had heard of our arrival, and came to carry us to his stopping-place for tea. A consultation resulted in an acceptance of the invitation, Mr. Cooner first having assured Preswick that the "tea" should not be of the Wilbur order, of the night before.

We were quickly driven to the spot, and supper was at once announced.

Twelve merry fishermen occupied seats around the table as guests of the genial Cooner. At one end was a large platter of trout, fried beautifully brown (the like of which I never before sat down to), the pyramid of fish reaching at least a foot above the white cloth. Mashed potatoes, flap-

jacks with maple syrup, white bread, sweet butter, hot tea and coffee, were as bountifully supplied. The host announced that he expected every man to perform his duty. "This dish of trout must be eaten," he said.

Keen appetites came to our aid, so that at the end of two hours the feast was finished, and an acknowledgment obtained from Mr. Cooner that his instructions had been faithfully carried out, while the guests were full of thankfulness and—trout.

Then the party gathered upon the porch, where pipes were lighted and stories told, until the horses were driven to the front gate to carry us to Warburton's. The night was a beautiful one, our road lighted by the full moon, whose bright round face could be seen through the branches of the trees and reflected from the rippling water of the creek.

By eleven o'clock our trout were all dressed and upon ice and we in comfortable beds. In the morning a good breakfast was served, after which preparations were made for the return to camp.

Forksville, some six miles up the Loyalsock from Warburton's, offers great inducements for fishing. Another stream enters the main one there, at the mouth of which and upon both branches, for miles above, abundance of trout are caught. The country is wild, unsettled, and

extremely difficult to get out of, save by following the beds of the creeks. A team can be driven from Shunkpen or Warburton's to Forksville, in a dense wilderness wild enough to satisfy any lover of solitude, and where accommodations can be had. Several smaller streams enter into the North and South branches of the Loyalsock at this point, all worthy of the fisherman's attention.

Our creels being already full, and preparations made for the return, the Forksville expedition was relinquished for the present.

The creek looked so inviting in front of the house that Preswick and I could not resist the temptation to make a few casts while the rest of the party were arranging the fish for transportation home. I reached the stream first, to find the great broad rocks, whose flat tops just emerged beyond the water's surface, wet and slippery from the morning dew. Several slides were made before a secure footing was obtained, when, looking up the stream, I saw my companion endeavoring to reach a similar rock. I called to him to beware of its treacherous surface, to which some response was made that was lost in the rapid's roar. He made efforts at reaching a rock near the centre of the pool, and I sent another caution for carefulness.

"All right; I'll not fall!" came back to me in the roar of the cascade.

Presently a splash was heard behind, causing me to look in Preswick's direction, to find him standing in the middle of the pool, with water running in rivulets from hair and finger-ends, while he assumed the most comical attitudes in endeavoring to reach the bank before his catastrophe should be discovered. His hat and rod were keeping company upon the rapid, both of which I rescued as they came within reach, and then sat down to join in the laugh over my friend's untimely bath.

In a short time things were righted, the wagon loaded, and a start made on the homeward track.

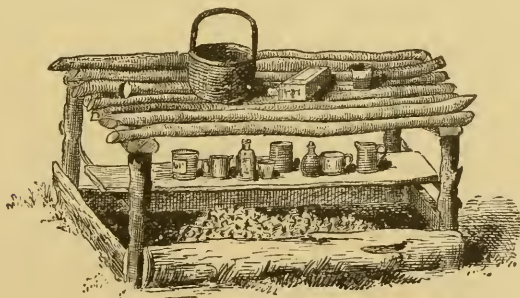
We reached Canton in time for the 10.47 train south, which brought us to Bodines at 11.36 the same morning.

Robert and Charles were on hand with the boats and paddled us into camp; the trout were then sorted, wiped dry, packed in dry grass, and forwarded to friends at home, arriving there, as we afterward learned, the same night, in good order. Our united catch amounted to over four hundred trout, from six to sixteen inches in length, so that our trip proved a very enjoyable one, at a cost of seven dollars for team and driver, four dollars at Wilbur's and six dollars at Warburton's, in all seventeen dollars, to be divided among four persons.

During our absence Robert and Charles had reconstructed the ice-chest, covering it with sods

and ornamenting it with ferns until it was completely sheltered from the sun. The island point was terraced to the water's edge, and a rustic bridge built to join the point with the smaller island in front. Over the bridge an arbor of hemlock boughs was raised, enhancing the view of the pond beyond. Large ferns were planted at various points about the camp, and a wild-flower bed, amply stocked with blooming plants, made in the rear of the large tent. A rustic reading-table stood in the place of the one made of slabs, and the old bouquets were supplanted by fresh ones.

In our usual chat about the camp-fire that night, all agreed that the past two days were brimful of pleasure. We retired earlier than usual, being tired from the day's work, soon falling into refreshing sleep, which was not interrupted until the wood-robin, at the peep of day, began his welcoming carol to the morning sun.



CHAPTER VII.

OTHER STREAMS.

Tioga, Kettle, Cross Forks, Young Woman, Pine, and Other
Creeks.

GATHERED under the shade of the beech and elm, we all sat one pleasant afternoon, trying to arrange another expedition to some distant fishing-ground.

Hamlin favored "Kiffs," a mill-pond on the head-waters of the Tioga River, to reach which we quit the train at Alba, a few miles north of Canton. A walk or ride of eight miles is then necessary, over the Armenia Mountains, until we strike the pond. Many times have Hamlin and I visited this spot in years gone by, constructed rafts which we paddled to the centre of the pond, where, among stumps, dead trees, logs, and other débris, we captured any quantity of ten- and twelve-inch trout, on a worm! The number caught was only limited by our endurance. If we could sit in the broiling sun from morning until night, the trout secured could not be carried from the raft by one person. They would not rise to a fly, no matter how skilful the cast or how tempting the artificial device; nothing but

a worm would bring them from the depths below. Hamlin, more patient with that sort of sport than I, secured the most trout, while I amused myself casting the fly for frogs, with which the pond abounded. I almost enticed the silent fisherman from his solemn watch upon the raft when once he discovered the rare sport I was having with the large green frogs, that jumped at a gaudy fly dangled before their noses. A big fellow, snapping the fly within his monstrous mouth, with a jerk, was flung high into the air, where he spread out his arms and legs in the most comical manner, then fell with a spat upon the water, that knocked grunt and breath out of him at the same time. Now and then one would be tossed upon Hamlin's raft, blinking his great yellow eyes and pawing vigorously at his lacerated mouth, assuming the while such grotesque positions as to set the fisherman roaring with laughter.

In the evening we quitted the pond to cast the fly in Tioga River, lying within a stone's throw thereof. The river is smaller than Lycoming Creek, but has many fine pools and rapids that contain a reasonable number of trout. We have taken many a pound trout and larger from its bosom. A Mr. Kiff has a saw-mill and dwelling-house near by, and will entertain any fishermen who visit these waters.

"How long since you were there, Hamlin?" Preswick inquired.

"Not since we all lodged in the barn,—four years ago."

"Oh, I remember that excursion well. You got me to cover you all with hay, then left me to shift for myself."

"Precisely; but did not every one of us volunteer to get up and cover you too, if you would do the same by us afterward?" answered Hamlin.

"Which I agreed to do—in the morning, and every mother's son of you declined."

"Well, we had a good time, any way, and brought home lots of fish," said Sanders. "I wonder whether we could do as well now?"

"I do not doubt it," Hamlin answered.

"We should have gone over into the Pine Creek region before we came here," Preswick urged. "I have never been over that ground much, and should like to try it. I'm told excellent fishing is to be found there."

"Yes; that is Chandler's favorite ground. He stops at Oleona, fishing mostly on Kettle Creek," I said. "It is a beautiful stream, too,—one of the finest in the country."

"How do you get there?" Charles asked. "I have heard my Philadelphia friends talk much of that country."

"The best route for you, Charles,—coming from Brooklyn or Philadelphia,—would be to go to Westport, on the Philadelphia and Erie Railway. It is the first station beyond Renovo.

There is a good hotel there, kept by John Robbins, where you had better remain over-night. A party of four persons should go, making the expense much lighter. Take a small A tent, a few canned meats, and a quantity of tea and coffee. Other supplies, such as bread, butter, and pork, can be had at the hotel. Mr. Robbins will furnish you with a good team, and a driver named 'Joe,' who knows every foot of the road, as well as the best fishing-points. He is also a fair cook, and carries with him frying-pan, coffee-pot, and other necessary utensils for preparing an out-door meal. With Joe and party start early in the morning up the creek (the hotel being at the mouth of Kettle Creek), and stop at Trout Run, fifteen miles out, for dinner. You will find a hotel there also, where a fair meal can be had. After dinner drive to the mouth of Cross Forks, seven miles farther on, and a fine fishing-point. Charley Leonhardt keeps a neat little hotel there, where you will find excellent accommodations. One or two days can be spent very profitably fishing on the Forks and Kettle. You will reach the place in time for evening fishing. Very fine trout are taken under the dam on a fly during May and June. You can dismiss your team here if you choose, and engage Joe to call for you upon an appointed day; but the best plan is to keep him and the team along, enabling you to make excursions to the

various streams in the vicinity. He can drive you up Cross Forks, dropping two of the party two miles away, and the others two miles beyond them, when all can fish down to some point agreed upon, where Joe can have coffee made and the tent pitched if rain is threatened, or for your accommodation during the night, should you decide to lie out. He will also clean and pack your fish, making himself generally useful and you very comfortable.

“When you have travelled over these creeks to your satisfaction, drive to Oleona, nine miles farther up the main creek. This is the point where Ole Bull attempted to form a Norwegian colony. The enterprise proved a failure, however; but one of the original party remains, in the person of Mr. Andreson, who was the original secretary of the expedition. Mr. Burt Oleson, who also resides here, is a clever, obliging gentleman, and an ardent fisherman. He will cheerfully impart information relative to the best fishing-points in the vicinity. The only hotel is kept neat and cleanly by Mr. Edgcomb, who sets an excellent table, and is accommodating to all fishermen who fall in his way.

“You will now cast your flies on the main stream and Little Kettle Creek, that enters at this point. The country is very wild and rugged; not a house is seen for miles, as you fish up or down the stream. Wild animals are constantly encoun-

tered. Deer meet you on the stream and stare you out of countenance, and bears and wild-cats scramble out of the way as you pass along. No more delightful waters for fly-fishing can be found in the State; the fish are bountiful and of large size. The largest trout are caught early in May, but good sport may be had at all times during the fishing season. Young Woman's Creek, Slate Run, Big and Little Pine Creeks, are all within half a day drive from this point, to all of which Joe will take you over tolerably good roads.

"A week or more can be very pleasantly spent in this region, by camping upon the streams, having Joe to do the cooking, to drive you from point to point, and to bring your milk, butter, eggs, and bread from the hotels.

"The largest fish only should be retained, as you will capture far more than your necessities require. The catches of the last few days of your stay can be sent to the hotel, and kept upon ice ready for transportation to your homes.

"The trip, for four persons, is not a very expensive one, even if you keep the team with you. Driver and conveyance cost three dollars and fifty cents per day. The hotels charge one dollar a day for man or beast. A trip of one week, from Westport and return, costs twenty-one dollars for team and man, and forty-two dollars for subsistence for the entire party, or about sixteen dollars for each person.

“Germania is five miles farther on, whence Pine Creek and tributaries are easily reached. A stage runs out from Oleona to that point every other day. Usually, however, parties who desire to visit these streams exclusively, come in from the opposite direction, hiring a team at Wellsboro’, in Tioga County, the nearest railway station. That place is most conveniently reached from Elmira, by the Elmira and State Line Railway, whence you can drive over the mountains, nine miles, to Marsh Creek, which empties into Big Pine, and is an excellent fly-stream. Thence on to Harrington’s hotel, one mile above, on the same stream. Good fishing will be found here also, with superior accommodations at the public-house named. Mr. Harrington is a courteous old gentleman, who will perform any service to make your stay agreeable and comfortable. From his hotel to old Hod Vermilyea’s, as he is familiarly called, is six miles. Before reaching it, you cross two good trout-streams, at two and a half and four miles out. A day or two can be pleasantly spent at Vermilyea’s, whence a drive of six miles brings you to Ainsley’s. Here Big and Little Pine Creeks form a junction, around which is perhaps the best fishing upon these two famous streams. Ainsley keeps a very good public-house, right at the forks of the two creeks, and has a team that can be employed to carry you to any point desired. Your own team

can be dismissed, therefore, while you spend a week or more casting over the delightful waters of this region. Three miles above, you find Genesee Forks, and a few miles beyond that, Cushing's Creek, where you have reached the ultimate point of the fly-fishing territory. Beyond, the streams are too small, but are alive with the small fry that stock the larger waters. Now, if you choose to follow up the trail and go over to Kettle Creek, and the region already described, it is but a seven miles drive from Ainsley's, or Pike Mills Post-Office (as laid down on the map), to Germania. I have already made you familiar with the country, from this point, clear through to Westport."

"But such an expedition is out of the question now," Preswick said. "It is too late in the season, and we do not want to go so far."

"True; I was only directing Charles how to reach these grounds when he chooses to go. For us, just now, it would be too long a jaunt, occupying more time than is allotted to the remainder of our vacation."

"How would it do to go up Tim Gray's,—way up above the splash dam? That is close by, and we can strike it even higher up by climbing this mountain, through the gulley, opposite the squire's dam," Sanders suggested. "It is but two miles over by this route, and we can make the trip easily in a day."

"Sanders, you never seem to get enough of Tim Gray's," Hamlin replied. "Why, you didn't do a thing up there the other day."

"I know it; but I didn't have a fair chance. There are lots of fish there, if we can only strike the stream at the right time. I'm willing to try it again, or I will go with you up Pleasant Stream."

"I think our chances are much better for Pleasant Stream," Hamlin observed; "but I presume we would encounter Shorty and a dozen others floundering about there."

"It's a delightful stream to be upon, even if we don't take a fish," Preswick answered. "Suppose we get the squire to drive us above Crawford's in the morning. We can fish down to the main stream by noon, and there have a dinner of steamed trout and tea. In the evening, we can cast on the main stream, and be down at camp in time for supper. Now, *that* would make a pleasant day of it."

"Or let us drive up Bloody Run, out to Cascade,—only six miles away, over a splendid road. Two of us can fish Salt Run, in which there are fine trout that never had a fly presented them until I did it myself. The Rev. Father Dunn captured one there weighing a pound and a half one day last week. Then the other two of us can go a little farther and try Wallace's Run, which flows in the opposite direction, emptying into the Loyalsock. This, too, is a good stream, sel-

dom visited by any but native fishermen. This will be entirely new ground to us, and offers that inducement, even should we catch but few fish. John Bodine will drive us out and return by moonlight, or we can take blankets and lodge under the wagon should the fishing warrant a longer stay. What do you say to *that*?" I inquired.

"That sounds well," Preswick said; "suppose we try it?"

This project was finally settled upon, all agreeing to breakfast at five in the morning, and to be in the wagon by six, ready for the start. Just as the council was concluded and we were about to rise from the grass, an immense bouquet of wild-flowers came rattling through the branches of the trees, falling with a thump in our midst.

"What in fury's that?" Sanders exclaimed, quickly rolling over, as from some imaginary danger.

"Only a bunch of flowers," Preswick said, picking them up and looking them over; "and very pretty they are, too. Wonder where they came from?"

"I'll wager a cookie Williams is not far away," Hamlin suggested. "I know of no one that would stop to gather such a quantity of flowers in this locality *but* he. Let's look him up."

At this he rose, went down the bank behind the tent, and from there proclaimed,—

"Here he is! I've treed him!"

"Break cover with him!" "Retrieve him!" "Bring him in out of the wet!" and similar exclamations greeted the announcement.

Soon Hamlin appeared, leading the tall, good-looking Canandaiguan by the ear, demanding that he should give an account of himself.

"Well," he said, "I heard you were all down here having a good time, so I came to see about it. I got off at Ralston and walked down the road, gathering those magnificent flowers I just now tossed to you, and which you do not seem to appreciate as cultivated gentlemen should, allow me to observe. I never saw such a profusion of wild-flowers in all my life as are covering the mountain-side from Ralston to this camp; why, the rhododendrons are gorgeous! exquisite! Just look at them! Did you ever see anything half as beautiful?" And he held a fine cluster up for inspection.

"Very pretty indeed, Williams," I said, "but not as beautiful as the laurels, according to my thinking; indeed, I never could understand why people will go into ecstasies over the rhododendrons when the laurel-blossoms are so very much prettier. Look at that cluster of laurel-buds, for instance, and name a flower, if you can, possessing so many lovely features. See how shell-like those half-open buds are, with the delicate pink dots upon their corrugated surfaces. What a

lovely blush the full flowers possess! and how admirably they harmonize with the dark-green leaves and delicately-tinted buds! Talk not to me of rhododendrons when the charming laurels are to be had."

"Well, I suppose I will have to compromise with you, doctor, and call them all beautiful, particularly as you seem to stand ready to become their champion," he said. "Have you observed the wild geraniums and forget-me-nots with which the wet, mossy rocks are covered?"

"Yes; our wild-flower bed by the tent yonder contains specimens of all flowering plants to be found in these wilds. That delicate little white flower that grows upon a small running vine, commonly called the 'partridge-berry,' is as fragrant as the trailing arbutus. I have taken up a fine bed of it, which I mean to transfer to the wild-flower department of my garden at home. The trilliums, vetches, lupins, and the endless varieties of ferns are particularly fine here. You must remain in camp over night, Williams, and accompany us up Bloody Run in the morning, and I will show you flowers in such profusion and beauty that you will feel like remaining forever in the mossy little dells that contain them."

"Thank you. Would like to remain, but the truth is, I am such a poor sleeper that I'm afraid I would have a restless night of it."

"I'll fix you, Mr. Williams," Charles responded, "if you will permit me, so that I will guarantee you to sleep like a baby."

"With colic?"

"No, indeed; but like one that has had its bottle, or dose of soothing-syrup, and is tucked away peacefully and contentedly for the night."

"Very good. If you will agree not to be disturbed by my restlessness, I'll stay with you."

"All right, sir; I will make you a bed in the back tent, upon a straw tick covered with a cotton-filled comfortable, that will afford you a mattress so soft and yielding that, when I have sponged you off and placed you upon it, I'm sure we shall hear nothing of you until George plays his reveille for breakfast."

"Now, boys, that being disposed of, let us prepare for the evening fishing. Here have we been chatting the entire afternoon, until the creek is already in shadow. Come, Williams, go with us: we will show you where we have 'marked down' several beauties that we shall be delighted to see you capture."

"Excuse me, gentlemen; if it is all the same to you, I will take a walk along the mountain and examine the flowers."

"You will never get him into the stream while a flower can be seen upon the bank," Hamlin said; "so waste no time in urging him to go fishing, but let us be off ourselves."

At this we took down our rods, and slung the creels over our shoulders. Williams did the same with his tin flower-box, and all started up the stream, spending a most delightful evening in visiting our favorite pools, and matching our skill against the cunning of the old trout we had pricked and lost upon previous trials.

At dark we answered to George's blasts upon the horn, and were soon gathered about the supper-table to hear Charles's graphic description of how a deer came bounding through the campgrounds, passing between the two rear tents and frightening George almost white, as it ran toward him with hair bristling in the wrong direction and eyes glistening like balls of fire.

"I declar' to goodness," George added, after listening to the recital, "I was afeared he was a-goin' to bite me—shuah; he 'peared mighty forbiddin' like."

"Why didn't you try Mr. Hamlin's plan, George, and catch him on a fly?" Robert inquired.

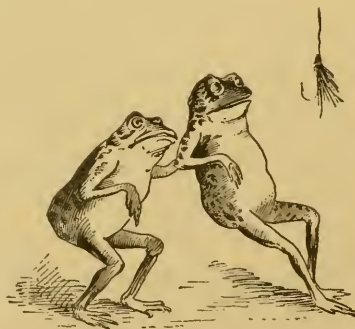
"Gwachious! I was too much skeered, and glad enuff to see him skip out. He did run fearful fast when I blowed de horn in his ear; he just jumped clean over da hammick and was gone in less'n no time."

"This point is a 'runway' for deer," Hamlin explained; "several have passed over it since we have been camping here. Doubtless this one

had been chased by dogs, else would he not have ventured so near the tents. They will run over anything that comes in their way when frightened, and will show fight if interfered with. Lucky you got out of his way, *Géorge*."

"Certin shuah, sah. I climes a tree when annuder comes."

The evening passed rapidly, while stories were told around the camp-fire, the serenades of the night-birds listened to, until ten o'clock reminded us of our beds, and that we had better seek them, so we might the earlier awake for the contemplated morning ride. Then the pipes were emptied, the "good-nights" said, and all the campers snugly tucked away by Charles, who wiped their faces with that huge sponge of his, then glided silently away to commune with the owls, returning to bed no one knew how or when.



CHAPTER VIII.

FLY-CASTING.

For Trout, Squirrels, Deer, and other Game.

HAMLIN had raised a fish which in angling parlance is designated a "buster"; he had spent a large share of the morning in an effort to entice him from his secure retreat, under a leaning beech by the long pool immediately above the slope wall; had even climbed up the beech, and, sitting astride one of its limbs, peered into the deep pool below to obtain a glimpse of the daring fellow who created such a splash in carrying away a fly and leader.

As I came around the turn in the creek, emerging from a clump of willows upon its bank, I looked for the enthusiastic fisherman, and soon discovered him upon the lofty perch, carefully dangling his flies below. Now and then, I could see a swirl in the water beneath, at which he gave a vigorous jerk, tossing his flies among the scraggly branches; then extricating them from the entanglement, and himself from the tree, he carefully descended, sat down upon the bank for a few minutes, arose, entered the stream a short distance above the trout's lair, and began a skil-

ful casting of the flies, but failed in securing any response from the trout. Again and again he tried to throw them under the overhanging limbs; but so low were they, that every effort failed. He reeled up the line, stood in the water waist-deep, looked anxiously toward the tree-top, and meditated. I could almost hear his thoughts,—his every motion and expression plainly indicating that he was trying to solve the problem of getting those flies where the old trout was lazily rising to take the natural ones that flew against the branches, and then fell, struggling helplessly, into the pool.

My presence upon the scene had not been discovered, so I sat down to await developments. Suddenly the fisherman looked about, gazed aloft into another tree, then stood upon tiptoe, and reached for a leaf that proved to be just beyond his grasp; and, as his hand swept by it, lost his balance, almost falling into the water: straightening up again, shading his eyes with one hand, he closely scrutinized the shore, making it evident that he wanted something, but just what, I could not divine. Finally his legs followed the direction of his gaze, and, taking a chip from the bank, he carried it out to his former position, where he again cast toward the tree-top, until his line became of proper length, when he drew it toward him and placed the leading fly upon the chip, permitting it to float silently away with the cur-

rent. "A happy thought!" I mentally exclaimed, and immediately rose to watch the result of that little piece of strategy. I saw the chip gliding among the twigs; observed a gentle twitch that dislodged the fly from its resting-place to bob upon the water's surface. A splash, a strike, a shrill rattle of the reel, and a whoop from the fisherman told the success of the exploit: the wary old trout was at last outwitted; an artificial fly, in a position where he had never seen one before, fastened itself in his greedy jaw. I hastened to render any assistance to disentangle him from the submerged branches; but, notwithstanding our efforts to chase him below or to draw him above this place, he persisted in remaining just where he was, diving among the drooping boughs in such a manner as to render the leader a hopeless tangle. An effort to place the landing-net under him failed, and giving a sudden, vindictive lurch, he parted the tackle, and escaped.

To part company with a large trout after a few minutes struggle for the mastery, is anything but a delightful sensation; to have the well-bent rod suddenly straighten out, throwing the limp and leaderless line into your face, sending a cold chill down your spinal column, changing a triumphant tremor into a miserable disappointment, is not an impression of an enjoyable character.

"All right, old fellow, I know you are there, and will try you again some time," was Hamlin's

parting salutation, as we sauntered on down the stream.

At the high bank, a stop was made, to cast over the favorite ripple that runs along its base. Cold springs are bubbling up from its bottom, affording capital ground for large fish.

I was standing at the top of the rapid, while Hamlin occupied the bank in front of a deep pool where some drift-wood had lodged against a fallen tree. He had made several casts without securing a rise, and when just about to make a longer throw, while his flies were still in the air, suddenly, from the depths of the pool, among the flood-wood, came an apparition that startled him, causing his line to fall among the clover-tops behind.

I looked in the direction indicated by his finger, and there stood a buck, his head proudly erect, staring at his astonished observer on the bank.

Hamlin, true to his nature, lifted the flies from the grass, poised them in the air an instant, then with a forward motion of the rod, at which the deer made a bound for the opposite shore, projected them fairly upon his retreating back. A hook fastened itself in his rump, at the prick of which the deer made a few frantic plunges that brought him upon the shore, with Hamlin scrambling along in his wake vainly endeavoring to disengage the flies.

The buck, frightened into renewed efforts of

“The last I saw of him he went over those willows yonder like a meteor, with forty yards of most excellent line

HAMLIN LANDING A DEER.



speed by his shouting pursuer (who loudly called upon him to stop, declaring that he would be only too glad to let him off if he would but wait a moment), made astonishing strides down the opposite shore, causing the reel to rattle as it never did before, until every particle of line extended in a bright streak behind him, and snapped like an electric spark, as he leaped over the willows into the thicket beyond!

The luckless fisherman held the stripped pole in his hand, inspected it from tip to butt, then, looking shyly toward me, exclaimed,—

“Well, confound him! he didn’t get my reel, anyhow!”

“Why didn’t you give him the butt?” I inquired.

“Gracious! I gave him all my line and leader; I thought that enough for one time.”

“If you could only have held him a little longer, I might have had my landing-net under him.”

“He landed himself; that was my whole trouble. Had he remained in the water, I could have managed him well enough. But I never had any experience with game jumping on shore and skedaddling overland into the bushes before; consequently didn’t know how to manage him. Never mind, I know where *he* is—— No, blamed if I do, either; for the last I saw of him he went over those willows yonder like a meteor, with

forty yards of most excellent line to lengthen out his tail with. Well, let's 'mark him down' and try another pool."

This propensity of Hamlin's for casting flies at every living creature that came in his way became a very fruitful cause of trouble to him. I remember once, in passing through the woods, his encountering an old ruffed grouse, who displayed her maternal antics of lameness—fluttering seemingly helpless wings—in order to lead him from her young. He made a cast as usual, catching her at the base of a wing. The instant she discovered herself fastened to something she became exceedingly lively, scampering about in every direction, while her captor tried to reel her in. The line becoming very short, she darted around the trunk of a tree a half-dozen times, shivering the slender lancewood tip into fragments, and then escaped with leader and flies.

Many have been the red squirrels hooked in the same manner, when found swimming the stream.

One evening a large bat annoyed him by flying about in his way; he hooked it also, frightening it into a tree-top with leader and flies, where it hung suspended, screaming and biting itself into a frenzy that forbade any approach. The next morning the indefatigable fisherman climbed the tree to secure his line; but when he reached the bat there was a lively contention as to who should possess the property; for every time the line was

pulled upon, the bat flew at his pursuer, snapping and biting in the most furious manner. Finally the gun had to be brought to bear upon the blood-thirsty little rascal before the line could be reclaimed.

Such incidents go to make up a full day in camp, and are referred to, time and again, about the camp-fire at night, are related to friends from the city, who occasionally call, and afford merri-ment at the club or about the whist-table during long winter evenings.

As I look over my note-book, so many comical situations of myself and friends crowd themselves before me that I hardly can decide which to relate and which to allow to remain within its sacred leaves for the enjoyment only of the select coterie of anglers who took part in them.

But we must not loiter by the way; friends, a bevy of ladies, have written us that they will arrive in camp by the eleven o'clock train to-morrow to partake of a trout dinner, necessitating the capture of a supply of that luscious fish, else will their hopes and desires lead to disappointment.

Hamlin started toward camp for another line, and I took to the stream in pursuit of the needed trout. Nobly was my rod rewarded, for when camp was reached, at dinner-time, eighteen beauties graced my creel as a nucleus for the day's catch. Hamlin, having repaired damages, appeared at the same hour with a thirteen-incher

among other fine ones that he had succeeded in landing.

The large one was a noble fish, fat and plump, and was a trophy he had a right to be proud of, as it was the largest trout that had yet been brought to camp. As the fisherman settled himself in the barrel-chair, pipe in mouth, with a challenge to match him, his satisfaction was something to be envious of.

Charles, the Brooklynite, and Robert, the bookseller, were busy all the morning beautifying the camp for the reception of the ladies on the morrow. The posts that supported the canopy over the dining-hall were beautifully decorated with hemlock boughs, ferns, and wild-flowers. Wreaths of flowers were suspended in the large tent, while festoons of laurels and rhododendrons ornamented the one used as a parlor. Bouquets occupied every available place, and the ground was swept as clean as a parlor floor. Flags decorated the eaves of all the tents, and waved from their peaks, while the large one, bearing the expressive name of "Camp Don't-Care-a-Darn," floated gracefully upon the breeze from the highest pine on the point. Right well had the "committee on decorations" performed their duty, and now they rested to inspect the catches of the "committee on supplies," who had just entered dripping from the creek.

"Doctor, it will never do to permit Hamlin to

show the largest fish to-morrow ; you must match him," Robert urged.

"It can't be done," Charles replied.

"Lemonade for the crowd that it can," was Robert's challenge.

"With a stick in it?" Charles queried.

"Yea."

"Done !"

And then I was hustled off to win or lose the wager.

As I entered the stream, Hamlin, who still occupied the chair, contentedly smoking his pipe, shouted to me to return and help him hold the stakes, but I passed on to try my skill on an old fellow that had been "marked down" in the morning.

In a short time I succeeded in hooking him, and, from the strain on the rod, I judged him to be a match for the one in camp, therefore I shouted, bringing a delegation of campers to the spot at once. He was landed, carried to camp, and laid before the captor of the other fish, who promptly declined to allow it as an equal. They were placed side by side, and the last one manifestly failed to reach the dimensions of his predecessor by just one-quarter of an inch.

Robert tried hard to have it allowed as an equal and the bet called a draw, that every fellow might treat himself, but this was stoutly resisted by Charles, who insisted upon another trial.

Hamlin was appealed to, but was immovable as the everlasting hills. The trout did not come up to the mark, and that was the end of it. Much merriment and many witticisms were indulged in over the discussion. Robert, like Procrustes of old, endeavored to stretch the trout, to make it measure the thirteen inches, but Charles forced the nose of the fish in the opposite direction.

Finally, I was sent out again, and the memory of that afternoon will linger with me always; for, by a singular good fortune, I captured the largest trout of that season.

Did you ever take a fifteen-inch trout with a delicate fly, upon a slender leader, and an elastic rod weighing less than six ounces? Did you? Fun! Shade of Izaak Walton, fun is no name for it!

Imagine a beautiful clear afternoon, with the sun just preparing to sink behind the mountain at your back; a pool upon which no ripple shows, save those that roll in gentle rings from bank to bank as each succeeding step places you nearer the mossy log lying half embosomed in the water before you, and under which a trout is supposed to lie. Carefully is the cast made, dropping the flies but a few feet from the spot; and, as you recover the line, a whirl in the water announces that your expected fish is there, but has missed the fly. From the wake you determine him to be a rouser, and stand almost motionless while reeling in the line for another cast.

Throwing your flies through the air back and forth, until the required length of line has been again unreeled, the gossamer leader with its downy flies shoots directly toward the log, and, as the line uncoils, is launched in a straight line immediately over the spot. The deceptive flies settle upon the water softly, gently, without the slightest splash to indicate their position. Suddenly the water boils about them, sending a thrill through your body and an involuntary movement to your wrist, the dull thud, when the strike is made, giving evidence that the game is hooked and is one of the largest of its kind. Instantly your reel is set whizzing as the fish rushes madly up the pool, while every inch of line is taken in his flight, when the terrific strain upon the rod bends it pliantly from tip to butt; and, feeling the stout resistance to his advance, he leaps from the water, throwing the crystal drops from his golden sides, wildly shaking his head to free himself from the hook. You are careful that he secures no slack, and cautiously reel him toward you. At this he dives to the bottom of the pool, remaining so motionless that you fear he has fastened the hook to a root or stone and made good his escape. The thought sends a cold chill through your frame, as you carefully draw upon the line to ascertain whether he has really fled. Soon, the steady pressure brings him again to the surface, where he floun-

ders and dives to and fro in a manner that tests the delicate tackle to the utmost. Reeling him near you, the landing-net is loosened from its button on your back and made ready for his reception; but before you can get it under the sprightly fellow, away he goes again, far down the pool, until he rests upon the very brink of the foaming rapids. Your chances now of saving the prize are precarious in the extreme; and, while the trout struggles and tugs to gain the swift water and so elude your hold upon him, the butt of the rod is advanced toward him that he may have the full spring and so relieve the strain upon his tender mouth; then commences a contest of skill at once in favor of the trout. Oh, how he *does* pull! and when he shoots across the rift the water hisses as it is cut by the taut line that throws it into beautiful, sparkling spray. Again and again he breaks, leaping into the air, causing you to shout like a Modoc at every jump. Presently you succeed in securing a stone from the bottom of the creek, which is hurled with all your might below the place where the trout is struggling, causing him to dart like an arrow directly up the stream, compelling a quickening of your pace in the same direction as you reel in the line as rapidly as your hasty steps will permit. Now he attempts to reach a pile of flood-wood, and sets your nerves tingling as he darts by, missing one of its projecting slabs by only an inch.

Then he tries to plunge under an old stump that lies sprawling in the water, all of which praiseworthy efforts you skilfully frustrate.

Presently he becomes tired, perhaps discouraged; his plunges grow less frequent, his side-long skips not so alarming, and then you are able to reel him within reach of your landing-net once more, where he lies upon the surface of the water and gives up the contest. You carefully slip the net under him and carry him gleefully to shore. Then it is that the hills are made to ring with your triumphant shouts that bring a like response from friends in camp, who run to meet you as you bear the trophy in. How you enjoy the triumph as the campers comment upon the beauty of the fish! and with what joy you relate the incidents of his capture, while they all stand gazing upon his glittering sides!

Hamlin graciously acknowledged the defeat when he saw the splendid trout floundering in the net that Robert carried toward him.

“Go to the head and *stay* there, doctor,” was his quick reply. “I did not believe there was another trout like that between here and the slope wall,—he *is* a buster, that’s a fact. Hold still, let us measure him!”

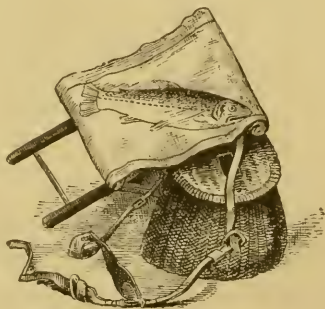
“Fifteen inches plump, by George!” he exclaimed, as he rose from applying the rule.

In the evening the squire, who had heard of the capture, paddled up to camp, bringing scales to

take the fish's weight, which he announced to be "One pound and five ounces!"

This would not be considered a large fish in the Adirondack or Maine woods region, but upon a mountain-stream, where fishermen are almost as abundant as the trout they seek to capture, such an one is not to be sneezed at.

We laid the splendid fellow out upon one of the camp-stools, spread out his bifurcated tail, extended his golden fins, and then traced his comely proportions with pen and ink, adding the vermilion spots, sketching his beautiful head, and dotting the Grover & Baker stitch that extended from gills to tail along the centre of his silver sides. Under him was lettered his length, weight, and date of capture; the stool thus embellished has remained one of the choice pieces of furniture in the camp from that day.



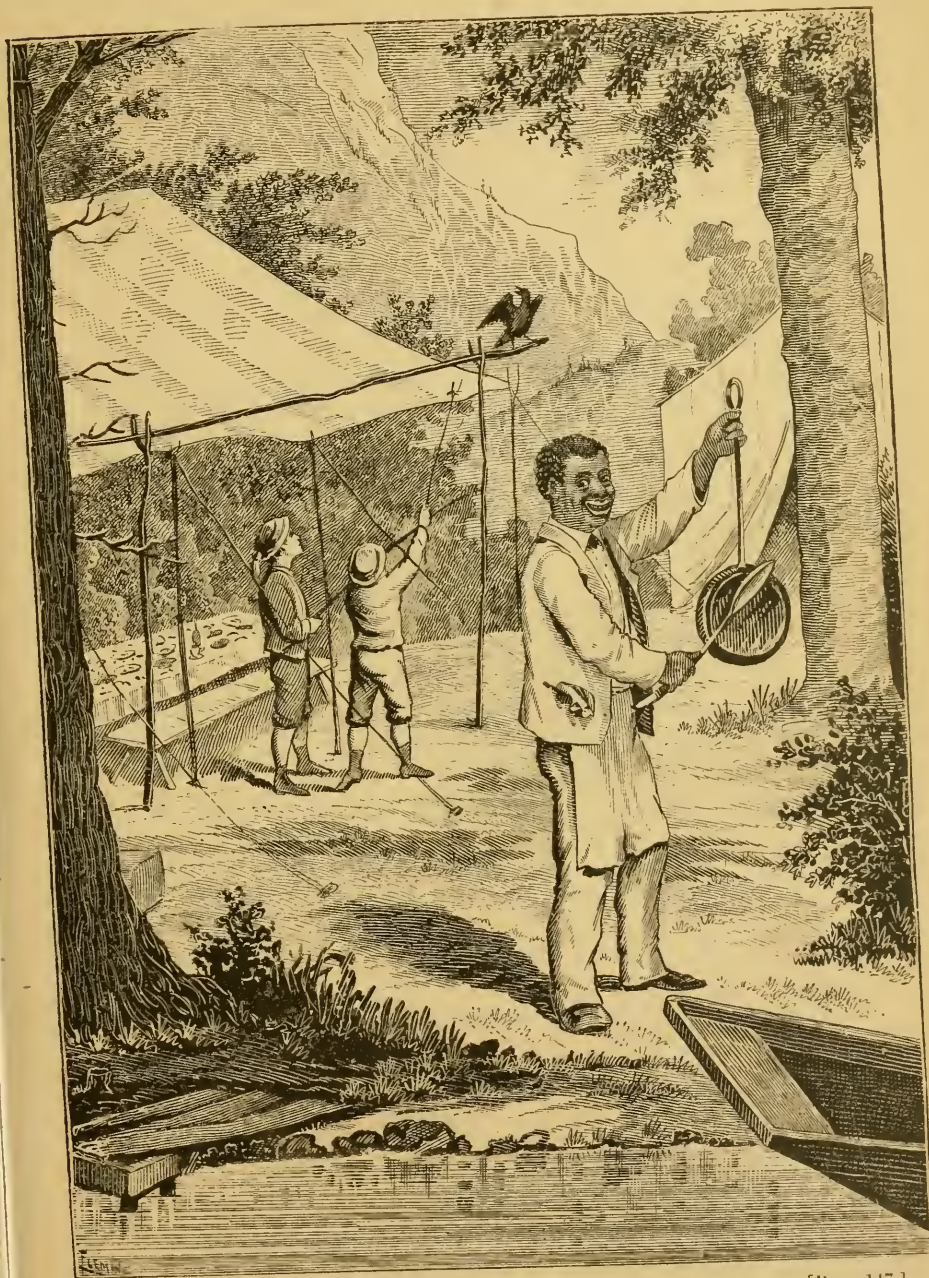
CHAPTER IX.

VISITORS.

Ladies, Babies, and Jim Crow.

WE were up bright and early, that camp might be placed in the best of order for our expected visitors. After breakfast Robert and Charles made excursions up the mountain-road for fresh flowers. George scoured the tin-ware, washed the table-cloth and spread it upon the line to dry. Hamlin arrayed himself in his best clothes, put on a white shirt, hung a bright tin plate against the beech to do duty as a mirror, and proceeded to scrape his face with a razor. Thad Jr. visited a farm-house near by for spring chickens and a fresh supply of milk; while George and I busied ourselves in preparing the dinner. By eleven o'clock our arrangements were complete, and we paddled the three boats down the pond to bring up the party. We were at the station but a few minutes when the whistle of the locomotive announced the approach of the train, and as it came gliding around the curve, white handkerchiefs were fluttering from the windows of the car containing the merry excursionists.

Two short whistles from the engine signaled for the application of the air-brakes, which were promptly applied, causing an involuntary obeisance of the ladies, and throwing their gentlemen escorts into a huddle by the car door. Immediately baskets, gentlemen, and ladies presented themselves in regular order upon the platform, and were speedily helped to the ground. Before the campers had an opportunity to make the usual salutations of "How do you do?"—"Glad to see you"—"Fine day," etc., every member of that visiting party laughed immoderately, poked all sorts of fun at our attire, and blandly inquired whether dinner was ready. We tried to organize them into a quiet group that Charles might read the welcoming speech, that had been beautifully engrossed with charcoal, upon fourteen sheets of Harry Green's best brown wrapping-paper, tied artistically with marline at the corners. But speech-making was out of the question to that noisy, merry, hungry party, so we directed the way to the boats by the old mill, and embarked them all safely upon the beautiful pond that led to the camp. The day was a perfect one, and the pond upon its good behavior, not a ripple disturbing the reflection of its charming surroundings. All the adjectives expressive of beauty or pleasure in the vocabulary were freely indulged in by the ladies, and emphasized by the gentlemen. Songs were sung, witty comments made, until



the old hills rang with the merriment of the jolly sailors.

As we neared the camp, Hamlin ran up the flag to the top of the pine, and exploded a diminutive fire-cracker as a salute. George was running about as busy as a bee, while his neat white jacket and apron intensified the blackness of his happy face. Jim Crow sat upon his perch, plumed his jet wings, and cawed a welcoming note. Amid merry greetings, laughter, and cheers, the party safely landed, and were conducted to the parlor-tent to deposit baggage and lay off superfluous wraps. Scarcely had this been done ere George flailed his big frying-pan with an iron spoon, summoning the party to dinner.

The table had been ingeniously extended by Robert and Charles, neatly covered with a white cloth, and literally loaded with the good things that came in the numerous baskets of the visitors. Loaves of cake, jars of preserves, dishes of head-cheese, pressed chicken, boiled tongue, deviled ham, baskets of berries, moulds of "wiggle," crates of green peas and beans, bunches of fragrant onions, clusters of black Hamburg grapes, bread, biscuit, crackers, and numerous other and indescribable gastronomic delicacies adorned the table, toppled upon the camp-chests, hung suspended from the limbs of trees, and sat everywhere upon the ground.

These added to George's fried trout, broiled

spring chickens, mashed potatoes, stewed tomatoes, green peas, and excellent coffee, made a dinner calculated to satisfy the cravings of any reasonable or discriminating stomach. That dinner, with its loaves and fishes, was heroically attacked, —the hungry party satisfied, leaving the historical number of baskets remaining, from which the campers feasted to the end of the season.

After dinner, excursions were made to various localities for flowers and ferns; the baskets returning loaded with choice plants intended for transplantation in ferneries at home. Great bundles of laurels and rhododendrons were collected, behind which the fair gatherers could scarcely be seen as they carried them exultingly to camp. Boat-rides were indulged in upon the pond, walks taken up the creek, berries gathered by the way, bird-nests hunted for, laurel-roots secured, barefooted paddlings in the creek resorted to, until all became weary, late in the afternoon, from their incessant frolics, when they settled themselves into a group under the beech and elm for a rest before tea. Charles, ever on the alert to render some one more comfortable, took his sponge from its peg upon the tree, washed it thoroughly in the cool water of the creek, then wiped the face of every lady in camp, much to their amusement and comfort. The group was having a royal time chatting, punning, singing, and lounging under the grand old trees, until a

modest little garter-snake came twining his way gracefully through the grass, putting some of the ladies to flight as quickly as though a crocodile had sought a luncheon among them. The handsome fellow was picked up by one courageous girl, laid away upon moss in the bottom of a glass jar, and carried home to ornament and enliven her fernery, where I saw it the following winter, as happy and contented as though in his native wilds, sporting in interminable summer.

"Ugh, see that ugly bug!" exclaimed one of the sensitive ones, as she gathered her skirts about her and retreated toward the tent.

Charles picked it up, followed her, and proceeded to deliver a lecture upon its beauty of color and form, and sprightliness of action, convincing her at last that it was not such a dreadful creature after all.

"Dear! Oh, me! see that caterpillar coming this way! Why, I should think the bugs would set you wild down here,—they're perfectly horrid!" said another scamperer for the tent.

"The bugs are not more numerous here than at home," Charles observed. "Every flower, every plant in your garden has its vexatious little parasite. I have seen hump-backed caterpillars perform their little trapeze acts overhead while swinging themselves gracefully within an inch of your nose, just as that fellow will do in a moment, now above your head. Great sprawling spiders

hop dextrously across your path, and escape to the nearest tree, from which to spin the webs that smear your face with dew in the morning walk. Green worms fall from the leaves above your head, vying with each other in attempts to drop upon your neck, where they play hide-and-seek up and down your spine. Many-legged worms go scampering about when the book is lifted from the arbor-table; and while reading, big black ants, winged and wingless, straggle over your hands, balance themselves on your hair, and, tickling your neck, you give them a flirt with pocket-handkerchief as you depart in disgust to the house. Microscopic flies dart into your eyes when riding, nearly blinding you with their acrid secretion. Flies light upon your fellow's ears, scrambling over his bald head when at meals, while cockroaches tumble into the jam. Midges, those little vexatious imps of Satan, thrust their needle-pointed proboscides into your skin, and drink your blood unseen. When you write, all sorts of moths and bugs dart at your light, then fall crippled and wingless upon the table, to dash across the paper and dot the i's for you as they go. By night mosquitoes fly through the screened windows, singing their diabolical tunes in your ears, making you weary with brandishing pillow or towel; and, as you sink exhausted upon the bed, pierce your quivering flesh with their blood-thirsty bills, then depart to the

outer darkness singing their hallelujahs to the waiting hosts to come; yet you call this place 'buggy'!"

"Come here, quick!" Robert cried, from the point of the island, where he stood with a snare in hand. "Come here, ladies, and I'll show you how to catch a sucker."

Several drew near to watch Robert work the loop of the snare over the head of a monstrous fish that was lazily poking about in the deep water under the bank. At the proper moment the jerk was made, landing the astonished sucker flopping and wiggling at the feet of the spectators. The wire was readjusted for another victim, and while it was being moved toward the unconscious fish, a large water-snake came swimming toward the point with a chub in his mouth. The loop was immediately transferred to the newcomer, when he was landed upon shore likewise, still holding the struggling fish in his mouth. At sight of him the ladies all screamed and scampered, of course, while the gentlemen drew near to see how Robert would remove the snare from his forbidding catch.

The ladies loudly demanded the killing of the reptile, and peeped through the folds of the tent to see what disposition was being made of him.

"Shall I knock his head off, ladies?" Charles asked.

"Yes! Oh, do!" came back in chorus.

Charles went to the tent, secured a large fire-cracker, which he thrust down the reptile's throat, allowing the fuse to protrude from his mouth. This was lighted, and his snakeship permitted to go free. He made directly up the slope toward the tent, at which there was another stampede. The fuse sparkled and spit fire, at which the snake blinked his eyes and seemed surprised. He held his head well up, however, travelling along, seeming quite content with his freedom. The sparks grew more numerous and brilliant, at which he turned his course toward the creek, thinking doubtless that he would reach the water and "put himself out."

Before his design could be carried into execution, however, he reached that climax himself, for the cracker exploded with a loud report, resulting in his complete decapitation.

Tea was now announced to be in readiness, and all arranged themselves about the table with renewed appetites. Jollity reigned supreme,—jokes, pranks, and merry laughter interspersed the meal. This completed, the flowers and ferns were prepared for the homeward trip; after which came the embarkation upon the pond, and the merry trip to the station amid the loud notes of the whip-poor-wills. Arriving there, it was announced that a wreck had occurred somewhere down the road, in consequence of which the train would be delayed, no one knew how many hours.

A return to the camp was therefore recommended, with an offer of the large tent for the ladies' use, if they would remain all night. They concluded, however, to go to Squire Bodine's, across the way, and there rest until the belated train should arrive. Ten o'clock came, with no news from the train. Mrs. Bodine kindly offered beds to the ladies, that they might retire and rest; but this offer was declined, as the train might come at any minute. The family therefore went to bed, leaving the lower part of the house in possession of the rioters. And such a rumpus as that party kept up until broad daylight may be imagined, but, Mrs. Bodine declares, never can be described.

One of the ladies thought it necessary to apologize to the hostess in the morning for the confusion that occurred during the night.

"Indeed, I tried my best to keep them quiet, Mrs. Bodine," she said, "but they would not mind me."

"Just so," was the reply; "now that I hear your voice, I recognize it as the noisiest one in the crowd last night."

This declaration elicited a shout from the party, and suspended further negotiations for peace.

When the campers came down to the station in the morning, they were surprised to see the excursionists still there. Breakfast was eaten in

the farm-house, and all were assembled at the station, awaiting the coming of the train, which was reported to be on the way.

At last it *did* come, and the party was shipped to anxious friends at home, from whom humorous bulletins were received during the day, offering fabulous rewards for the discovery of the whereabouts and safe return of its members to their waiting families. And so ended a very pleasant visit from as happy a bevy of ladies as ever invaded a camp.

The next train brought wife and children. A separate tent was provided for them, and the youngsters given free run of the grounds.

I have seen men happy in the woods, but their *abandon* is not to be compared to that of the eight- and ten-year olds. They ran after butterflies, chased the squirrels, set traps for woodchucks, fished for suckers, built dams, tumbled in the water, constructed ovens in the sand, and dug out the kingfishers' nests in the bank. A busier lot of little mortals, from early morning until late at night, was never seen. Skins grew brown, appetites quickened, and little bellies rounded, as the days flew by, bringing health and happiness to accompany their play.

At night they were laid snugly away in rude beds, where they slept more soundly than in their own at home. Baby, too, enjoyed the change, growing strong and chubby from her out-door life.

One night only, did she disturb the camp, as she had a right to do when suffering from colic. Our baby is at the interesting age in which they are most prone to that troublesome complaint; and why all babies are made up with that exasperating accompaniment is a mystery beyond my ken. They all have it, though, crying, screaming, and kicking like fury, until you are driven to the verge of desperation, seeking means of relieving the pain and accompanying turmoil.

Having a doctor in the house, we are spared the usual procedure of seeking him elsewhere; but the colic is just as bad as though his abiding-place were as remote as other folks' physician. Now, I must confess, I never did know precisely what to do with a baby in colic, particularly when that baby was my own; although in my quiet moments, in the retirement of my study, I can give a visiting mother capital advice upon the management of a colicky infant,—provided she comes unaccompanied by the unfortunate child. But the moment that scream reaches your ear, and the upturned heels of the baby perchance carom upon your nose, while mother, aunty, and grandma are administering peppermint, paregoric, catnip tea, camphor water, and hot fomentations, you become so confused and perplexed with the excitement incident to the occasion that you are in doubt whether any further interference in the case can be of the slightest avail, or

whether, in fact, any room could be found in baby's stomach (or anywhere about its person, for that matter) admissible of any scientific attack upon the malady.

Then, how wondrously strange it is that all babies should have a special hour for this gymnastic exercise! I say *all*, because fathers agree, with remarkable unanimity, that four o'clock, ante-meridian, is the precise moment of the attack. Why it could not as well occur at four, post-meridian, or even at ten, is a question worthy the serious consideration of the gynæcological society.

That early hour in the morning is always certain to catch a fellow napping, when to turn him out in search of the paregoric bottle (which by an unaccountable oversight is left in some inconvenient nook in the dining-room, in stumbling toward which his unprotected ankles come in collision with sundry projecting rockers that abrade the cuticle, bringing tears to his eyes and psalms to his lips) is anything but a desirable diversion. Sometimes the experiment of rocking the baby in bed is attempted, the anxious mother converting her person into a cradle, bobbing up and down upon the spring-bed like a rubber ball. This soothing process acts admirably upon the child, but is slightly perplexing to the sleepy father. It tends to shatter his confidence in the law of gravitation, particularly when the mother of the child is of considerably more pounds

avoirdufois than he is, which circumstance produces a strange effect from the rocking process; for when *they* go down, somehow he goes up, and the uncertainty of alighting always in the same spot is so noteworthy, as to establish in his mind more thoughts of his own comfort and safety than for that of the blessed baby.

"Oh, papa, papa, see here what a funny mouse I've caught!" exclaimed Fritz, running toward me, holding a small, wiggling animal by the tail. "See what a funny nose he's got,—looks like a China-aster on the end of it." Then turning toward his older brother, he added,—

"Just lookee here, Way; isn't this a boss nose, though? Golly! guess he can smell lots when he wants to."

The two boys sat upon the sand plotting a destiny for their newly-found acquisition (a star-nosed mole). Fritz thought he would be safer in a fruit-jar, while Way suggested the building of a cage.

"Oh, gracious!" Fritz said. "When we get him home we'll put him in the cage with the canary. I'll just bet he'll make it lively. Won't he stir the old bird up, though? You better believe he will!"

"Let's see what Jim Crow will say to him," Way suggested; then, tied the mole to a stick by the tail, and held him aloft for the inspection of the bird.

Jim did not fancy the squirming, wriggling animal, and stepped gravely to the far end of his perch as the boys moved it toward him. The mole was brought nearer and nearer his face, at which Jim set up a wild cry of terror, swinging under his perch by one foot and striking at the mole with the other, now and then flopping a wing at it with a force sufficient to annihilate the little animal. At last the mole grasped the crow upon the back, held on desperately with his flippers and claws, at which Jim gave sundry frightened screeches, and flew from the perch carrying the mole with him. The string which held the animal slipped from the tail, leaving him to scramble over the terrified crow, throwing him into most wonderful contortions of body, and eliciting some very queer sounds of disapproval at the proceeding. At this the boys screamed with merriment, which only frightened the crow the more, until in one of his gymnastic feats in mid-air he tumbled to the ground, leaving the poor mole to escape under the loose sand.

Jim is a queer bird, and has furnished the boys endless amusement. The odd manœuvres to which he is addicted challenge our respect for his intelligence, if not our entire approval of his pranks. He came to us at a tender age, when quite incapable of supporting himself; indeed, he had not yet been weaned, and his affectionate mother parted from him with great demonstra-

tions of grief. Jim, however, did not seem to share in the apprehensions of his anxious parent, but came to us gleefully, particularly when we offered him a living "shiner" as a retainer, and which, we regret to chronicle, he swallowed without the least compunction of conscience. His favorite position is upon a perch that looks in upon our dining-room, where he watches for an opportunity to pilfer from the table when George's back is turned.

One day he tried to unravel the mystery of the construction of Fritz's straw hat, and from the fragments strewn around I concluded his success to be something remarkable. He is a great lover of curiosities,—a regular connoisseur, in fact, in his admiration for oddities. Near him lay the baby's last doll, with one of its beautiful blue eyes ruthlessly picked from its socket, while a ghastly rent in its square abdomen, from which the sawdust was falling, exhibited his desire for a knowledge of anatomy. On the rough bark of a tree he fastened a particle of meat, saved from his last repast, which he intently watched; and, as the large black ants attempted to make their way toward it, he adroitly made cripples of them all, while he watched their bobbing about with the satisfaction of a manufacturer of apparatus for the deformed. Jim soon became installed the favorite of the camp. He was talked to and petted like a precocious child. When camp was

broken, he was the most conspicuous object, as he sat perched upon the load of baggage that floated down the pond upon the flatboat. He enjoyed the long ride home, soon became familiar with his new quarters, but at last succumbed to his own indiscretion. Poor Jim ! we sorrow for him even now, as we look from our study window and see his vacant perch, where three short months ago he afforded us amusement and entertainment by his comical antics. Such a versatile and intelligent creature was he that I doubt not ere this, if his capabilities are properly appreciated, he has become a blackfaced chimpanzee, or perhaps a Congo baby, according to the Darwinian theory. But wherever Jim may be located in the spirit world, or whatever his metamorphosis, he is wished a genuine success, while his tail-feathers are carefully retained in affectionate memory of the jolliest and funniest of crows.



CHAPTER X.

A CHAT WITH CHARLES.

On Dyspepsia, Horseback, and Philosophy.

"I'M afraid that dinner was too much for me," Charles remarked, after lighting his cigar and mounting the hammock. "I wish I could eat as other folks do, without suffering from it afterward."

"Well, it is a trial to be a dyspeptic,—a constant trial. You are sick if you eat, and eat if you are sick, and for the life of you cannot tell under which formula you are best-conditioned. Let your diet be strictly after the Graham biscuit and mush order (stuff no more digestible than so much sand, I desire to observe), and your head, in company with your stomach, will ache like fury all next day. Partake of terrapin and champagne for supper to appease your famishing appetite, and quite as likely as not you will feel like a fighting-cock for a week to come, only to be thrown into a headache at the very next attempt of that sort. So you are perplexed and annoyed to determine when and what to eat. When a fellow is quite as much sick when he

‘takes care of himself’ (living upon starvation diet, partaking of oatmeal, beef tea, and similar slops) as when he goes in for a real hearty dinner of roast beef and accessories, what in the name of common sense is he to do? It is a trite saying, but somewhat applicable in this case,—‘You might as well die for a sheep as a lamb,’ and surely why not?

“The trials of the dyspeptic are sometimes funny as well as distressing. It is amusing to see him sit in his easy-chair after a moderate supper, feel his pulse, and every time his heart gives a skip, his eyes give a blink, his thoughts a summersault, and his tongue an expression which becomes intelligible in ‘heart disease.’ Every time that heart skips its owner does likewise, until he brings up in the physician’s office and at once demands an examination of that mysterious organ. He tells the doctor he *knows* he has ‘heart disease’; and if he has, he don’t want to be told so, but to keep it sort of quiet,—to himself, as it were. When the physician declares it to be only a functional disturbance, the result of indigestion, he does not believe a word of it, but goes straightway home, makes his will, gives a few parting instructions to his wife, then seeks his bed, but sits bolt upright, with fingers upon his pulse, calmly awaiting his end. But it never comes! Then he resorts to digitalis,—takes from ten to fifteen drops twice a day, until his heart

becomes so slow and confoundedly regular as to be monotonous, not to say annoying. He therefore concludes to hurry it up a trifle with a stimulant, because he does not want it to stop entirely, you know. Takes brandy,—tastes good—touches the spot,—has some more; and wakes up in the morning with a pain in his stomach and a worse one in his head. Suddenly a twinge under his shoulder manifests itself. That smacks of consumption, and forthwith he has his lungs examined: cod-liver oil three times daily is at once recommended. In a day or two, in prospecting for new symptoms, a pain is struck in the small of his back,—that hints at Bright's disease, and argues loudly for a microscopic examination of the secretions: therefore citrate of potash and lemon-juice must be taken. Scarcely are these pains analyzed and classified ere an ache has been developed under the short ribs,—'liver complaint' is at once suggested, and pellets of podophyllin indulged in nightly. A day or two after, his legs and back keep company in an awful ache every time a refreshing blast of air sweeps through his apartment: plainly, this is a cold, and that it may not 'settle on his lungs,' ginger tea and an alcohol sweat is imperatively demanded. So he fumes and sweats for a day or two longer, when an ailing neighbor, who has just been relieved (or *thinks* he has, which is much the same, after all) of a ninety-feet tape-worm, drops in for a

lively chat. This brings him to the inevitable,—a tape-worm, and that is the sum of all misery. To have three or four hundred feet of that jointed, squirming creature fastened on to the mucous membrane of his entire alimentary canal is a condition not to be tolerated for an instant; therefore pumpkin-seed tea and castor oil is swallowed in heroic and oft-repeated doses, until two of him is required to cast a decent shadow. As the remedies increase so do the ‘symptoms,’ until it becomes far easier to enumerate the aches and pains that are not apparent than those that are.

“These are a few of the trials and perplexities that beset the way of the dyspeptic. They are mournful, yet comical, but always render the possessor entitled to the sympathy and indulgence of his friends. The dyspeptic is an unmitigated nuisance in society, but never tell him so; poor fellow, he is about as miserable as he can be. While you enjoy your hearty meal, he sits by and nibbles at a Graham cracker or sips oatmeal porridge. While you are constructing rings from your fragrant Havana, he bolts for fresh air and some digester for his frugal meal. Well, what of it? Oh, nothing in particular; only if a vast majority of dyspeptics would cease from drinking slops and chewing dry, hard, unnourishable crackers and the like, and eat three wholesome but moderate meals a day, consisting of rare

roast-beef, eggs, milk, and other nourishing foods, they would be much better off and have fewer reasons for complaint. It is my deliberate opinion that a stomach that can digest oatmeal, cracked wheat, Graham mush, and like irritating and senseless stuff, can far more easily dispose of the more nutritious foods mentioned, because of their being infinitely easier of digestion and assimilation. In a word, cease making your stomach a receptacle for slops, and begin the eating of wholesome food, at seasonable hours and in moderate quantities."

"Why, I supposed that oatmeal and Graham mush made the best sort of a diet for dyspeptics; consequently I indulged in them very freely when, in former years, I was closely confined to business and a bad stomach. But I broke down completely at last, and had to resort to out-door exercise. I went to Long Beach, rowed in a boat, trolled for bluefish, and sailed in the bay until I could eat almost anything Captain Bond placed upon his table; and I do believe, now that you mention it, starvation diet of oatmeal and so forth did as much as anything to use me up."

"How much of your time did you give to the bank during every day, Charles?"

"For just seventeen years I devoted fifteen hours every day to the work on my desk, resting but one hour in the middle of the day for a hastily-eaten luncheon."

“And after your strength gave way, your stomach refusing to perform its function longer, tried to render it contented on gritty slops, eh?”

“That is what I did; under medical advice, though. Now, what would you have prescribed under the circumstances?”

“Precisely what you were sensible enough to adopt yourself. Out-door exercise and considerably less work at the desk. If the season was unfavorable for camping out, then I should have recommended horseback exercise; one that seems to have been provided on purpose for those suffering from indigestion. Very numerous have been the devices and inventions of man to afford his fellow the requisite amount of exercise to keep him physically sound. So many people nowadays strive to live by their wits,—using their brains more than they do their hands and legs,—that we have degenerated into a nation of dyspeptics, which circumstance has called forth the inventive genius of the brain-workers for the production of machinery that will afford us that exercise of muscle without which humanity cannot be run to its possible attainments, and be free from the pains and aches for the subjugation of which the army of doctors is yearly employed.

“These inventions have taken form in the ‘health-lifts,’ pocket gymnasiums, dumb-bells, Indian-clubs, and a multiplicity of other contrivances, none of which can at all equal a half-hour

engagement with a buck-saw, or a morning walk of a mile or so.

“To make gymnastics effective, they must shape themselves toward some definite object to be attained, beyond the single one of securing simply and solely the exercise. When a man takes hold of the handles of a lifting-machine and pulls until he is blue in the face, and then fondly imagines he has been benefiting his muscular system, he is grossly mistaken,—nothing of the kind has been done. Indeed, I have seen more injury result from that sort of thing than good. Exercise, to be beneficial, should be conducted in the open air, where proper arterialization of the blood is induced through the pure oxygen taken in at the lungs, which should be correspondingly stimulated to action with that of the muscular system. Then you have immediate repair of the waste which naturally occurs from muscular activity.

“Nothing so fully meets the requirements of a sluggish circulation, weak digestion, and flabby, inactive muscles as horseback-riding. All the inventive talent of the brain-workers in the universe combined is not equal to the production of a machine that will so thoroughly exercise and shake up every muscle and organ entering into the construction of physical man as a good square ride for a mile or two upon a trotting horse! Try it just once and see! Start out some bright spring morning, when the air is pure and clear, when

all nature is struggling to reveal her charms, and so entice you to the trial and to an observation of her budding beauties. Ride to the nearest hill-top, and when you reach the level plain beyond, venture upon a burst of speed to try the qualities of your trotter. He will enjoy it, never fear, and cause you to bob about upon that saddle like a jumping-jack on a stick. Come in at the end of an hour, and take an inventory of your pains, aches, and sore places. If there exists a square inch anywhere upon the surface of your body, from your *glutei maximi*, up or down, that fails to bring a report of duty well performed, as indicated by tenderness to touch; or if you do not realize that the construction of your body is wonderful, not to say peculiar, in the multiplicity of its organs that before were undiscovered by you, then has your ride been a miserable failure, else are you not in need of manual labor or exercise.

“The first time I took this prescription myself I was prepared to dispute the best works upon anatomy and physiology extant, and could show to any man given to investigations of this character some queer features in my own anatomical development. Mounting one of my trotting steeds, I essayed the even road of the driving-park, to the end that the first attempt might be smooth and easy of accomplishment.

“I started on a brisk trot. The mare had been there before, and thought speed was required of

her on that particular occasion, and the little beast surpassed my wildest expectations of her capabilities in that direction. At the quarter pole, I was convinced that my upper jaw was constructed to close upon the under one, instead of *vice versa*; that the left lung was suspended from my shoulder-blade by a slender cord, that snapped a second later and let the whole confounded thing fall into my belly. At the half-mile, the liver, stomach, and other viscera had settled into the saddle, so that every time I sat down upon them it did seem as though they would be crowded into my boots. At the three-quarter pole, I became conscious of chafing the saddle fearfully, while the perspiration ran in rivulets down my back, until it reached what Shorty calls the 'crupper-bone,' where it bifurcated and passed down each leg into my boots, while my face, in color, resembled the setting sun. Hot! Goodness! a boiled lobster was no circumstance to my heated condition! But as I came down that home-stretch, I was amazed at the incomprehensible manner in which my legs and arms were swivelled to my body. Legs, that aforetime had done good service upon many a trout-stream, now dangled helplessly on either side of the saddle, while the liberated stirrups flailed the steed to greater efforts of speed. Arms played up and down helplessly, obeying every motion of the animal, while my spine seemed

distorted into an anterior-posterior curvature, that brought my head on a level with the watch-pocket. At this juncture, thanks to a kind friend, the wild flight of the gallant mare was arrested and I was carefully lifted to the ground. To this day I cannot for the life of me determine how that confounded saddle touched every available spot of my body. Every muscle was tangled with its neighbor, every organ unshipped, and for the remainder of the week my meals were taken from the buffet, in silence, and standing. But that very ride made a convert of me, for I found that if exercise was what was needed I got it,—lots of it, too; and knowing what I do about that style of gymnastics, I unhesitatingly recommend the trotting horse as the only successful exercising-machine in existence, answering all the requirements of the dyspeptic.

“When you come to try it, get up in the morning and dress for the occasion, with heavy flannels to absorb perspiration; jacket, stout trousers, long boots, and a light silk cap. Take breakfast before starting,—never ride with an empty stomach; then mount your horse, and take it moderately. Ride a trotter if you would secure the full advantage of horseback exercise. After an hour dismount, and subject yourself to a good rubbing with a crash towel, and change your flannels for fresh and dry ones. After a week you will be able to take long excursions to the

hills, and enjoy the pure, clear air and glorious sunshine, while now and then you may stop to admire the landscape, or pluck some wild-flowers to adorn your desk at the office. Have a companion go with you, if possible, for then is the pleasure enhanced many fold. Ride *every* morning, rain or shine, if you would have the full benefit of this prescription. So many sit upon a cushioned chair, bewailing their lame and sore condition after a hard day's ride, that it becomes difficult to get them out again. The treatment must be continuous that its efficacy may reach the maximum degree. No matter how stormy, cold, or hot it may be, or how little you feel like undertaking it, do not miss your morning ride under any circumstances. A half-hour in the saddle will put to flight all unpleasant reflections; the sore places will not be felt; and if you are suitably protected with rubber clothing, you will be surprised to see how very enjoyable even a ride in the rain is. Chandler and I had both followed up horseback-riding most faithfully until the day we arrived in this camp. We can testify to its efficacy in our improved digestion, and to its pleasures by asserting that we mean to resume it again upon the first morning that we reach home."

"Does your life here in camp do you as much good as your horseback exercise?"

"Yes; I think it does. It is the relief from

office-work, the complete abandonment of all business cares, and the devotion of your time to pleasant pursuits, that aid you in procuring the needed rest and assist the stomach to resume its function. Then, you perceive, we walk many miles every day, while the constant throwing of the flies gives ample exercise to arms, wrists, and chest."

"I think there's something in the air here that increases the appetite. I seem to grow hungry the moment I strike this island."

"Doubtless you do, Charles. Although you walk over considerable territory every day in Brooklyn, and have thrown off the cares of business like a wise man, now that you can afford so to do, yet you lack the fresh balsamic air of the mountains to put health and vigor in your step and an appetite in the stomach. There is something very exhilarating and appetizing in this out-door life."

"That is very evident," he replied; then continued, "I do not wonder that the primitive man lived to be several hundred years old. He abode in tents then, as we are doing here in camp. Lived upon fish and game captured by his own prowess, affording food and fascinating exercise at one and the same time. He was not confined within-doors, in furnace-heated apartments, for eight months in the year, nor troubled and perplexed how to meet a note in bank or satisfy a mortgage on his

homestead; neither did he sit still, in a cramped position over a desk, until his fingers and brain became weary with toil, while his stomach refused to digest the hastily-eaten meal. Not he. Fortunately for him, his habits and wants were far more simple. To be sure, now and then he seemed to be imbued with a desire for a little exciting exercise, and, instead of swinging an Indian-club above his head for an hour or two, he would simply grasp the jawbone of an ass and knock the heads off a few hundred persons one fine morning before breakfast. That, you must admit, is exercising one's muscle to some purpose; there's a spirit in it that I like; it betokens strength of muscle, a quick eye, and a strong jawbone. I don't wonder, now I think of it, that those primitive chaps flourished to so great an age. They must have had a real jolly life of it, and supped the while on the fat of the land. Don't you think we would live longer and be happier if we abandoned our houses and dwelt in the woods, as they did?"

"Live longer and more healthfully, doubtless; but as to happiness, I cannot say. A civilized life is full of pleasure, you know, Charles, even if it is a short one. After all, I think we attain as great an age as did our ancestors, when we take into consideration our means of travel, the telegraph, telephone, phonograph, and the numerous and increasing scientific inventions that are

daily multiplying to annihilate time and space. Then the pleasures obtained from the arts, literature, and our social intercourse, perhaps more than compensate for the years stricken from our life's expectancy."

"Well, I don't know about that. I was at the Zoological Garden before I left home, and overheard a seedy-looking chap make this observation, while intently gazing at the giraffe,—

"“Lord, Bob! wouldn't you like to have a neck like that when you take your whisky cocktail? Glory! you'd get a taste of it such a long ways down!"

"That remark amused me, and is somewhat applicable to this case. I wonder whether I wouldn't like to live longer, feel better, and know less! I think I might enjoy myself here, in these comfortable quarters, for an indefinite period, particularly if I could catch as many trout as you skilled fly-fishermen do."

"Your contentment would not be lasting, Charles. It is the keen pursuit of business, or the arduous and perplexing calling of the professional man, that renders the perfect enjoyment of such a rest as this possible and desirable. Could we remain here for a year, I doubt not we would be heartily tired of it, and never care to cast a fly nor see a camp again. No; as we are apt to seek our opposites in temperament for companions, so do we seek rest, recreation, and

pleasure in descending from the haunts and customs of civilization to those of primitive man. I have philosophized some over that peculiar trait in our nature, trying to analyze it; the nearest approach to a solution I can reach is, that we are living under a constant restraint; we are forced into decorum and good deportment because of the conventionalities of society; we are polite, urbane, and graceful to our fellows because of the rigid training we have received from our parents and others. I really do not believe our present status is a natural one. Were not a strict watch and training kept over us, I doubt not we would gradually gravitate to the customs and habits of the aborigines. Therefore, in coming to these wilds, throwing off the restraints of society, we but follow a natural inclination; hence the satisfaction in its gratification."

"I suspect you're right. I notice the natives here care but little for trout-fishing when it cannot be made remunerative, but get much pleasure from a visit to the city, whence we have just escaped with so much thankfulness. How fortunate it is we do not all have the same desires or inclinations! I sometimes think, even now, there are too many bankers in existence, while you doubtless think the same of doctors. Bless me, what a time we would have if every youngster should choose one or the other of these pursuits."

"I conclude (following up your argument to

its natural termination) that you consider men honest and law-abiding through fear of social ostracism or of the prison."

"Precisely. I know that is not a popular view to take of the case, but here in the woods, we can express our opinions somewhat freely. I think two-thirds of the human species are kept in abeyance—*forced* to respect the dictates of polite society—through fear of suffering socially or physically. But I'm not quite sure to which circumstance the credit of a peaceful and law-abiding community belongs: whether it is by reason of man's susceptibility to spiritual impressions, causing his gradual advancement toward refinement, or from the wise administration of wholesome laws. But of one thing we are sure: set him loose in the woods where all restraint is removed, and he will be as happy as a lark."

"What the deuce have you fellows found to talk about in this lively manner for the past two hours?" Hamlin inquired, as he emerged from the tent, where he had been taking a nap since dinner. "Every time I woke, I heard you still chatting away in the most animated strain."

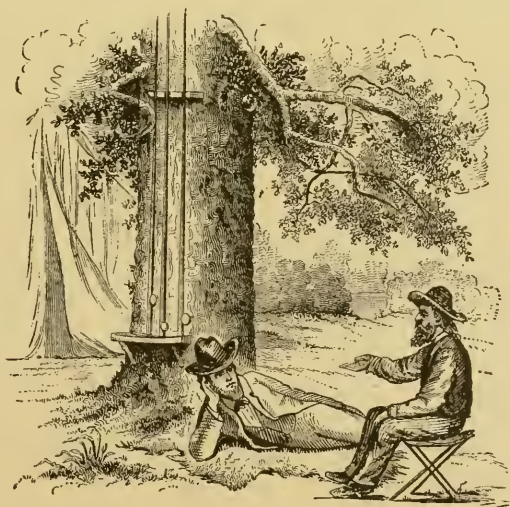
"Come, it must be time to go up-stream," he continued. "Thad went some time ago. I've got a rouser marked down, and want to see you take him."

"Charles, Hamlin is the only fisherman I ever met that can look up a fine trout, and wait for a

friend to come and pick him out. Last season, he waited at the high bank two hours for me to cast for a pounder that he had raised there. When I came upon the scene, he pointed out the spot and insisted upon my capturing him, which I did to his evident delight and satisfaction. I must confess that to do an act of this kind requires considerable self-sacrifice, although in his case it seems to be a downright pleasure."

"While you are gone," said Charles, "guess I'll get in another back-log for the camp-fire to-night. The large one Robert and I hustled up the bank the other day is nearly burned in two."

"All right, Charles; if you enjoy that sort of fun, may good luck attend your endeavors. We will not be in until late, so do not hurry supper."



CHAPTER XI.

RAINY DAYS.

Rifle-Practice—Thunder-Storm—A Puppy—Poetry—And a Woodchuck.

“RAIN! rain! rain! Will it *never* stop?” Hamlin queried, as he stood at the flies of the tent gazing heavenward to catch a glimpse of the fleeting clouds. “This is the fourth day of the confounded storm, and I’m growing tired of it. The creek will be bank-full by morning, and then no more fishing for three days to come. This is the most contemptible weather we have ever encountered here,” he added, and seated himself in the barrel chair, covered his legs with a robe, and placed his feet upon the top of the underground furnace, while vexation appeared upon every line of his face.

“What can we do to-day? I’m tired of reading.”

“Suppose we set a trap for the woodchuck; burn down the old stub; catch a flying-squirrel; deodorize a skunk; or sit out upon the bank and watch the thunder-storm play upon the tops of the mountains; no end of sport for such a day as this,” was suggested.

"Let's trap the woodchuck."

"Agreed!"

A steel trap was set in the entrance to the animal's residence; the chain fastened to a stake, all traces of which were carefully concealed by a sprinkling of sand, and then we retired to await the issue.

In the mean time, our clerical friend (who had arrived in the morning, to take the place of a camper called home) desired to try his skill with a rifle. Accordingly, he took position on the bank while I went above and tossed empty beer-bottles into the rapid. As they went bobbing by him, he knocked their necks off, sinking them to the bottom. After a dozen or so had been broken in this manner, he requested that one be placed on a stick, one hundred and fifty paces away. This done, he deliberately knocked that bottle into a cocked hat, then coolly inquired,—

"How's that?"

"Well done, sir; think we can match you against Dr. Carver if you continue shooting in that manner."

"Oh, that's nothing extraordinary; I can do better than that. See the blackbird on the tree-top, yonder?"

"I do. Can't hit him, can you?"

"See."

Crack went the rifle and down came the bird, body first, head following.

“That will do, sir; I see you can shoot as accurately with a rifle as with your sermons. Now, I must see you cast a fly, and if you do it as well, I can promise you fine sport to-day, notwithstanding the rain; for see, the creek is not yet roiled much, and by going up Pleasant Stream we shall probably find it entirely clear, for no cultivated grounds lie along its banks to shed their muddy water into the creek.”

“Very good; I will accompany you.”

John Bodine was at once summoned to bring horses and wagon up the mountain-road, while we made ready for the trip. The lunch-box on my creel was provisioned, the tea-kettle strung upon its strap, the tea and sugar pouches replenished; then, with capes over our shoulders and rods in hand, we climbed the otter-slide and path beyond to the mountain-road. There we found John in waiting, who soon carried us to Hunter's mill and left us.

The stream was clear but high, and the trout sufficiently plenty to afford considerable sport, so that we fished down the stream to its mouth, there making a halt for dinner. Wood was gathered, dry kindlings whittled from a fragment of board found under a sheltering bank, but when I came to apply the match, behold! my match-box was filled with water! I had waded so deep as to have submerged it. I called to the preacher for the article needed, when he felt in his trous-

ers-pockets, held up his box and poured the water from it also. This was a provoking state of affairs for two hungry men in need of a dinner. My companion volunteered to go to a farmhouse near by and bring some matches, while I prepared the trout for the roast. Soon after his departure the sun shone out, quickly drying the rocks, upon which I spread the wet matches. In a few minutes they were quite dry, enabling me to light the fire. After a while the preacher returned, appearing upon the opposite bank with a broad smile upon his face.

“What tickles you?” I inquired.

“My interview with the woman at the house,” he replied; then entering the stream to cross over to where I stood, gained the middle, stood still to laugh; in doing which he lost his foothold in the swift water, cutting his merriment short and bringing himself stumbling upon the shore. He then stood his rod against a bush, unhooked his creel, hung it upon a stub, and seated himself to finish the interrupted laugh.

“Do tell me what is the fun?”

“When I knocked at the door of the house, out yonder,” he replied, “a woman answered my signal, looking quite frightened the moment she had a glimpse of me. She was about to shut the door in my face, when I quickly made my wants known. At this, she shyly reopened the door, looked at me from head to foot, then went laugh-

ingly to supply my wants. Taking some matches from a clock, she handed them to me, and smilingly said,—

“ ‘When I heard you talk, I thought you were a gentleman ; but when I saw your pants, I didn’t know !’

“Now what do you honestly think,—had I better swap my trousers for another pair or face it out ?”

“Well, I do not wonder the poor woman took you for a tramp after inspecting those breeches ; for a worse-looking pair is not often encountered on these streams. I really believe Shorty, even, would take fright at them and give you the cold shoulder.”

“Well, how is dinner progressing ? I see your fire has settled into a fine bed of coals.”

“The water is boiling, ready for tea-making ; the trout will be done in just five minutes ; I will put the tea in to steep while you spread our lunch upon the flat stones I have arranged upon the log there ; and if you want to cook those eggs you are holding in your hands, just wrap each one in several thicknesses of newspaper, wet thoroughly, and cover in the hot coals ; let them remain from three to five minutes, and they will be done soft or hard, as you like.”

The clouds were now gathering in threatening blackness ; the thunder rolling and reverberating among the mountain-peaks urging us to the

repast if we would have it dry. Consequently the trout were at once taken from the coals, excellently done; the eggs ditto, while the tea was strong and steaming hot. We set the pot in the creek to cool while we sampled the fish. They proved to be unapproachable as a savory morsel, eliciting our approbation of the process of cooking for the hundredth time at least. While we were eating, the great black clouds came rolling over the mountain, and the zigzag flashes of lightning blinded us with dazzling brightness. Nearer and nearer came the storm that seemed to ascend the mountain from the opposite side, then rolled into the valley, an interminable mass of swirling blackness. A terrific peal of thunder burst above our heads, and, before it rolled away, echoing from hill to hill, another followed with increased fury, adding its terrible crash and roar to that of the approaching storm. We saw the great trees upon the mountains bending under the wind that snapped the limbs from the willows and laid the alders prostrate on the bank. Then the rain fell in torrents, cutting the leaves from the trees to be driven far down the valley before the furious wind. Soon, the rain reached the creek, lashing it into a boiling mass, that seemed like liquid fire under the illumination of the vivid lightning. It was now almost as dark as night; and, as we stood by the creek, shielded from the rain by our rubber capes,

the scene was one to be enjoyed or feared, in accordance with the mood of the spectator. We looked silently on, watching the storm as it swept down the valley toward the camp. Flash after flash of lightning led the way, while most terrific thunder crashed in quick succession.

“Oh, how that would have stirred up Dixey!” I remarked, as a tremendous thunderbolt burst just above our camp-grounds.

“Why, does he dread the lightning?” my friend asked.

“Dread it! That word but feebly expresses his sentiments toward an entertainment of this character. I doubt whether he can frame a sentence himself expressive of his feelings upon an occasion like this. Last season, he and another camper were lively competitors for the possession of a large Saratoga trunk in which we brought our bedclothes to camp. Every thunder-storm found one or the other of them inside the trunk, the lid closed, and respiration rendered possible through the key-hole. Dixey, I think, occupied that apartment the oftener, while his friend sought safety in bed, with a pillow over his face.

“One day, we were both fishing on the main creek below here, when a storm like this burst suddenly upon us. It came furiously down the valley, and was what Fritz calls a ‘clipper.’ I was below Dixey, saw it first, and made for a shelter behind a clump of bushes, out of the way



THE THUNDER-STORM.

"The lightning struck a tree close by, and its terrific crash caused him to bound into the air."

[Page 185.]

of tall trees. While there, I saw Dixey coming down the railroad track on a keen run, doing his level best to reach camp—and the Saratoga—in advance of the storm. His line was unreeled, flies driven by the wind before him, hat rolling like a hoop between the rails, face pale as death, but with an expression betokening a determination to outrun that storm if he lived. When he reached a position immediately opposite where I was seated, the lightning struck a tree close by, and its terrific crash caused him to bound into the air, then, looking behind, as if to be certain he was all there, he gave expression to one single but expressive word, ‘R-r-r-*ip*!’ as he bounded over the fence into the meadow and ran like a deer for the camp. I hailed him, but he never stopped, only shouted (a word between every jump), ‘Bring—my—hat!’ and in an instant was out of sight.

“Dixey and friend had another competitor for their favorite resort during a thunder-storm in my dog Zip. Zip was even more frightened than they, jumping for the tent upon the slightest indication of alarm upon the part of the gentlemen.”

“Why, have you a dog in camp?”

“Oh, yes,” I said, seating myself by my companion upon the log, the storm having passed down the valley, leaving a faint indication of coming light in the western sky. “Yes; I have

a puppy, a thoroughbred, that knows a thing or two; having a fine action, good nose, and irrepressible tongue. He's technically called a 'setter,' but why is past finding out; for a more restless creature could not well be found; I doubt whether he was ever seen 'setting' for two consecutive minutes since he was born. Before we left home, he was found swinging upon the clothes-reel in the back yard, having fastened his teeth in a finely-embroidered garment of some sort, which he succeeded in tearing into shreds, while he grunted, growled, and barked in very ecstacy of delight, until Laura, the maid, interrupted his hilarity with a broom-stick. That piece of embroidery, consisting of a pair of very short arms and a yoke, cost me, I was vexatiously informed, the sum of fifteen dollars; and seeing that pup swinging himself, and the alacrity with which he took a fresh hold every time a ribbon of it came away in his mouth, induced me to believe it was worth the money, the spectacle somewhat assuaging my grief at the cost of the fun. He then ate, or in some other mysterious manner caused to disappear, the baby's best dress, only a small portion of the lace which entered into its composition having yet been recovered; he was next observed in attempting a luncheon off my patent-leather boots; only succeeding, however, in tearing the legs from them; further demolition was suspended by a well-directed

boot-jack, that sent him with a ki yi to his kennel. One day, affairs culminated; for upon entering my usually happy domicile, a storm was noticed to be brewing; indeed, I thought a change in the atmosphere apparent when a block away; but when my better-half met me upon the threshold with fire in her eye, a determined expression of countenance, finding relief in these words, 'That puppy is a perfect abomination, and you *must* chain him or take him from these premises,' it was plain she meant every word of it. I therefore unhesitatingly sent for the necessary chain and collar before venturing to inquire what new deviltry he had been indulging in. It gradually leaked out that Zip had been viewing himself in the parlor mirror, and while engaged in that commendable occupation knocked over and broke two vases, carried their fragments to the yard, and when discovered, was industriously engaged in burying them among the choicest flowers, performing the work so clumsily as to totally wreck several fine geraniums in the operation. After this exploit, he deliberately walked into the kitchen, and, when Laura's back was turned, jumped with his muddy feet into the basket of clean clothes, and snuggled down for a quiet snooze. He was dislodged, it might be well enough to state; the means employed not being so unnatural, under the circumstances: it was accomplished with a hot iron

lodged directly upon his back, and accompanied with a wild wail of indignation from the maid; upon this he left, right speedily too, I inferred, if the light of glass that lay shattered upon the floor might be accepted as evidence of the fact. Well, I chained him; but that procedure was far from satisfactory, for he howled, barked, and raised the very old Harry generally. Thrice daily, when at my meals, was I forced to leave the table to apply the necessary chastisement that secured quietness for the rest of the time. In the night, boots, slippers, canes, and other convenient articles were thrown at him from my bedroom window, intended to persuade him that howling was not the best occupation to engage in. This scheme succeeded in so far that when he again essayed a howl, it would be cut short in a sort of grunt, as he peered aloft to see what manner of missile was coming from the window next, and to speculate upon the possibility of dodging it. He is more afraid of the crack of a dog-whip than he would be to have a cooking-stove hurled at his head. Of this circumstance I took advantage, and entered into an arrangement to deceive the knowing pup. I procured a package of torpedoes, which I placed on my window-sill upon retiring at night. When Zip barked, bang went a torpedo near his head, sending him to his kennel without further ceremony. There would he remain for a while, until he thought the coast

clear, then he would stalk cautiously out, peer into the moonlight, and venture upon a mild sort of a howl, just to see what would come of it, being careful to keep his head pointed toward the kennel door. Another torpedo thrown, sent him speedily within, as before. After this, when poor Zip so far forgot himself as to indulge in a bark, he waited for no invitation, but dived for his hiding-place with an alacrity that left me master of the situation. I really admire that pup; the female portion of the household abhor him; the children love him; and the neighbors—well, *they* damn him; and so the matter rests at present, while Zip is rusticating with us. But you can be assured of one thing: when I buy another pup he will be at least two years old and well broken. That torpedo experiment is what induced the fear of thunder; he doubtless thinks torpedoes of an improved pattern are being hurled at him, and he interprets it as an invitation to hunt cover, which he accordingly does in the sprightliest manner.”

“There comes another storm; I hear it rumbling beyond the mountain,” my clerical friend observed. “I see, too, the creek is rising and growing quite muddy. I suppose this ends our fishing, so we might as well take the road and go to camp.”

This suggestion was at once acted upon, bringing us to our quarters just as the rain struck us.

As we neared the grounds, we heard Hamlin singing in the large tent, so we stopped in the dining-hall to listen.

This is what we heard :

“ The poets sing
Like everything
(And sadly out of tune),
Of birds and flowers
And *random* showers
That come in the month of June.

“ Confound their song !
I hold they’re wrong
And crazy as a screaming loon,
When they try to tell
Of the weather spell
We’ll have in the month of June.

“ My friend and I
Did hither hie
To spend at least a moon,
In catching trout
When the sun shone out,
In the *pleasant* month of June.

“ To throw the fly
Under a rainless sky
Is indeed the fisherman’s boon ;
Now, I shiver and shake,
And bones all ache ;
Confound your month of June !

“ I hope and pray
For clouds to stray
To other quarters soon,

And relieve two chaps,
With all their traps,
From this cold and drizzly June."

"My sentiments exactly!" Charles exclaimed, as he approached us from the point with a string of monstrous suckers in his hand. "I found the creek coming up, and thought we had better lay in a stock of fish as a matter of precaution against famine."

"Halloo! got back already?" Hamlin inquired, addressing us from the flies of the tent.

"Ay; and heard your ode to the weather."

"Fine thing; ran out of words to rhyme with June, or I might have done the subject justice and continued the song indefinitely. As it is, it only faintly foreshadows what I might accomplish if some fellow furnished the words. But say, did it rain anywhere you happened to be?"

"Well, yes; a little. Any here?"

"Oh, no; some dew fell awhile ago,—nothing to speak of, however."

"Thunder any?"

"I really can't tell for certain; I didn't go outside to see, and there was so much confounded noise aloft I couldn't tell."

"Did you catch the woodchuck?"

"No; gracious! I forgot him."

"Let's go see!"

Arriving at the hole, we found the chain carried inside, and was taut against the stake. A

pull on it satisfied us of the presence of the fellow at the other end, but all efforts at dislodging him by pulling, failed. George was therefore summoned with a shovel to enlarge the aperture, when the animal was soon unearthed. He was not a handsome fellow. I doubt whether any lady would have selected him for a pet, as he squatted upon the mound, lashing his short tail upon the ground, gnashing his long, yellow teeth, and scratching dirt into our eyes, in his frantic efforts to escape. He was at last secured, conveyed to camp, and chained to a sapling, where the taming process was to be instituted. Charles at once essayed the rôle of wild-animal tamer; but after a week of most patient endeavor, only succeeded in getting near enough to pitch clover to him from a long, forked stick, while his drink was squirted at him from a force-pump; the little, ferocious beast sitting upon his haunches, biting, snapping, and looking for an opportunity to grab his trainer by the leg.

“Unchain and let him go, Charles; he will bite some one yet.”

“Shall I?”

“Certainly.”

“Think I can’t, eh? I’ll show you.”

He took the long, crotched stick, placed it about the animal’s neck, and pinned the snarling rascal to the bank, when he loosened the strap from his neck and let him go. His first move

was an effort to catch Charles by the leg, seeing which the pole was brought about with a sweep that sent him sprawling into the creek.

"There, take *that*, you ungrateful little wretch!" Charles said, as he stood watching the animal floating down the rapid into the deep pond, at the edge of which it clambered up the rocks and disappeared in the thicket.

As Charles lay down in the hammock, he was heard to make this single observation,—

"No more woodchucks for me, if you please!"



CHAPTER XII.

RALSTON.

Glens, Gorges, Cascades, and Waterfalls.

AN invitation had been received from Mrs. Myer for the campers to dine at Ralston.

Accordingly, after breakfast, Hamlin, Charles, Thad Jr., and myself started on foot up the beautiful mountain-road to that picturesque retreat. We loitered by the way, admiring the laurel and rhododendron blossoms that made our pathway a bower of budding beauty. The white and pink laurels never appeared so lovely we thought as upon that cool, delightful morning walk. Robins were singing everywhere, and diminutive unseen warblers filled the air with their melody. Red squirrels scampered along the fences, black and grays bounded from branch to branch of the great trees until they found safety in the dense woods, to bark and chatter their happiness in secure retreat. Woodchucks ran across our path and disappeared in the thicket; muskrats swam the stream with tufts of grass in their mouths, making graceful dives beneath the water when our presence was discovered. A partridge lighted in the road before us, display-

ing her skill in mimicking the lame and wounded, until we were led far from her young brood, heard peeping in the bushes.

Arriving near the foot of Powell's pond, where a portion of the creek follows the base of the mountain,—a charmingly shaded stream,—we sat upon a log to rest. Presently a black mink and nine young were seen approaching along the shore. They were graceful, sleek little creatures, gliding along so noiselessly as to have almost escaped our notice. The mother, catching a glimpse of us, turned quickly, uttering a faint squeak of alarm that sent the pretty family back again, she leading the way across the stream, followed by her young. One little fellow, carried away by the swift current, squealed right lustily, causing us to rise in anxious sympathy for his misfortune. Before our assistance could be rendered, however, the mother plunged into the stream, seized him by the neck and carried him ashore, and the interesting party darted into the crevices of the rocks and were lost to view.

We strolled leisurely along, here and there encountering tiny mountain-streams that had their birthplace high up in the ravines, finding their way across the road, glistening in the sunlight, and tumbling over the bank into the creek below. About their edges, numerous butterflies had collected, rising leisurely in the air to settle again as soon as undisturbed. A hawk was seen,

chased through the air by the kingbirds that pounced upon his back, he uttering remonstrating screams as he flopped his way to the mountain-top.

Two miles above and half-way upon our journey, lay Astenville with its long row of deserted tenements, that stretch themselves along the grassy sward at the junction of two great mountains. Through the narrow gorge, a stream comes splashing down over the bowlders and rocks to mingle its cool waters with the Lycoming. It possesses the euphonious name of Frozen Run, at the mere suggestion of which we all stooped down and drank of its refreshing water.

Around a turn in the gorge, lifting its blackened summit from among the stately hemlocks, we beheld an immense chimney, and as we drew nearer, found the rickety buildings of a furnace, the costly machinery of which, from exposure to weather, was rapidly falling to rust and ruin.

Upon the run above the furnace is a dam, forming a pretty pond, in which sport the sprightliest trout, distinguished from their fellows in the larger stream, by their deeper and richer colors.

Retracing our steps to the main road, we espied the peak of a modest spire, just peeping out from the dense foliage by which it is surrounded. A closer inspection revealed a small church, in which the former inhabitants of the village doubtless worshipped, in the prosperous days of the valley.

Close at hand, another crumbling furnace stands, exhibiting its picturesque lines and crimson-painted boiler against the dark-green background of the mountain.

Farther on, the mountain becomes more precipitous, huge rocks are piled in ungainly masses, many having crumbled, covering the mountain-side with a sombre, gray mantle that renders the flowery regions below more lovely for the contrast. Here and there, black dots mark the entrances to iron mines, while zigzag lines indicate the railways that formerly carried ore to the now idle furnaces.

Journeying along, we speculated upon the fabulous sums of money here sunken, of the families impoverished, and fortunes lost in the disastrous enterprise, until we came to a cool spring whose waters bubbled from beneath a moss- and fern-covered rock by the roadside. Some philanthropist had constructed a watering-trough under the protecting shade of a large tree, around which, and by the spring, wild forget-me-nots and violets were blooming fresh and crisp under the trickling water that fell upon them from the mossy rocks.

Seated upon a grassy mound, we admired the charming landscape with its encircling hills. Among a cluster of trees upon the flats was seen the Ralston House, to its rear the Lycoming Creek, with a beautiful rapid, across which is

thrown a rude bridge leading to the mountain-road. Near the railway bridge that spans the creek beyond, is the mouth of Rock Run, and farther still, Red Run and Dutchman Run empty their waters into the Lycoming.

Looking toward the north, the inclined plane stretches in a straight line from base to peak of the high mountain, over which busy cars bring coal to the valley below.

Far to the north and south, mountain profiles cut the blue sky, with now and then a notch through which some murmuring creek finds its tortuous way. A more delightful spot for quiet could not well be found.

The rambles through glens and chasms are unsurpassed. A drive down the mountain-road reveals a display of wild-flowers, mosses, and ferns delightful to behold, while the trout upon the various streams, though by no means abundant, afford the angler additional pleasure.

The hotel—kept by Mr. S. C. Myer—is of the very best character, where the summer sojourner will find an excellent table, good beds, large rooms, and ample means of recreation.

After a sumptuous dinner, we all took a stroll in company with Chandler, whose summering-place this is, introducing Charles to Rock Run. A more enchanting stream I have never encountered.

Dressed in wading-suits, we passed along the bank of the creek to the foot of the mountain,

there crossed the stream to take a path occupying the bed of the Switchback Railway that years before was employed for mining purposes. The path, though well defined, is overgrown with wild plants, while moss-covered logs occasionally obstruct the way.

The banks of the gorge are covered with immense trees, the woodman's axe never having desecrated the place. Black, yellow, and white birch, crooked beeches, sugar-maples, and grand old hemlocks and pines raise their lofty heads far, far above the overhanging ledges.

As we advance, the gorge grows narrower, the rocks higher, the creek more rapid, until a turn in the path leads us away into the forest among massive trees, huge boulders, and lofty lichen-whitened crags that project from the mountain-crests flanking the noisy creek.

For three miles we walked through the wilderness, no axe-marked stumps, no barkless, prostrate trees to indicate the track of the lumberman. All our surroundings are as nature fashioned them,—grand in their solitude, picturesque in their undisturbed repose.

The path turning abruptly to the right, its course leading through dense laurel whose pink blossoms brush our faces, we arrived upon the bank of the creek again, at a point where Miner's Run creeps among the rocks to find its way into the gorge below. Here the two streams meet,

forming a cascade, below which is a deep basin, carved out of solid rock, in the dark recesses of which many large trout are lying, as our flies have revealed on numerous former excursions.

Above this point, at one and two miles, are two magnificent falls, amidst wild and grand scenery. But upon the present occasion we moved down the stream that cuts its way through solid rock, forming delightful little cascades, roaring rapids, and foaming swirls, until the "First Falls" are reached. The water here rushes over a precipice eighteen feet high, with rocky abutments on either side that have been cut through by the constant wear of ages.

Climbing over the rocks and around the falls, by aid of the laurel-roots, to the high bank above, we looked down into a cavern sixty feet below, where the water rushes and foams in its rocky bed.

Carefully working our way down, we reached the level of the creek once more, to have a front view of the falls, showing a clear sheet of water, behind which dark, moss-covered rocks were seen as through a lace curtain. A delicate mist rose from the falls bathing our upturned faces, and, to our right, amber-colored waters trickled over the shelving rocks, upon which violets nodded their pretty heads in graceful obeisance to the falling spray.

On the other side immense cliffs rose perpendicularly before us, from the summits of which

lofty hemlock stubs leaned in threatening attitude. We turned our backs upon the weird scene and clambered over the rocks to the rapids below. Hardly a glimpse of the sky was seen; never a ray from the sun penetrates the deep, rock-bound cavern. Let the inhabitants in the valley swelter in the heat of the August sun, all is cool and serene here.

We now came to a place where the creek has worn for itself a channel—hardly six feet wide, but dark and deep—through solid rock, in which the water rushes, hisses, and roars until released in an ample pool below. Here again a rocky basin is formed, with bottom as smooth and round as though fashioned by the potter's hand.

Hastening down, we reached Porcupine Pool, with its projecting rocks, placid water, and cool retreat upon moss- and violet-covered banks, where picknickers are wont to rest and take their noontime meal. A gentleman once lunching here with Chandler saw a porcupine come from out the thicket and take a drink at the sparkling fountain, then, nodding an adieu to his observers, dodged into his lair again. To this incident is the pool indebted for its name, it being ever afterward known to fishermen and tourists as "Porcupine Pool."

Rapids, cascades, pools, and swirls succeed one another until the old dam is reached, where the cañon widens, and

"The mountain mists uprolling, let the waiting sunlight
down."

The dam has formed a lodgment for all manner of flood-wood, accumulated in an inextricable mass upon its edge. Through it water trickles and spouts in every direction, forming tiny rainbows over its blackened surface, while trout dart for covert in the large pool as our shadows fall upon its surface.

From this point the walk is less rugged, the stream wider with fewer rapids, until we reach the broad plateau that leads to the hotel.

Close at hand, near the foot of the inclined plane, is a fall, the beauty of which has been so loudly praised that our steps are involuntarily directed thither. Reaching the railway track, in the centre of the narrow valley, and following it up beyond the plane, there is a path leading to the foot of the mountain, when we soon step into the cosiest dell imaginable.

It is surrounded with stately forest-trees, whose boughs spread themselves so far above our heads as to permit an uninterrupted view of one of the loveliest falls my eyes ever beheld. Here

" . . . the stream whose silver-braided rills
Fling their unclasping bracelets from the hills,
Till in one gleam beneath the forest-wings, ·
Melts the white glitter of a hundred springs."

One can but wonder, as he looks upon this beautiful fall with accompanying stream and

murmuring rills, whether Dr. Holmes did not find inspiration for the lines while gazing upon its marvellous beauty.

Before us is a mass of striated rocks, rising more than one hundred feet perpendicularly from a dark cavern. Its surface is irregular, dark lines running transversely over its face, from which ferns, lichens, mosses, grasses, violets, and wild forget-me-nots are growing in luxuriant profusion. At its top a channel is worn deep down, from which flows, in graceful curve, a crystal body of water a hundred feet to the gulf below. Half-way down, it strikes a projecting ledge, from which it is thrown into white foam that tumbles on either side in a boiling, seething mass, then falls with a steady roar and splash upon the great boulders in the chasm, from which a spray is dashed upon the overhanging rocks, to trickle down again with never-ceasing murmur. And this, in the vernacular of the natives, is "Dutchman Falls."

As we retrace our steps toward the hotel, we once more pass the plane, where Mr. Platt, the superintendent, hails us, and, with characteristic hospitality, invites us to his pleasant cottage to tea. The afternoon being already well spent, and the walk to camp still before us, this pleasure, from necessity, is declined. He accompanies us in our walk toward the hotel, and speaks of the village of McIntyre, upon the

mountain, where eight hundred miners dwell, delving under-ground for coal.

Before reaching the hotel, we come to the mouth of Red Run, emptying into the main stream from the western mountain. This run is not a whit less beautiful than the one just explored; and, Chandler insisting upon our visiting it, we decide upon a short journey to one or two of its most attractive points.

We turn aside, therefore, and seek a winding path that takes us through a dense laurel thicket, and step out upon a table-rock, projecting over the creek that runs sixty feet below. Looking up the stream, a thirty-feet fall is seen, with its strange, reddish water, that takes its color from the tamarack swamp in which it rises.

Immediately above this point, only to be reached by retracing our steps to the original path, is another fall and cascade, extending through a chasm of rock for more than a hundred and fifty yards. Continuing up the rugged water-course for three miles, we find a succession of beautiful pools, falls and cascades, until we come to the loveliest of them all, pitching gracefully down from its rock-bound crest, thirty feet above. The peculiarity of this fall consists in the rock that forms it, being in the shape of a cone, over which the water pours in two sheets, the under one striking upon the shelving rocks, forming numerous smaller cascades, seen through the outer, ruby-

colored sheet that falls smoothly over all. Two slender hemlocks that found root upon the rocks, lean toward each other over the crest, forming a green arbor, through which the water flows to the deep, dark pool below.

Chandler, who worships Nature often at this shrine, has given it the name of "Ruby Falls," and never tires of conducting his friends thither when summer finds him rustivating in this glorious valley.

So varied and numerous are the rambles about Ralston that this entire volume might be devoted to their description. Mossy dells, lovely grottoes, marvellous glens and cañons, everywhere abound, while mineral springs entice the visitor to drink of their health-giving waters.

In the evening, when the long summer twilight is upon the valley, "the church on the mountain," formed by a cluster of trees,—a silhouette against the gray sky,—is pointed out from the pleasant balcony of the hotel.

Here the guests sit listening to the whip-poor-wills and watch the moon rising from behind the dusky mountain, to throw her silvery light upon hill and dale.

Then, the fragrance exhaled from the balsams upon the cool evening air becomes grateful to the lungs and invigorating to the body.

Indeed, next to camping-out, I know of no more delightful spot for those in love with scen-

ery such as I have endeavored to describe than Ralston. No attempt at dress is indulged in, no dissipations in balls and parties thought of. I heartily recommend it to those in need of a quiet, unostentatious, healthful, and inexpensive summering-place.

Persons intending to visit this region can secure ample accommodations by writing to S. C. Myer, Ralston, Lycoming Co., Pa., or to Miss Jennie Conley, who keeps a quiet boarding-house across the creek from the Ralston House.

Gentlemen should provide themselves with old clothing and brogan shoes for wading purposes, and for climbing mountains and traversing glens. The ladies will find flannel suits, with short skirts and heavy shoes, a great and indispensable convenience, should they desire to visit any of the wild scenery to which I have referred.

Reaching the hotel, tired from our long jaunt, Mrs. Myer insisted upon preparing us a cup of tea and luncheon before the return to camp. This disposed of, we were refreshed and invigorated for the homeward march.

Charles and Thad Jr. took to the road, while Hamlin and I concluded to cast our flies once more over our former favorite ground in the Sugar Bottom. Chandler accompanied us partly on our way, pointing out spots where he had pricked large trout the day before; and, after seeing us land one or two beauties, retraced his steps

with a merry song toward his stopping-place at the hotel.

We fished over the familiar places which years before rewarded us so nobly ; through the Sugar Bottom, the deep pool back of Astenville, the mouth of Pleasant Stream, Powell's Pond, the Slope Wall, thence over the waters in front of the high bank, on down to camp, where we found Charles and Thad Jr. awaiting our coming that supper might be served.

Emptying our creels, a fair catch of fish was exhibited ; and, at the evening smoke about the camp-fire, all voted the day a complete success.

A threatening storm induced us to seek our beds earlier than usual, where we lay chatting over the adventures of the day, and planning new excursions for the morrow, until the gentle patter of the rain upon our canvas roof lulled us into a quiet, refreshing sleep.



CHAPTER XIII.

SUNDAY IN CAMP.

The Dogs chase a Deer, and Charles asks Sundry Questions

“GLORY be to God on high!” rang out upon the clear morning air, greeting my ears in a cheerful song, which I recognized as having Hamlin at the other end of it.

I rose from the bed, looked out between the flies, to see my friend upon a projecting plank at the water’s edge, bathing his face with a sponge while he looked toward the rising sun.

The morning was a charming one; the sun just peeping through the notch in the mountain sent a flood of light upon the ripple before us.

“Halloo, Hamlin! Why this exultation at so early an hour?”

“Come out here and tell me,—did you ever see so glorious a morning? Don’t idle your time away in bed; such a scene is far too beautiful to be lost. Call Charles!”

“It will be necessary to go beyond the limits of this camp to fulfil the requirements of that last observation of yours. Charles is not here.”

“Where is he?”

“Down by the dam, likely, diving from its

comb into the foam below. At least, I heard him make some such threat before we retired last night."

"Why, I didn't hear him get up."

"Nor I; but I felt him covering us up some time during the night. When he sleeps is past finding out; he seems to be seeking every one's comfort but his own. There he comes now; I hear his paddle on the water."

Presently Charles's boat shot into the pond from out the little bayou that leads to the meadow behind Bodine's barn. He was singing merrily, seeming to be imbued with the prevailing good feeling of men and birds induced by the auspicious opening of the day. In a few minutes his boat touched the shore, and he alighted, carrying a hatful of eggs, which he placed upon the table, remarking,—

"I heard you say fresh eggs were needed, so I engaged a few hens to lay them for me. I've been in the squire's barn; and say," he quickly added, "I saw an old chap coming up the mountain-road just now, looking for his hounds; he said they got loose this morning and made for the forest, and that if we kept quiet we'd see a deer run across our point before a great while."

"But, see here, Charles, this is Sunday, and running deer on such a day, and out of season, too, isn't just the thing."

"True enough; perhaps that is the reason the

old chap was looking for his dogs, that he might suggest the situation of affairs to them. Doubtless, if they knew this to be Sunday, they would feel ashamed of their performance and slink home with tails between their legs. At least I hope so, for the sake of the moral aspect of the community in general, and the dogs in particular."

"It is a little indecorous in those dogs to be chasing deer to-day, that's a fact," Hamlin remarked; "but I'd give a cookie to learn what their conclusions might be relative to a chap who deliberately invades a barn on Sunday to appropriate any eggs therein found."

"See here, Mr. Hamlin, if that observation is meant to be personal, assailing the character of a party from Brooklyn, permit me to remark that I had a tacit understanding with those hens, and permission from the owner of the barn, by reason of proffers of sundry nickels, to appropriate the united products of their labor for one day, and, by George, I don't——"

"Breakfast!" shouted George, as he ran toward the dining-room with a dish of smoking hot potatoes in his hand, which he set down with a crash, placed his fingers in his mouth, then whirled them through the air, and, jumping about upon one foot, exclaimed,—

"Lor' a massa but das hot!"

"I saw a queer transaction this morning in the small bayou," Charles said, while we seated our-

selves around the table; "I watched for a long while the antics of a 'bull-head' with a lot of young. She had them gathered about her, to the number of three or four hundred,—little, black, fellows that resembled tadpoles. She watched and cared for them as carefully as an old hen would her chickens, and did not permit a fish of any sort to come near them. I never knew before that they protected their young by personal supervision."

"That is new to me also, although I have seen trout and bass guarding their spawning-beds, but never their young," Hamlin said.

"It is a wonder to me that so many eggs of the fish escape destruction. I never wade a rift that I do not see suckers rooting and feeding in a spawning-bed. I am surprised that trout are as abundant as we find them, when it is considered how many natural enemies they have. Suckers, mullets, crabs, and insects feed upon the spawn. Pickerel, fish-hawks, kingfishers, and innumerable birds and animals prey upon the young fish, yet thousands escape to come to maturity and to our hooks."

"I hear da dogs a-comin'!" George shouted.

"So they are," Charles said. "A long way off they must be; hark! I can just hear faint bayings beyond the mountain; wonder whether they're coming this way?"

"We can lay off and see," Hamlin replied,

rising from the table and stretching himself out in the hammock. "A fellow need not plug his ears I imagine, even if it is Sunday."

Presently, the cry of a dog was heard from beyond the mountain; then another, both becoming clearer, yet a great way off. We walked into the open, to the rear of the camp, and listened. Only a faint sound came to us, then died away. We waited, turned our ears anxiously in the direction of the last sound,—quietness only. We were about to return; the baying became louder than before. Along the mountain-tops it rang nearer, clearer. Then we caught a faint glimpse of the animals' forms, that was lost again as they passed over a ridge into a deep gully beyond.

Ascending the slope across the ravine, they once more "gave tongue" in cheery tones, making the cliffs ring with their melody. Around the hills they circled, their deep voices growing fainter as they descended into a ravine, louder and rounder when they climbed the opposite bank, and then died out in the distance. A half-hour of silence almost persuaded us that the game was lost; but then the short, sharp yelp of the hounds announced their close proximity, being almost upon us. Along the summit of the mountain, at the base of which we stood, rang out the prolonged bellowings that were rendered even more musical against the opposite hills. Still they ran and bayed and yelped and made the

echoes fill the very air with crying dogs. They struck the ridge leading to our point. Down it they came, the yelps growing fiercer, the dogs coming nearer. We saw the laurels parting, trembling, and swaying, heard a crackling, then a splash!

“Look a dar! Look a dar!” George shouted in the most excited manner, pointing toward the bayou with one hand and holding his dish-pan aloft with the other.

We looked in the direction indicated, to see the head of a doe gliding rapidly down the pond. Upon hearing George’s animated voice, and seeing all the campers rush to the point of the little island, she made several desperate plunges to regain the mountain-side, failing in which, she swam farther down and tried again, this time succeeding, and disappeared among the dense laurels and rhododendrons through which many a time we had failed to force our way.

Scarcely had the deer gained the thicket before the dogs came upon the spot where she entered the stream. There they stood for a moment, and, sniffing the air, gave a disappointed howl, then, acting upon some sort of understanding between themselves, one followed the bank down while the other ran up the stream.

Not a sound was heard for fifteen minutes; then, where the deer quitted the water, the dog below struck the trail again, and made the “welkin

ring" with his exultant cry. In an instant, a streak was seen along the mountain-road that marked the course of the up-stream dog on the way to join his companion. True to his nature, he did not "give tongue" until the trail was reached. A short cry announced that he had joined in the chase, then their united voices melted away in the deep forest, and they were heard no more.

"By George! that was quite enjoyable if it is Sunday," Charles observed. "What musical voices those hounds have. Never heard anything like it before; it's worth coming to the woods to hear."

"Your enthusiasm reminds me of an incident related quite graphically by Sanders," Hamlin replied. "He recently visited Cortland County to engage in a fox-hunt. The dogs got loose and took a hunt upon their own responsibility one Sunday morning, when an enthusiastic hunter called to his father, saying,—

"‘Oh father, come here, quick, and listen to this heavenly music!’

"The old gentleman appeared at the door, placed his hand behind his best ear, listened a moment, then returned to his comfortable arm-chair, petulantly remarking,—

"‘I can't hear nothin',—them hounds make such a confounded noise.’

"Evidently the father was not so much of an

enthusiast for out-door sports as the youngster supposed."

"Oh, papa! papa! come here and see this funny bird! He's a-standin' right on the side ov the tree where there isn't enny limbs," Fritz shouted from the rear of the large tent.

I went to him, and found a "yellow hammer" upon the old stub, busily picking over its surface for grubs.

"That's a woodpecker, my son," I said, "and all birds of that kind light upon a tree or limb lengthwise, while robins, crows, and other birds sit across the limb." I then went into an explanation of the habits of birds, much to his delight, and left him.

Soon, he came running toward me with a Sunday-school journal in his hand, upon which was shown a picture of an angel with outstretched wings, and a dinner-horn to her lips. (I say *her*, for now that I think of it, I rarely see a picture of a *male* angel, which circumstance startles me just a little.) Holding the picture up for inspection, he made this inquiry,—

"Pa, which way does angels light?"

"My son, I give it up. You must ask some one more familiar with their habits than I. Perhaps Mr. Hamlin can tell you; go try!"

"The squire was telling me yesterday," Charles said, "of some old chap below here, who can go out any day and catch more trout with a cot-

ton string for a line, an alder stock for a pole, and a pin for a hook, than most fishermen who come here with fancy poles and tackle. That seems queer to me. Do you believe it?"

"Such traditions are indigenous to all fishing localities, Charles. Go where you will, that wonderful individual with his primitive and clumsy tackle, will invariably be referred to, and his miraculous achievements commented upon. But to this I can testify: he's a myth; you will never encounter him. Should he exist in name, his exploits are wholly imaginary. I will agree to match Hamlin or Thad against any three men equipped in the manner described, and will warrant either one to bring in four times as many fish as all of them combined.

"Trout are not so anxious to rise to clumsy flies and cotton strings as many are wont to suppose. Doubtless, such feats were performed in early days, when trout were abundant and not much sought for; but now, it is quite different; they require fine leaders, delicate flies, and skilful throwing to deceive them."

"What sort of a line is that upon your rod yonder?" Charles inquired. "I see it is very fine and light."

"That is a linen, braided line, tapered and made waterproof. I prefer it to silk, hair, or any other sort. It is lighter, is delivered more freely through the rings, and does not fray."

“How long is your leader?”

“Just seven feet, and made of very fine but strong gut. I taper it, placing the finest gut at the free end, and the heavier where it joins the line, both ends terminating in loops. Three feet from the free end I make another short loop for the ‘dropper,’ tied in such a manner as to make it point *up* the line. Here, I’ll show you how to tie it, for I regard it as one of my most important discoveries.



When you have made three feet of the leader—the finest end—tie a loop upon each end, then tie this to the line end in the manner represented in the drawing. This will prevent the fly from clinging to the leader, but will make it stand out straight when drawn over the water, so doing away with one of the chief annoyances of fly-casting. If the second loop is made double at its shank and well shellacked, it will be still more rigid and less liable to cling.”

“What sort of a reel do you prefer?”

“A nickel-plated click reel, by all odds. I have tried the ‘basket reel,’ the rubber reel, and several other sorts, but have returned to the click, as answering all the requirements of a good reel better than any other. If the Fowler rubber

reel had a click attachment, I would regard it as the perfection of reels. The advantages possessed by the Fowler reel are lightness and the rapidity with which it takes up the line. But it lacks, as I said, the click, which regulates the movement of a reel better than any other device, beside being a merry indicator of the fish's strike. Never buy a cheap reel,—that would be the poorest sort of economy, the contrivance annoying you perpetually. One of the very best workmanship should be secured, with handle well fitted, so that the line will not become fastened in the groove of the handle or crank when lengthening it for a longer cast."

"Another thing I have wondered over: why do fishermen carry such quantities of flies?"

"The older or more experienced the angler, the fewer flies you will find in his book. When I first fitted myself out, I'm almost ashamed to tell you, I had forty dollars worth of flies, of all sorts and descriptions, which it certainly would not have been a sin to worship, for they resembled nothing 'that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.' I now confine myself to a half-dozen varieties, consisting of—

"‘The Hamlin’ (black body, black hackle, white wing, and long, black tail, ending in a white tip).

"‘The Great Dun’ (lead-colored wing, mouse-

colored body, grayish hackle, and long, speckled tail).

“ ‘Bright Fox’ (white wing, light-yellow body, no hackle, and slender tail, made from three or four hairs from crest of English pheasant).

“ ‘Grizzly King’ (speckled wing, green body, light-red hackle, tail from feather of scarlet ibis).

“ ‘Black Gnat’ (lead-colored wing, black body, black hackle, no tail).

“ ‘Queen of the Waters’ (light, speckled wing, yellow body, yellow hackle, yellow tail, or none).

“ These include all the varieties really needed upon any of the waters of Pennsylvania or New York. You have observed that I have not changed my cast since our arrival here. I use the ‘Hamlin’ on the lead and the ‘Great Dun’ for a dropper. This constitutes my cast. Wound about my hat is another leader, upon which is fastened a ‘Black Gnat’ for the end fly and a ‘Bright Fox’ for a dropper. This is for use at dusk, and as long as my flies can be seen upon the water. When I can no longer discern them, or see where they strike, I quit. I never could see any sport in night fishing, neither have I had any success after dark, casting a ‘miller’ or other white fly.

“ My flies are made smaller than those usually found in stock, being tied upon Nos. 9 and 14 hooks. As a general thing, it is a waste of time to be forever changing your flies. If the trout

are not rising, it is entirely useless to fling an assortment of flies at them. Stick to your cast of the 'Hamlin' and 'Great Dun,' when, depend upon it, you will come in with as full a creel as your companions, who imagined their flies wrong, and spent valuable time in searching for the right ones. I am aware that excellent fishermen differ with me upon this point; and I have also noticed that my plan kills the most fish.

"Another thing let me caution you against: do not buy more flies than are needed for one season, for the gut becomes tender, and parts at its junction with the hook, when kept in the fly-book for a year or more. Lay in a fresh supply every spring. I order of James Ratcliffe, Arcade Block, Rochester, N. Y., two dozen each of the 'Hamlin' and 'Great Dun,' and half-dozens of the other varieties. I pay one dollar a dozen for them, and find them quite as serviceable as the more costly ones of other makers.

"Before laying your fly-book away, sprinkle a little crushed camphor-gum between its leaves, else will the moths attack it and the flies.

"Your reels should be taken apart, cleaned and oiled.

"Rods must be well varnished with the best copal varnish. Never use shellac,—it scales and cracks, letting the moisture come in contact with the wood to swell the joints and make them stick. When the varnish is thoroughly dry, lay your rods

in a suitable box and stow it away upon the floor of some closet, at a distance from chimney or register. Do not stand them on end, they must lie flat on the floor to prevent warping.

“Lines should be unreeled and stretched in the sunlight, and rubbed with a chamois-skin, then laid away in hanks, unreeled, until needed. This will prevent their becoming rotten.

“Creels are best preserved by rinsing in a strong solution of sal-soda; hung up to dry, then oiled with raw linseed oil.

“If you exercise this care with your tackle, it will remain sound and efficient for years.”

“Now, tell me another thing: how do you get through the bushes with your rod and hanging flies without breaking your tip and hooking fast to every branch that obstructs the path?”

“Easy enough; nothing more simple to accomplish. In my pocket I carry two small corks, into which I hook my flies before entering the brush, and I point my rod ahead of me, carrying it parallel with the ground, being careful not to strike the tip against a tree. Never be in a hurry, either in going through the brush or wading a stream. Always take it leisurely, particularly in fishing, and be sure not to take your feet out in stepping, but glide them through the water noiselessly, and without creating waves or splashes to notify the trout of your approach. Be careful, too, not to let your shadow fall upon the pool

where you intend to make a cast, else will you send the large trout scudding for covert.

“Some fishermen are forever on the go, seeking for better places over which to cast their flies, or to reach some favorite pool or spring-hole before it is invaded by other anglers. Haste begets ‘nervousness,’ causing awkward casts and careless ploddings through the stream, putting the fish to flight, to be captured by the more patient, careful fisherman an hour afterward.”

“Well, I was bothered in another way yesterday: my tip kept coming out of the ferrule; and, to add to my misfortune, the wind took my leader into a tree-top, from which I failed to remove it. I must say, I’m not much in love with fresh-water fishing; the tackle is too delicate, and the perplexities of casting too numerous. But just place me in a sail-boat on the bay, when blue fish are taking the squid, then I’m at home.”

“Both your difficulties are easily overcome, Charles: place a piece of waxed thread in the socket, then force the ferrule home, when you will find it will remain in place. To get your leader down from the tree-top: cut a small sapling,—for this purpose I carry a large-bladed knife, weighing half a pound, with which I can fell the tree in a twinkling,—trim it of its branches, and let the top terminate in a long fork. Now, get the limb to which your leader is fast between the prongs of the fork and twist the sapling round

and round, until the limb is twisted off or the leaves and flies stripped from it. You can almost invariably succeed in this manner."

"I wonder why it is that I do not hook more than one-quarter of the trout that rise to my flies?"

"A trout does not always get the fly when he attempts to; it may be lying against the leader, making it impossible for him to get it in his mouth; you may jerk too quickly, taking it out of reach; the strike may be too hard, tearing his mouth. Indeed, I think the tendency of all fishermen is to jerk too hard, either taking the fly out of the fish's mouth, or tearing a portion of his jaw away. More trout by far are pricked than hooked. Large ones usually hook themselves, and almost always take the fly *under* the water. Practice only can teach you when to strike; you see a faint gleam under the surface, when you instinctively twitch, to find you have hooked a beauty. Few fishermen can separate force from quickness of motion. They seem to throw all their strength of muscle into the jerk to render it a quick one. Never use your arm in making the strike, only your wrist; then will the difficulty be overcome. Look behind you before making a long cast, to see whether limbs or bushes are there to be avoided.

"No description with pen or tongue can teach you how to cast the fly. Accompany an expert,

and watch him. You will learn more in one lesson of this character than can be gleaned from reading volumes of fishing-books."

"Why do fly-fishermen taboo bait-fishing? I could never understand that, exactly. They all seem to be ashamed to acknowledge that they ever use bait."

"Fly-fishing might be styled the poetry of angling. It is as superior to fishing with a squirming, filthy worm as true sculpture is to gravestone-making, or as the work of the artist is above that performed by the man who white-washes your kitchen ceiling. Any fellow can impale a miserable worm upon a hook, and, by its writhings, entice a fish to nibble at it. But it requires a quick eye, a tranquil nerve, and superior judgment to cast a fly so as to deceive the wary trout. I do not object to taking fish with a worm, for food, if hard pressed, but for sport,—never! There is nothing disreputable in fishing with a worm; by no means. But I do not enjoy that sort of thing; therefore never engage in it.

"I am aware that many fishermen are ashamed to acknowledge their use of the worm, and will quickly change it for a fly when they see a fly-fisherman approaching, or will remove it, substituting a leader and flies just before coming in at night, and then declare every blessed fish to have been taken on a fly. That is all right; I

approve the method; glad they are ashamed of it,—they will the more likely become expert fly-casters, some day, I'm sure."

There is no telling how long this might have continued had not Way and Fritz brought it to a termination with their usual pranks.

The first was shouting from the point to have us come see the big sucker he had caught in the "eagle's-claw trap," while the younger urchin chased a red squirrel over us that barely made his escape up the beech.

"It's just old bully to be in camp on Sunday," Fritz said, as he stood looking at the squirrel above his head; "a feller don't need to be all dressed up and keep so awful clean, and we can 'hoop-her-up' all we want to;" then, with a regular war-whoop, he ran to join his brother, who was having all sorts of fun with the suckers down by the point.



CHAPTER XIV.

AROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

Chats containing Information and Amusement.

“I LOST a fine one this morning,” Thad Jr. observed, as he joined the group enjoying their pipes about the camp-fire after the evening meal had been eaten. “I do not know why it is,” he continued, “but I almost invariably miss the trout that come to the middle fly.”

“Follow your father’s plan,—cast but two flies. I used to be troubled in the same manner before I tried that,” Hamlin said, who then rose and placed his stool on the windward side of the fire to escape the smoke that was pouring into his face.

“How does that obviate the trouble complained of?” Charles queried.

“I will tell you: when you use three flies, as is the custom with all fishermen that I have yet met, the middle one is continually clinging to your leader, because of its being under water. Your ‘dropper’ is kept on top the water so that the fly is necessarily free from the line, while the end one is equally unencumbered, and therefore readily grasped by the trout; but let him rise to

the middle one, and he will usually fail in securing it, because of its adherence to the leader."

"The very trouble I have had myself," Sanders said, "and strange that I should not have thought of the cause; I believe the difficulty to have been entirely due to what you have suggested. I shall certainly use but two flies hereafter."

"Sanders, what did you do on Tim Gray's run to-day," one of the party inquired.

"Nothing of consequence; too much sawdust running below the mill now. Never caught a trout from the mouth of the stream up to the mill. Oh, how I used to lay them out over that ground a few years ago! No better fishing could be found in this region; it beat the Sugar Bottom, even. I went up as high as the splash-dam to-day and caught forty, of regulation size. Returning, I fished on the main stream, capturing my largest ones at the mouth of Tim Gray's and under Du Bois's dam."

"Did you walk all the way back to camp, or take the cars at Field's?"

"Footed it all the way. It isn't a very long walk: about four miles from the mouth of Tim Gray's."

Hamlin again shifted his seat, fanning the smoke with his hat, and, after getting his breath, remarked,—

"I have never seen any one yet that could find

the breathing side of a camp-fire ; go where you will the smoke will follow you up, either blinding or smothering you, if you sit still long enough. I don't wonder the punkies skedaddle under such a smudge as that."

"Come to *our* side," said Robert ; "the wind hasn't been in this direction for the half-hour I've been sitting here, and the fire is burning and crackling beautifully. Just see how the broad leaves, at the very top of the trees, wave under the influence of the ascending heat."

Hamlin dodged through the smoke to secure a seat by Robert's side ; and in less than two minutes you couldn't see either one for the blue smoke that was gracefully curling around them. In a minute, Hamlin appeared at the right of the fire, hat in hand, which he flourished desperately in his wake, and puffing like a porpoise. With tears running down his cheeks in torrents, he finally found voice to say,—

"A blessed good move that, Robert ; glad I came over ; any other spot about this fire you can recommend ? Guess I'll try a back seat for a while,—long enough to take a half-dozen breaths, anyway. When you find another real nice place just call me ;" saying which, he walked into the darkness, toward the ice-chest, where he was heard to strike a match and then exclaim, "I say, Sanders, your fish seem to be soft. You didn't dress them early enough, did you ?"

"No, I did not; that's a fact. They should have been cleaned at noon, but I did not take time to do it, I was in such a hurry to reach the main stream."

"Fish keep the best that are immediately cleaned," Charles observed.

"So they do," Hamlin said; "but to keep trout well, dress them the moment they are caught, and *wipe them dry*. I have kept trout fresh and nice for several days in a cool cellar, without ice, by wiping them thoroughly dry, and rubbing a small quantity of salt along their back-bones. They should not be piled one on top the other, but spread out on pans or boards on the cellar floor. In the woods I prepare them in the same manner, placing dry grass over each layer of trout in the creel. You will be surprised to see how long and well they will keep."

"Sugar is good to rub them with, I've heard," Robert remarked.

"It is not so good as salt; I've tried both," Hamlin said. "But you must be careful not to use too much, else will the flavor of the fish be destroyed."

"Oh, doctor! I caught one of those four trout you pointed out to me this morning under the log at the foot of the leaning tree," Charles interrupted. "He had a Hamlin fly in his upper jaw. You had a splendid hold on him that would have brought him to shore had the gut not parted."

"What did you take him on?"

"The Hamlin."

"The deuce you did! Why, I tossed that fly to him at intervals during most of the afternoon; he snatched one from my leader, and I supposed he would prefer a change of diet when he did take hold again. How large is he?"

"Oh, about twelve inches, I guess."

"Why, he's a nice one, and must have given you considerable sport."

"Indeed he did; and I believe I shouted according to the approved method of anglers in this camp; didn't you hear me?"

"I heard what I took to be a two-year-old bull bellowing up there, somewhere, about noon."

"That was me!"

"How comes it that none of you fishermen carry liquor? All Murphyites?" Robert inquired.

"Perhaps the introduction of my tea-pot had something to do with banishing liquor from this camp," I replied. "When I first began fishing, I arrayed myself in all the paraphernalia recommended as necessary by friends. Among other things was a flask of whiskey, to be used as a preventive against taking cold. I invariably came in at night with a headache, attributed to too violent exercise. I was quite willing to accept this solution of the cause, and continued the stimulant, taking a mouthful at our nooning and another upon leaving the stream, or when much

fatigued. The headaches continuing, I surmised that the liquor was at the bottom of it, and abandoned it entirely. I gave my flask to a preacher (to carry cold tea in), then had this tea-pot made, —a simple device you see; only a tall tin mug, capable of containing about three pints, with a handle riveted on (not soldered), and two holes punched just under the rim, through which a piece of copper wire is passed, to serve as a bale. This I hang to the strap of my creel behind, where it is out of the way. To accompany it, I have two muslin bags with drawing-strings at their mouths; in one I put a double handful of black tea, in the other the same quantity of granulated sugar. These I place in one of the pockets of my fishing-jacket. Now, when my companion and I come to our nooning, we first build a fire, covering it plentifully with wood, and, while it is burning to coals, dress our fish, wipe them dry, and stow them away in our creels; saving the smallest ones for dinner, cooking them in——”

“Going to tell how to prepare those delicious fish we had for dinner yesterday?” Charles interrupted.

“Yes, thought I would: we carry with us sheets of fine, soft paper (known as tissue Manila), which are smeared with the butter, carried in a small box thrown in the creel. The trout are all well seasoned (and for this purpose we carry

a small box of Cayenne pepper and salt, mixed), and every one rolled up separately in a piece of the buttered paper. Hamlin and I usually require twenty trout, about six inches long. They are then placed in a pile and enveloped with another piece of paper, rolling them into one snug package. A piece of newspaper is wrapped about the bundle, and is held in the creek for five minutes, or long enough to completely saturate the enveloping paper. By this time your fire is burned down to a bed of coals. Scrape a hole in the centre of them, and there bury the roll of fish under the glowing embers. If the package is as large as Hamlin and I make, let them remain twenty minutes. While they are cooking, put your tea-pot on, full of water. When it boils set it off, and place in it about a heaping tablespoonful of tea. Cover the pot with a flat stone. Let it steep ten minutes or more, and your dinner is ready."

"Don't the trout burn?"

"Not at all; the outside paper will be scorched, but the one enveloping the fish is untouched by the fire. Seating ourselves on the bank, in the shade, we place the bundle of fish on a flat stone that must serve for a plate, and take them from the package hot, as they are needed. Every spot and marking on them remains as bright and perfect as before they entered the fire. Indeed, they do not appear as though cooked at all; but just

take a bite out of one! Such a delicious morsel you never had dissolve in your mouth before, I will venture to assert."

"That's so, by George!" Hamlin said, who again approached the group from the region of darkness. "I wish we had some now; the very thought of them makes my mouth water."

"Then the tea is such a 'rester.' After drinking it, we feel as though the work for the day had but begun. Is not that so, Hamlin?"

"That it is. I don't want any whiskey on the stream, if I can get within reach of the doctor's tea-pot; and I always manage to, by noon, even if I have to——"

The remaining portion of the sentence was lost in smoke, for that contrary wind struck Hamlin again, banishing him to his seat in the darkness, from whence we now and then heard a grunt of satisfaction as he whiffed away at his pipe.

"What do you have for luncheon beside fish and tea?" Robert asked.

"In my lunch-box I carry a chunk of bread, a doughnut or two, a few pickles, or anything else our larder affords or fancy suggests. By the way, I promised to show you that lunch-box, Charles. I say, George!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Bring my creel from the large beech, will you, please?"

"Yes, sir!"

"There; that is a contrivance I had fastened to the back of my creel, partaking, as you observe, of the shape of the creel, and projecting backward just two and a half inches. In short, it is simply a tin box, two and a half inches thick and as large as the back of the creel, to which it is fastened with copper rivets. It opens on top with a lid, and will hold enough luncheon for two persons, keeping it dry and unbroken."

"That looks all right," Charles said, "but I carry luncheon in my creel, done up in a piece of oiled silk. I throw my fish on top until noon, without their coming in contact with it."

"Yes, that is a good plan, but not so cleanly nor convenient as the lunch-box arrangement."

"Halloo! there's a light on the pond. Some one's coming to camp," Hamlin proclaimed from out the darkness.

"Yes, I hear the paddle," Robert remarked from the point, whither he had gone for a better view. "It's the squire: I recognize his voice; some one with him, too."

Soon the boat, with its occupants, reached the landing, when Squire Bodine and Harry Green stepped ashore. They were bidden welcome, supplied with pipes, and the conversation went on. Said the squire,—

"Shorty and two men from Williamsport came from Pleasant Stream to-night with nine hundred trout."

"Nine hundred!" was the chorus that greeted the declaration.

"Yes, sirs, nine hundred! and not one of them over four inches long."

"What a confounded shame!" Sanders said. "I wish we could manage to have such fishing as that stopped; but I suppose it can't be done. A party from Elmira took about six hundred of the same size last week; it is amazing to see the number of small trout that splendid stream affords."

"If we had a law,—one that could be enforced,"—the squire observed, "to prohibit catching the small fry, and to prevent netting, seining, and snaring on these waters, no such fishing-grounds could be found anywhere."

"True enough, squire. So they snare them too, do they?" I asked.

"Of course they do. Why, don't you remember that big, fat fellow that used to work just below here every summer?"

"What, Fuller? Oh, yes; I remember him."

"Well, he always waited until the creek was very low, late in August, when all the big trout were settled in the deep holes, or out on their spawning-beds; then he'd go and snare them. They say he has taken as high as twelve trout, from fourteen to eighteen inches long, out of one hole, just below the dam."

"I wonder we have any large trout in the

creek after such operations," I said. "He carried me up Tim Gray's last summer, and told of some such exploits. Said he could snare large trout easier than suckers, and even prided himself upon the accomplishment. Why, in the name of all that's wonderful, did you not have him punished, squire?"

"Easier said than done. No one would complain of him, and I never saw him at it myself. The people here are afraid to make complaint for fear of exciting quarrels and bad feeling among neighbors."

"The remedy indicated, therefore, is to send a game-constable here, to watch and bring to trial and punishment all such offenders against law and honest angling. Perhaps this could be arranged by forming a club of fishermen from among those visiting these streams, and then hire a man for such a purpose."

"That's it! That's just the thing to do!" the squire exclaimed; "and if carried into effect, no better fishing could be found anywhere than right here, on this creek."

"I was on the stream to-day, doctor," Harry said. "Tried my best to catch up with you and Mr. Hamlin, but my feet hurt me so I couldn't walk well."

"Catch many?"

"I took one nice one from your favorite pool by the meadow."

“How large?”

“Thirteen inches.”

“That makes more than a dozen trout of thirteen inches and better, taken from this one pool during the week. Not bad fishing that, Harry.”

“No, sir; not at all. Plenty of fish here for those who know how to take them. It always amuses me to hear the green fishermen declare these streams to be ‘played out,’ when they come in at night with empty creels. For my part, I’m glad to have them think so. I notice, though, that you and Mr. Hamlin have no trouble in catching all you want.”

“What caused your feet to pain you so, Harry?”

“I cut holes in the toes of my shoes—confound it!—to let the water out; it not only answered that purpose, but let sand and gravel in too, blistering and chafing my feet fearfully.”

“That is a very common blunder to commit by amateur waders. A wading shoe should never be mutilated; no holes or slits allowed anywhere upon its surface, through which sand and gravel may gain admission between shoe and foot.”

“That’s so, doctor,” Charles said; “I had a very uncomfortable experience of that kind myself. Last season I purchased a pair of brogans to wade in here, and, at the suggestion of some booby, slit the toes to let the water out. I threw them away after the first trial, coming in from a

half-day of fishing with my socks full of sand and my feet blistered. Since then I never lose an opportunity to warn people against that absurd practice."

"I could have killed a deer as slick as a whistle to-day if I'd a gun with me," said Harry.

"I often wonder that some ingenious gun-maker does not invent a very light, short, single-barrelled, breech-loading shot-gun for fishermen's use," Sanders observed. "I have often felt the need of such an arm. Scarcely a day passes, when on the stream, that I do not meet wild animals of some sort, that could be captured with such a gun. To-day, for instance, I could have killed a dozen young black squirrels that were almost full grown. What an excellent supper they would have made for us, eh?"

"Such an arm would be a great convenience to fishermen, that is true, Sanders," I said. "I would like one myself with which to secure specimens of birds. It should be very light, however, and made to sling over the back. I shall seek to have one made for next season."

"What have you been up to to-day, doctor?" the squire asked.

"Hamlin and I were out from five until dark. Went up as far as the Slope Wall. Caught a dozen each,—none under eight inches, and two of twelve. I find the late afternoon fishing the best just now. We take all we need for the table

in two or three hours daily. We rarely cast longer, unless we go on to Pleasant Stream or Tim Gray's, to make a day of it. Now and then a trip is taken far up or down the main stream, to enjoy a nooning of steamed trout. Hamlin is very partial to Bloody Run for this purpose, where we also gather wild-flowers in the many cosy nooks up there."

"Well, come, Harry," the squire said, rising and moving toward the boat; "the whip-poor-wills have stopped singing some time ago, and it must be nigh unto ten o'clock,—we had better be paddling down the pond."

"All right, squire; I'll light the lamp, then we'll be off."

Soon they were gliding swiftly down the stream, under the impulse of the squire's strong arm. We watched them as their light became less and less distinct, until it disappeared behind the bank at the old mill. Then we heard the boat touch the shore, the paddle drop, and the couple leap on shore, at which all turned toward the tent and prepared for bed.

"Don't bring that lamp in here!" shouted one. "It will attract every mosquito and punkey on the island to the tent."

"Where's my night-shirt?"

"Who's moved my satchel?"

"What in fury did George do with my other blanket?"

These and similar queries greeted my ears as I stowed myself away for the night.

At last, all were in bed, the light extinguished by George, the "good-nights" all said, the short queries replied to, the jokes cracked, when the long, sonorous breaths of one or two indicated that sleep had already come to them; then Charles bounded from the bed and groped his way to the door.

"What the deuce is up now?" his bedfellow queried.

"I am," Charles said; "I forgot my bath, and I'm so confoundedly hot I'm going to take a swim in the creek to cool off!"

"What! not now?"

Splash! was the only answer heard, as Charles plunged headlong into the creek.

Hamlin got restless, turned over and over in bed, and declared a corn-cob had gotten into the straw in his tick.

Robert threw off a blanket or two and remarked upon the oppressiveness of the air. Preswick was the only quiet one in the lot, and slept like a baby until Charles returned and mopped all our faces with his big sponge, almost frightening the sleeper out of his wits, as the soggy thing startled him from his sound nap.

"Keep quiet, bubby," was Charles's soothing remark as the cooling process was administered to every head and face.

Quietness was once more restored, we were all peacefully snoozing when something fell, spat! upon the roof of the tent, scrambled over, and dropped upon the ground.

"Now, what?" Robert asks, sitting bolt upright in bed and punching me in the ribs with his elbow.

"Nothing but a flying-squirrel. Do keep quiet; he won't trouble us; that is one of his favorite amusements."

"Flying-squirrel? Scrabbling-squirrel would be a much better name for him. How long does he mean to perform?"

"Oh, that's his last appearance for to-night, so cuddle down and go to sleep."

Quietness once more, but of short duration, for Thad Jr. sprang up and danced about the tent, switching his night-gown about his legs, declaring that something alive was crawling up his back.

"What is it, Thad?"

"Goodness! I don't know; but he scratches as though his nails had not been trimmed lately, whoever or whatever he is. Get him off of me, somebody, do!"

"Take him on a fly, Thad." "Snare him," and similar suggestions were made, and George was called to for a light. All were now thoroughly awake and speculating upon the character of the beast. Hamlin suggested a rattle-snake. Robert thought it a porcupine. Sanders

wondered whether the woodchuck was out foraging. Charles concluded a bullhead had left the pond in search of his mate, that he had captured during the day. Preswick thought it might be a skunk. Fritz, who by this time was also aroused, wandered dreamily into our tent, and rubbing his eyes with both fists said,—

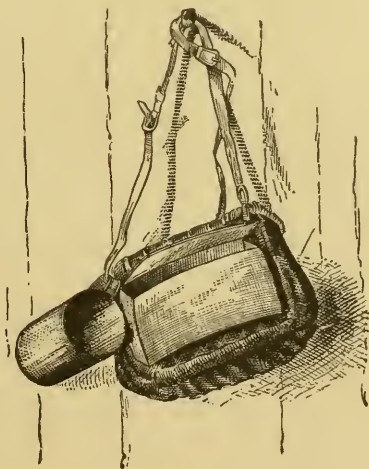
“Say, Thad, I know jes what ’tis,—it’s my china-aster-mole and I want him for Jim, ’cause he’s had no fun since he left. Stan’ still jes a minute, won’t yer? and let a feller look for him.”

There’s no telling where these observations would have ended or what sort of a menagerie would have been accumulated had not George arrived with the light, revealing Thad standing in the middle of the tent, holding his shirt far from his body, and jerking it vigorously to throw the intruder off.

A search was at once instituted, when a frightened little deer-mouse was found perched upon a fold of his garment, trembling in every limb, and looking for a good place to get out. After chasing him up and down Thad’s back for some minutes, he was finally captured and carried from the tent. Thad declared, as he shook out and stirred up his bedclothes, that he would not lie on the ground another night, but would place his bed on stilts as soon as the morning dawned.

Another half-hour was passed in commenting upon the behavior of the mouse, and wonder-

ings as to what he could have been in search of, the final observation being lost in the snore of my bedfellow, the continued monotony and weariness of which at last lulled me to refreshing sleep.



CHAPTER XV.

CUISINE.

With a Sort of Medical and Surgical Appendix.

“I NEVER ate better johnny-cake than that,” Charles observed, as he rose from the breakfast-table, taking down his meerschaum from a bracket on the post and filling it. “Indeed, the cooking is *all* good, and surprises me that it can be accomplished with so few conveniences. I really think, doctor, you should print a little manual on camp-cooking for the benefit of those you have already instilled with notions of camp-life. Next season I mean to encamp on the Delaware Water Gap with my family, and would like to get an insight into the cooking business.”

“Our bill of fare is very simple, Charles, but excellent in quality and flavor. I could teach you very easily how to prepare all the dishes that are served here, when, I have no doubt, you would be surprised at the simplicity of the transaction.

“What is most needed in camp-cooking is a good fire; and I am satisfied, after many trials of cook-stoves devised for this purpose, that the very best thing that can be used is our fireplace yonder.

“We have a Dunklee camp-stove and two forms of kerosene-stoves down at the farm-house, which have been abandoned for that open fire we are now using with so much success. Camp-stoves are too small to do the cooking for three or four persons, if you desire any variety in your fare. Kerosene-stoves have the same fault, and are too troublesome and quite inadequate. Our ancestors knew what they were about when cooking over a fireplace similar to ours, using Dutch ovens in which to bake, and skillets and pots for frying and boiling. In the Dutch oven we bake excellent biscuit and johnny-cake, while as a means of roasting beef, baking puddings, beans, etc., it cannot be surpassed. In the beginning of our camp experiences we built a fire between two logs, setting our frying-pans, coffee-pot, and boiler in the depression between them, the fire blazing up between the logs, and doing our cooking for us quite well. The difficulty with that arrangement was, the logs soon burned out, requiring frequent renewal, which circumstance led to the adoption of the two iron bars, and they are simply perfect. There, you see, is room for three frying-pans, a potato-boiler, coffee-pot, and stewing-kettle, while the Dutch oven rests upon the hearth, with coals under and on top of it, giving as much cooking space as is afforded on the tops of the largest stoves. Then, the fire is so easily managed. George builds up a large one an hour

before the cooking is commenced, piling the wood under and on top of the bars, so that when it is burned down, a fine bed of coals occupies the space underneath, when he is capable of cooking *anything*, in my opinion, better than can be done on any stove in Christendom. Never use a blazing fire; it burns and blackens your utensils, smokes your food, and sets your fat on fire.

"If you like I will give you a few details of our cooking arrangements."

"Certainly, go on; I'm listening with all my might," said Charles, stretching himself out on the bench, and watching the blue rings of smoke ascending from his pipe.

"Well, you already know how the fireplace is built,—with stones piled up, covered with sods to prevent their bursting and flying into your dishes when hot, the two iron bars over the top, the large flat stone for a hearth, and——"

"Yes, yes, I understand all that," he interrupted.

"Very good; you see that chunk of fat pork spiked to the tree, near the fireplace?"

"Indeed do I, and wondered the first day I came here what the deuce it was there for."

"That is for convenience. All George has to do is to slice what is required for cooking purposes from the lower end of the chunk; then he always knows where to find it; the weather does not damage it in the least, and we use it for

frying our fish principally, cutting a very thin slice, placing it in a hot pan until the lard is all extracted, then laying them in it. The fish are first rolled in Indian meal, which gives them the brown color. George has a theory that it is best not to salt your trout until nearly done, as the salt prevents browning.

“But I have a sort of camp-made recipe book which I have prepared at odd intervals, here in camp, with the aid of my wife, which treats entirely of dishes suitable to our wants. If you desire you can have it copied, when I think all your needs in that direction will be supplied. It contains information upon preparing dishes mostly adapted to all of the summer months. When Hamlin and I first commenced camping here I did the cooking myself. I soon found that altogether too laborious. I liked to cook well enough but detested the dish-washing. Hamlin liked that occupation no better than I, and we soon began stealing away after dinner, with a cock-and-bull story of a large trout that claimed immediate attention somewhere in the neighborhood, leaving the dishes and pans for the remaining one to wash. This happened so frequently that some one became necessary for our comfort and cleanliness, so we now take George with us, and find it keeps him continually occupied in ministering to our wants. But here is the little manual referred to.”

CAMP RECIPES.

JOHNNY-CAKE.

Stir into a pint of corn-meal enough sweet milk to render it of the consistence of a "batter." Beat up two eggs; dissolve a well-filled teaspoon of baking powder in a little milk, then add eggs and the solution to the batter. Stir the mixture thoroughly, adding a tablespoonful of brown sugar dissolved in a little water, and a teaspoonful of salt. Get your Dutch oven hot by placing coals under it and on the lid. Grease it well with a piece of pork. Stir your batter again, rapidly, and turn into the oven. When well browned on top it is done—and delicious. If you have no milk, try it this way:

Take same quantity of meal, pour boiling water over it until quite wet. Add a tablespoonful of dissolved sugar, a teaspoonful of salt, a tablespoonful of melted butter, and two well-beaten eggs. Mix thoroughly. Heat and grease the oven as before, placing the mixture on the bottom, about an inch deep. Bake until brown. It's good.

BISCUIT.

One quart wheat flour; three teaspoonfuls baking powder; one teaspoonful salt. Mix all (dry)

thoroughly; then add butter the size of a hen's egg, and enough sweet milk to make a soft dough; knead thoroughly, and roll out (with a champagne bottle) to half an inch in thickness. Have your Dutch oven hot, grease it, then cut your dough with a tumbler and place the pieces in the oven. Bake twenty minutes. No woman in the land can make a better biscuit than can be made in that way.

GRIDDLE CAKES.

OF CORN MEAL.—One pint corn-meal; half cup of wheat flour; one teaspoonful salt; one teaspoonful baking powder; two beaten eggs. Mix with enough sweet milk to make a batter. Place your large, long-handled frying-pan on the fire, and grease it with a chunk of fat pork fastened in a split stick. When pan is hot, dip the batter in with large iron spoon, forming a half-dozen small cakes. Turn with your butcher knife. Or, cover the bottom of the pan with batter, forming one large cake; when done on one side, flop it over on the other. It's fun when you become expert at it.

If milk is not at hand, try it this way :

One pint meal, which scald with boiling water; mix with it half a teacupful of wheat flour, a teaspoonful salt, an even teaspoonful of *soda* (confound the stuff!—don't get too much), one beaten

egg. Add enough water to make a batter. Bake as before.

OF WHEAT FLOUR.—Three pints flour; two teaspoonfuls baking powder; four tablespoonfuls melted butter; three well-beaten eggs; one teaspoonful salt. Add enough sweet milk to form a batter. Dissolve the baking powder in a little milk and stir it in the very last thing. Bake as you did the others.

I would tell you how to make them without milk, but blamed if I know.

MILK TOAST.

Oh, pshaw! any fellow knows how to make that! Just toast your bread and pour hot milk over it, in which you have placed a chunk of butter and some salt. That's easy.

That will be in the bread line, now let us tackle the

POTATOES.

Keep a good supply of them on hand; better get out of bread than potatoes. First let us have them boiled—with their jackets on. *Never* peel a potato to boil it. Wash, and put them in your boiler with cold water. When they have boiled long enough to let a fork go into them, pour the water off, allowing them to remain in the boiler

near the fire. When they crack open, "go for 'em," as Fritz says. If there is anything better than a boiled potato for breakfast, Hamlin and I have never discovered it. Boil all your vessel will hold. Then pare, slice, and fry the remaining ones with salt pork for supper. They are delicious with fried fish. To bake them, put them in your Dutch oven, and, when done, take them out again. Nothing easier.

If you want to

FRY RAW POTATOES, peel, cut into very thin slices, then allow them to lie in cold water for several hours (overnight is best). Fry out enough of the salt pork to give you quite a depth of hot fat in your pan. Take the slices of potatoes out of the water, dry in a towel, and drop them into the hot fat, one at a time. When quite brown take out, and eat them.

When you have a quantity of cold, boiled potatoes, slice them, and

WARM THEM IN MILK, with pepper, salt, and a chunk of butter. Set them off as soon as they come to a boil. This will do for the potatoes.

Now as to the

FISH.

I have already indicated how they may be fried, and in another place have spoken of steaming

them in rolls of paper placed under the coals. I know of no better way to cook trout, unless they be very large. Should you be fortunate enough to catch a fifteen-incher, roll him up in a cloth and boil in a kettle of water, well salted. When done, place the fish in a dish and cover with "drawn butter." This is made by beating two tablespoonfuls of flour and a cup of butter to a cream, over which a pint of boiling water is poured. Set it on the fire and let it come to a boil, when it is done. The trout may not like this dressing, but *you* will.

EELS.—Skin, score, and fry them. (I insist upon the skinning.)

Another good way, making a most delicious morsel, is to remove the backbone, cut the eel into pieces about two inches long, covering them in water, adding a teaspoonful of strong vinegar, or a slice of lemon; cover the stew-pan, boil half an hour, pour the water off, drain, return to the pan, supplying fresh water and vinegar as before, and boil until tender; drain, then add cream (if it is to be had) or milk enough to make a respectable stew. Season with pepper and salt (no butter), boil again for a few minutes, and serve upon hot, dry toast. Goodness, but it's good! Just try it! Now for a

FISH CHOWDER.—Cover the bottom of your boiler with slices of pickled pork that have been slightly fried. Over this place a layer of trout

that have had their backbones removed. Over the fish strew a light layer of chopped onions, one of sliced potatoes, then another of split crackers, the whole well sprinkled with pepper and salt. Repeat this with another layer of fish, onions, potatoes, crackers, and seasoning until the chowder has assumed the proportions desired. Sprinkle flour over the top of all, then pour over enough water to just cover the mixture. Place on a slow fire and stew gently. Three-quarters of an hour will cook one of moderate size. Then take up the chowder and thicken the gravy with a tablespoonful of flour rubbed into a teacupful of butter. Bring to a boil, and pour over the chowder. Add a little sherry to the gravy, if you have it in camp. Very good, but not recommended for dyspeptics.

GAME AND CHICKEN.

If you are in a region of game, and can kill a duck, partridge, or pigeon now and then, a primitive way to roast them, and one that is quite satisfactory, is to draw the duck or partridge, allowing the feathers to remain. Inside the bird place a slice of pickled pork, pepper and salt. Now smear the bird all over with wet clay, and when completely enveloped, cover him in the hot coals. Let him remain a half-hour or more, then break the clay open, when the feathers will

adhere to the shell, completely skinning the bird, permitting it to roll upon your plate hot and savory. Then eat it. Small birds can be split down the back, well seasoned, and broiled over the hot coals. When done, smear them with butter and serve on toast. Partridge or chicken will be found nice when placed in the pot, well seasoned, covered with water, a lid put over the pot, then allowed to simmer for about two hours. Stir in a tablespoonful of flour and two of catsup, then simmer another half-hour. Don't know what you call it when done,—a sort of stew perhaps,—but I do know it to be excellent as an article of diet.

A FRICASSEE OF CHICKEN is made by cutting the fowl into pieces, parboiling them in water enough to cover. When tender, remove from the pot and drain. Fry two or three slices of pickled pork, brown. Sprinkle the pieces of chicken with salt, pepper, and flour, and fry to a dark brown in the pork fat. Take the chicken up, and stir into the fat in which it was fried half a cup of dry flour, stirring it until it becomes a dark brown, then pour on the liquor in which the chicken was boiled, bringing the mixture to a boil. Place your chicken in a deep dish and pour the gravy over it.

Doesn't that sound good?

Now let us see what we can do with

EGGS.

First, we can boil them; any fellow will know enough for that, so we will try them

SCRAMBLED.—Beat up half a dozen eggs, stirring into them half a cup of milk and a teaspoonful of butter. Salt and pepper to taste, pour into the frying-pan containing a little pork grease, hold over the fire and stir until it thickens.

AN OMELET may be constructed by beating up three eggs with two tablespoonfuls of milk and a little salt. Heat the frying-pan hot, drop into it a small piece of butter, and when melted, turn in your mixture, holding it over the fire until cooked a light brown, when it can be folded over and served on a hot dish.

MEATS.

SALT PORK.—Cut it into slices, and pour boiling water over it. Turn off the water and fry until brown on both sides. Hamlin says it's fine. I take no stock in it myself.

HAM AND EGGS.—Slice the ham; let it stand in boiling water for ten minutes, then fry in the pan for ten minutes more. Take the ham up. Break the eggs, one at a time, and place in the hot ham fat. Fry until the white portion is done. Lift out carefully with a spoon, and place the eggs, unbroken, on the ham. If you like it—eat it.

BEEFSTEAK.—Place it on your broiler, and hold over the hot coals, turning frequently, for ten minutes. Place on a hot dish, pepper, salt, and smear with butter. Serve immediately.

BEEFSTEAK SMOTHERED IN ONIONS.—Now we'll have a dish that makes me hungry to think of. In a large pan containing the fat of salt pork place half a dozen large, thinly-sliced onions. Fry them brown, which process will require an hour or more. Then put your steak in the pan, covering it with the onions. Place a cover over the pan, and fry the steak until done. Take it up, spreading the onions over it. This is one of the attractions that brings Hamlin to camp every year.

VEAL FRICASSEE.—Fry several slices of salt pork brown. Take it from the pan, and in the fat place your slices of veal. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and fry brown, then take it up and mix in the pan, with the hot fat, two tablespoonfuls of dry flour. Stir until well browned, then add two cups of boiling water, and boil and stir for twenty minutes. Pour this gravy over your veal and place it before the campers.

RICE.

BOILED RICE is a good dish in camp, and always acceptable and wholesome. Wash half a pint of rice and place in your stew-pan, with enough water to cover it well. Salt it, cover,

and set the pan in a larger one containing water. Boil thirty minutes. The double pan is to prevent scorching. Serve with sugar and milk.

TOMATOES.

STEWED.—If canned, pour them into a stew-pan, seasoning with pepper, salt, and a heaping tablespoonful of sugar (for a quart can of them). Simmer for two hours, until they become quite thick. Stir often. When ready to take up, stir in a teaspoonful of butter.

PUDDINGS.

OF BREAD.—Gather up your stale bread, which soak for an hour in two quarts of sweet milk. Mash the bread fine, removing the lumpy pieces. Beat together four eggs, a heaping cupful of sugar, a pinch of salt, and a little grated nutmeg. Stir this into your bread and milk, adding a few raisins. Place this in a two-quart tin pan, which set in your Dutch oven, and bake for about three-quarters of an hour.

OF CORN-STARCH.—Place one quart of milk in a basin, which set in your stew-pan, with boiling water. When the milk boils, stir into it four tablespoonfuls of corn-starch, mixed in a cup of milk, and a pinch of salt. Stir thoroughly, and cook for three minutes. Serve with sugar and cream or milk.

BAKED BEANS.

Soak a quart of the small pea-beans overnight. Pour off the water, and place them over the fire with six quarts of cold water and a pound chunk of salt pork. Boil half an hour, then drain and place in the Dutch oven, gashing the pork with a knife, and allowing it to touch the bottom, putting the beans around it. Now pour over the top a tablespoonful of molasses, sprinkling in a teaspoonful of salt. Add boiling water, just to cover. Bake ten hours, adding water should they become dry.

That bill of fare is sufficiently elaborate, so let us have something to drink.

COFFEE.

Buy the *best*. Take a mixture of Java and Mocha, two-thirds of the first to one of the last. Take a tablespoonful for each individual, and another good, large one for the pot. Mix it in a tin cup with an egg, shell and all. Pour a teacupful of cold water on it, allowing it to stand, covered, overnight. In the morning, place it in the coffee-pot and pour two coffee-cups of water (for each person) over it, and bring to a boil. Set it off a few minutes before pouring.

TEA.

Use the best black tea. Scald out your tea-pot, then put in a teaspoonful of tea for each person. Pour over it a cup of boiling water. Steep in a hot place,—being careful not to allow it to boil. In fifteen minutes pour in boiling water enough for the party.

This chapter would not be complete without some reference to sickness and accidents. Sometimes sickness occurs even in the woods. One of the party might fracture an arm or leg, encounter the fangs of a venomous snake, or a child might fall into the stream and lose its life for lack of prompt and judicious treatment.

In case of drowning, hold the person up by the heels for a few seconds, that the water may run from the mouth and the tongue fall forward, leaving entrance to windpipe clear. Let others prepare warm blankets,—if to be had,—otherwise, any covering, wiping the body dry and applying friction to chest and limbs with the hands. If the patient does not breathe freely, lose no time in aiding him in the following manner: Take hold of his right arm, extending it above his head, at the same time rolling him upon his right side. Put ammonia (hartshorn) to his nostrils, and take hold of his tongue with handkerchief or napkin, drawing it well forward. All this, while others rub chest and limbs vigorously

under cover. Allow him to rest on his side while you count five, then turn him on his back, arms by his side, count five, turn upon his side again, extending arm as before. Repeat these movements until respiration is established. Let one attend to holding the tongue forward, wiping the mouth, and applying the ammonia. Another do the turning of the body, while the rest of the party attend to warming the body with friction, blankets, and bottles of hot water. Do not abandon your trials to resuscitate for at least an hour.

BROKEN LIMBS

occurring, select a sapling of as near the size of the leg as possible. Take the bark from it in two pieces, twelve inches long, or the length of the limb above or below the knee. A chestnut sapling is the best. Cover these two half-round splints with pieces of cloth. Rip up the trousers' leg with a knife. Tear a strip from a sheet, two inches wide, running the entire length. Roll it up firmly. You are now supplied with all necessary appliances to do a first-class job in bone-setting. Three persons will be required to do the job successfully. The patient is lying upon the ground. Let the strongest man sit at his feet, placing his stockinged foot between his legs at their junction, while he grasps the ankle of the broken limb with one hand and the foot with the

other. Now exert a steady pull, preventing the patient's body moving toward you, with your foot. Pull with all your might—it will not hurt him—while the “surgeon” of the party presses the bones in place with his hands. When they assume their natural positions, the fact will be announced by a sort of thud, felt by the man at the foot as well as the surgeon. Now let the third party apply the splints, one in front, the other to the rear. Do not let their edges meet by half an inch; secure them in place with your roller bandage, being careful not to get it too tight. Construct a litter of two poles, across which tie broad strips of green bark. Carry your patient to camp, or to the railway station for home, where a competent surgeon will attend to him. If a surgeon is convenient to camp, these splints will answer every purpose, and the patient will do quite as well swinging in his hammock as at home.

RATTLESNAKE BITES

are best treated by applying a cloth saturated with liquor ammonia over the bite, and immediately administering large doses of whiskey. Let the patient drink all he will hold, or until intoxication is induced. Many physicians doubt the efficacy of this treatment. I have seen it employed in several instances and am confident of its success. It acts upon perfectly scientific

principles, sustaining the nervous system under the shock induced by the poison.

SICKNESS.

Take with you in a small box, adapted to the size of the bottles, the following medicines, put up in four-ounce phials, with rubber stoppers:

Essence of peppermint.

Paregoric.

Laudanum.

Tincture of Jamaica ginger.

Spirits of camphor.

Tincture of capsicum.

Liquor ammonia.

Take also a bottle of Tarrant's Seltzer Aperient, and a bottle of cathartic pills. Seidlitz powders cannot be kept in camp.

Also have prepared the following cough mixture, to be used in case of "cold upon the lungs," exciting cough:

R Syrup of squills,

Syrup of Tolu,

Syrup of ipecac,

Wine of antimony, of each, one drachm;

Paregoric, two drachms.

Mix, and label "Cough Mixture." Dose, ten to fifteen drops every two to four hours, as symptoms require.

FOR SPRAINS, mix equal parts from your laud-

anum, camphor, capsicum, and ammonia bottles, and rub upon the sore place. Good also for rheumatic or neuralgic pains, toothache (applied to cavity or gum of tooth), etc.

FOR DIARRHŒA.—Take of paregoric and tincture of ginger, each, a teaspoonful; place in a little water, and add ten drops tincture of capsicum. Repeat the dose in two hours, if necessary. Should this not arrest the discharges, place a tablespoonful of wheat flour in half a cup of cold water. Mix thoroughly, adding ten drops liquor ammonia. Drink at one dose. Repeat it in a few hours, if necessary.

For pain in stomach or bowels, take a teaspoonful of tincture ginger and paregoric in a little water.

For colic or belly-ache in children, give sweetened peppermint water, with five to ten drops of paregoric added.

Those subject to bowel ailments should wear a broad, heavy flannel bandage over the abdomen. This is particularly advisable in children.

FOR HEADACHE.—Eat less, and take a tablespoonful of seltzer in a cup of water before breakfast.

FOR TOOTHACHE.—Moisten a pledget of cotton with the liquor ammonia and pack the cavity of the tooth with it. Or, dip the point of a pine stick in the ammonia, then in the tooth cavity. The ache will stop instantly.

Mosquito, midge, and black fly bites are annoying. Apply equal parts of liquor ammonia and sweet oil to allay the irritation. To prevent their attacks I have found no satisfactory application. Tincture of pennyroyal rubbed upon hands, face, and neck, is the best preventive I have tried. To drive them out of the tent, build a "smudge" and smoke them out before bedtime. Take no light inside afterward to attract them.

Change your wet clothes for dry ones as soon as you come off the stream. Do not sit at your meals in wet garments. Air and sun the bed-clothing every day if possible. Do not overeat. Do not eat when very tired. Rest first. Drink no liquors if you would feel well and have a clear head. Coffee and tea are better than wine or whiskey. Go to bed early, sleep well, and have a good time. Don't get sick if you can help it, and take no medicine until you must.



CHAPTER XVI.

IDLE HOURS.

The Sanctum — Communings with Nature — Homeward Bound.

ACROSS the creek, through the clump of willows, a pathway has been cut leading to a densely-shaded bank where shapely beeches form a grove. From among them a tall pine towers, an artistic centre-piece to the group below. Against the largest tree a plank is secured, serving for a seat. Before this seat is driven a green stake, upon which rests the head and rim of a cheese-box, forming a convenient writing-desk. This is the sanctum from which I am writing.

A gentle wind is waving the branches about me, permitting the entrance of dots of sunshine that dance and twinkle over the table and on the grass at my feet. Down from the tall pine comes a soft, gentle sighing, strangely soothing, inclining me to a dreamy revery. Frogs croak in the pond; insects chirp among the grass-blades; birds sing from the tree-tops, and twitter and hop from branch to ground, fearless in their sociability. .

Along the mountain road, beyond and above

the camping-grounds, I hear the measured tread of horses' hoofs and the dull, rumbling roll of wagon-wheels, an occasional thump and grating slide revealing the rockiness of the way. Voices are heard, every word plainly distinguishable while the travellers stop to comment upon the beauty of our camp as seen from the mountain heights. In some distant field, in the valley behind me, a farmer plods wearily the furrow, scolding and cursing his stupid oxen.

From below, the dam sends back its steady roar and the clattering old mill its grinding, grumbling groans. There, upon a high tree-top, calls a robin to his mate, and higher still the lark sings cheerily a carol to the perfect day. Butterflies wing their way through my bower, and bees come laden with their sweets from the blooming clover, whose fragrance pervades the air. Honey-suckles entwine the bushes before me, daisies bespangle the green sward, and violets greet me everywhere. Upon the low ground to my left, tall, graceful ferns sway plume-like, in the wind, the maidenhair keeping them company beneath.

From the meadow comes the merry laughter of children busy with their play, and from the mountain stream the exultant shout of the lucky fisherman. Winding through the crooked valley, I hear the discordant rattle of approaching cars, and now the echoes, from hill to hill, of the loco-

motive whistle. Now and then, the clear metallic ring from the railway iron, struck by the trackman's hammer, reverberates through the valley and along the mountain crags.

Through the branches of my grove and over the tops of the willows that border the creek is seen our island home, the white tents peeping out from the surrounding bushes. On the small island, before the point, stands a tall and graceful pole, at the peak of which Dixey has secured a weather-vane, pointed and fastened permanently toward the south, the direction from which comes the fairest weather. There also hangs our flag, its crimson stripes doubly beautiful against the green mountain-side. If I look to my right, through the willow branches, I catch the sparkle of the sunlight upon the rippling water. Overhead, at my feet, round about me, rustle and tremble the ever-changing leaves.

Leading from the pathway to the mound where I am seated, steps are terraced in the bank. Two chipmunks are chasing one another over them in rollicking sport. Now they stop to scrutinize the mysterious writer at his desk, approaching in short jumps, stopping between the leaps to flirt their tails and to chatter their curiosity. Venturing a closer inspection, they scamper away when I inadvertently move foot or hand, returning again, reassured by my quietness, to stare me in the face with comical expressions of countenance.

When I change my position, they run under the root of a tree, to their nests, then peer out to see what I am next about to do.

A red-headed woodpecker has just alighted upon the pine before me, so close that I could touch him with a fishing-rod. He pecks away at the bark, then thrusts his long tongue into a crevice and draws forth a grub, impaled upon its barbed point. A movement reveals to him my presence, when he darts from the tree uttering a wild note of terror.

Looking about in quest of another acquaintance, wondering who or what the next one will be, I discover a parting of the grass a short distance away, and sit perfectly quiet, watching for and speculating upon the character of my new visitor. He does not keep me long in suspense, but bounds directly upon the bare place by the terrace, revealing himself,—a woodchuck. At sight of him the chipmunks dive into their retreat under the root, giving a peculiar chir-r-r-rip! as they go, leaving me alone with the new-comer. He seems to be conscious of an intruder's presence upon his domain, for he stops short, sits upon his hind legs and snuffs the air, grimacing queerly the while. Presently he gets a glimpse of my scarlet fez, and, as I move my head leisurely from side to side, he imitates the movement. A bird flies noisily through the bushes, at which he takes alarm, scudding away to a

safer distance, where he stands erect upon his hind feet, peering at me over the grass-tops.

I nod my head to him; the fez seems to fascinate him and he returns for another inspection, sitting upon his hind feet, holding his black paws meekly before him, as would a dog trained to "sit up." I move my head again to the right and left; he does the same, following the movement with his bright black eyes. I bow to him, —he repeats it quite gracefully, shyly getting down upon all-fours preparatory to a successful retreat should the movement become at all threatening. Here we sit and stare, and nod, and wink, and "make faces" at one another until a bumble-bee comes buzzing about my ears and insists upon alighting upon my nose, which familiarity I resent by a vigorous sweep of the fez, the demonstration causing the chuck to bound into the willows with a precipitation and speed creditable to his short legs.

Hardly has he departed before several creatures claim my attention: a woodcock, alighting among the willows on the bank, seems to be endowed with a reasoning faculty; it is unsatisfactory to ascribe his behavior to the dictation of instinct, for I but now saw him walk, in his dignified manner, to a worm-hole, tap with his bill upon the ground, when out backs a worm, which he secures, and, as he points his bill skyward, closing his great round eyes as though giving thanks

for the meal, with an effort of deglutition and a crooking of his neck, the morsel disappears down his throat. Immediately another is searched for and found, when the tapping is repeated, and no worm responding to the summons, he thrusts his long bill, clear to his eyes, into the earth, withdrawing it with the worm secured.

Tiny birds seek the shade of my sheltered nook, industriously collecting the green worms that drop by their slender silken cords from branch and twig. One bird I trace to the home of her young, where she sits upon the edge of the nest, seemingly puzzled to determine in which greedy, widely-opened mouth to drop the luscious morsel. Yonder, a spider and large black ant are having a battle for the mastery that promises to completely demolish the handsome web that sparkled so brilliantly in this morning's sun. While I watch the contest, behold! a little brown bird descends from a limb and snatches them both, again practically illustrating the theory of the "survival of the fittest," and the imperious rule of the strong over the weak.

The sun is rapidly ascending the heavens, sending down his direct rays that parch the earth, making the stones and sand upon the beach hot to your feet and the air oppressive to your lungs. The campers are all lying about in the coolest bits of shade, bewailing the condition of their friends in the city, while Fritz and the dog are

having a frolic in the water. I notice the birds begin to hang their wings, betokening the heat outside our shelter, and the crows on the mountain-side have grown too lazy to caw and clatter longer.

There! I hear George's horn! The dinner-hour has arrived, so I pass down the pathway, cross the foot-bridge, and join the campers on the other shore, who have now aroused themselves to partake of the mid-day meal.

The sanctum is closed for the day.

"We propose to invade your camp to-morrow for a trout dinner. Disappoint us at your peril."

This brief message, in familiar chirography, bearing the well-known initials of two good friends, came to us upon a postal-card, one evening at the supper-table.

Not a trout remained in our ice-box. Indeed, but few could be found in the creek willing to fasten themselves upon our hooks, for the season was wellnigh spent, and the termination of the week would bring our vacation to a close.

"Well," Hamlin said, "I guess we can find enough trout between here and Pleasant Stream to supply their wants. If we fail, we'll give them suckers,—they won't know the difference."

In the morning, Hamlin and I took down our rods and started toward the Slope Wall, over the ground that never yet had failed to supply us in an emergency like this.

The water was as clear as crystal, the sun shining brightly, and the trout shy and thoroughly familiar with our leaders and flies. Few of them remained, of regulation size, that had not aching jaws and lacerated lips from testing the quality of our tackle.

As we walked along the high bank, we could now and then see a frightened trout darting about frantically in search of a hiding-place.

"See them scud!" Hamlin exclaimed. "If we do not quit these waters soon, every blessed trout will die of starvation. I observed one to-day cautiously rising to a natural fly. He flapped it under the water with his tail, then watched it from under a stone to note its behavior. He turned it over with his nose, and sailed around it a dozen times, eying it the while with grave suspicion, doubtless expecting a prick from it every moment. When the poor fly regained the surface of the water, that trout rushed pell-mell down stream as though a shark were in pursuit. I doubt whether he stopped short of Du Bois's dam."

"I have frequently seen trout rising to the natural fly, flapping them under the water with their tails, then, wheeling quickly about, take the disabled insect in their mouths," I said. "I imagine they do this in play, sometimes, for I have observed them leaving the flies occasionally when they had so swamped them."

Chatting upon the habits of the trout and kin-

dred topics, we soon reached the Slope Wall. Hamlin seated himself upon the bank to arrange his leader and adjust fresh flies. The roar of the rapid prevented his hearing my approach, and as I walked behind him, my line caught in a twig, giving the reel a sudden rattle just behind his head. Quick as a flash he bounded into the creek, leaving his tackle upon the bank.

“What under the sun is the matter with you?” I asked.

“Matter? Matter enough! I thought a rattlesnake had me by the ear! That confounded reel of yours is the best imitation of that venomous reptile I ever had the misfortune of listening to.”

The fishing proving poor, and the prospect of supplying our friends' wants for dinner on the morrow looking unfavorable, I left my companion at his favorite pool and walked to the mouth of Pleasant Stream. I fished faithfully from its mouth to a point above Hunter's mill without catching a trout of respectable size. Not wishing to return until our wants were supplied, I sought a shady spot on the bank and lay down, waiting for the evening shadows to fall upon the stream and for the trout to rise to the natural fly.

About five o'clock I noticed rises under the banks, by some limbs hanging close to the pool, against which the flies were driven by the wind and then fell into the water. At such places large trout are apt to lie, and here I found them.

I commenced casting, and was rewarded in an unusual manner. A better evening for trout I do not remember. Almost every cast brought a beauty to my landing-net. How I wished for my friend! I wondered too whether he was having equal sport. On up the stream I went, catching a trout from every pool, unconscious of the approaching night. A large trout rose, creating a wonderful splash in a pool beyond me. I lengthened my line as I waded near him. After one or two casts, he came rushing down the pool to meet my flies. I struck him before I was aware of it. What a splendid fight he gave me! When at last I had him secure in my net, I looked about and was amazed to find it almost dark, and I six miles, at least, from camp. I hurriedly walked down the stream, but it grew dark so rapidly that I soon was unable to find my way. I came to a deserted, rickety stable. I examined it and found the mow filled with old hay. I at once resolved to put up there for the night, and built a fire by the creek, dried my clothing, and cleaned my fish. Hanging my creel to the limb of a tree and resting my rod by its side, I mounted the mow, and buried myself in the hay, thankful for so comfortable a lodging-place. Lying there, looking from the square hole in the loft, I watched the moon rising from behind the mountain crest, sending its silvery light through the tree-tops, until its round, full face was seen in the clear heavens. Bats

lazily flopped about, feeding upon the beetles that went buzzing through the air. A fox barked and whined somewhere on the hill-side, porcupines gnawed the logs in the stable below, while the whip-poor-wills made the hills ring with their sharp cries. Conscious of my loneliness, the scene was a weird one, and I lay there wondering what my companions would think of my absence. Presently, some sort of insects began creeping over my hands, and played hide-and-go-seek down my back and through my hair. Their titillations became unbearable after a while and drove me from the mow. I went to the creek, built a fire upon a large flat rock in the middle of the stream, and lay down upon the warm surface, with a boulder for a pillow; and there I remained during the entire weary night, listening to the hooting and screeching of owls, and the occasional screams of unknown animals, until the day began to break, lighting up sufficiently for me to plod my way through the stream toward the camp. At four o'clock in the morning, I arrived in sight of the smoke curling aloft above the camp-grounds, when I sent a "toot toot" upon the morning air that possessed a wonderful clearness, and brought responsive shouts from my companions, who were already up planning an excursion in search of me.

Hamlin had set a line for eels during the night, and paddled up the pond with a half-dozen of the

squirming captives in the bottom of the boat. Upon seeing me, he shouted,—

“I feared you would not be successful in securing enough trout for dinner, so I concluded to dine the company upon eels. We may not pass them for trout, being so slender, but they will find them delicious, nevertheless, as are all fish taken from these waters.”

Thad Jr. and Charles had spent the previous afternoon in snaring suckers from the deep pond. They now produced their catch for my inspection, exhibiting ten monstrous fellows, any one of which would have made a meal for any hungry person. Charles declared that there was not a sucker in the pond that did not have a ring around his tail,—a badge showing his escape from the ordeal of the wire snare. Even the suckers began to fear us, and no longer rooted about within reach of our poles.

One of the campers busied himself during the morning in preparing a basket of wild-flowers to be sent to his wife, as a birthday present, by our returning guests. The basket was woven from willow branches, lined with moss, and filled with most exquisite wild-flowers,—laurel-buds, rhododendrons, violets, daisies, meadow-rue, flowering grasses, forget-me-nots, honeysuckles, and fifty other varieties, artistically arranged and surrounded with a wreath of blackberry blossoms.

Our friends arrived by the eleven o'clock train.

We met them at the station and paddled them to camp, where they were treated to a trout dinner. Remaining long enough to hear our evening concert from the birds on the mountain-side, they left us, with many expressions of delight, complimenting our grounds, wondering at the array of wild-flowers blooming about us, and charmed with the camper's life.

The day appointed for striking camp has arrived. Rods are disjointed, wiped dry, and placed in their cases; lines, reels, and fly-books packed away; bedclothes folded and stowed in the great trunk. Bed-ticks are emptied in the open in the rear of the grounds, the straw burned, that no wandering tramps may desecrate our grounds. The final breakfast, at six in the morning, is eaten, and all hands are busy with the several duties assigned them. George has washed, scoured, and packed the tin-ware.* The tents

* I must here call attention to a new device in tin-ware for camping purposes which I have had constructed since my list of table-ware was written. Two pressed tin plates are soldered together with a half-inch rim around their edges, forming a double plate, with a space between the upper and lower one. On the edge is a half-inch hole, with a rim to hold a cork. At the opposite side an awl-hole is punched. We have six of these double plates, and when in use, they are filled with boiling water. This arrangement keeps your food warm as long as you choose to sit at table. I have three larger ones, a foot long and eight inches wide in the centre, oval in shape, and

are down, neatly folded and packed in the camp-chest, on top of the cooking utensils. Tent-poles, pegs, and the forked sticks used for the dining-room canopy are tied in bundles and carried to the rear of the grounds, and left standing against the old stub for use next year. Jim Crow sits perched on the handle of the basket, much disturbed by the confusion and the forsaken appearance of our surroundings.

The "Great Eastern" is at her dock, floating gracefully under her load. In the centre the camp-chest, the great trunk, the smaller trunk, and the basket with Jim perched on top. The two boys at the bow, holding a flag. Hamlin, Charles, Thad Jr., Dixey, and Robert all on board, with Squire Bodine at the stern, paddle in hand, ready for the start. George and I betake ourselves to the smaller boat. Then, with three cheers for the dear old camp, we ply our paddles and shoot into the deep water of the pond.

As we start, we hear ominous rumblings beyond the western mountain, and before we are

with covers. The intervening space is one inch on the bottom, tapering to a point at the rim. When filled with boiling water from your teakettle, they will remain so hot for hours, as to require them to be handled with cloths. In these, we serve our meats, fish, potatoes, and other articles of diet that are best kept hot. Do not heat your tin plates by the fire. You will not only ruin them, but find them cold by the time they reach the table. All the campers are enthusiastic in their praise of the new plates.

half-way on our journey to the mill, great drops of rain lash the pond into a foam. Below the otter-slide, we paddle under shelter of the projecting rocks until the shower has passed, then resume our journey towards the station. As we touch the landing by the mill, William and John appear upon the bank with the oxen and stone-boat. But a few minutes are required to disembark and land our baggage at the depot, where we arrive in ample season for the nine o'clock train north.

Dear reader, having landed you at our starting-point, may I indulge the hope that the recital of the incidents of our vacation has been as interesting to you as it has been enjoyable and profitable to us? If so it be, perhaps one day we may meet in some shady, secluded dell, by a rippling mountain brook, and relate to one another, around the camp-fire, the joyous experiences of those in love with Nature and the delightful recreation of camping out.



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