

at the hour of four o'clock a.m. on the morning of Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 1898.

Some of the party went to bed for two or three hours and had just got to sleep when they were awakened by being told - three o'clock - and the cab will be here in half an hour. Of course, as might have been expected, they were sleepier than if they had not been to bed at all, and they not been gentle followers of the Gentle Craft would have been crabby in exact proportion to their sleepiness.



The Laird, and the Lawyer, and the Southron, whom, by the bye, we christened Southron because he came of Aberdeenshire stock, these three, after feeding the inner man with solids till 11.30. qualified the solids with a wee drap over a few games of billiards till the hour of 3 a.m. and breakfast arrived. The Laird having gummed his last words on the face of the dining room clock, gathered himself and his luggage and his colleagues into a growler and bawled off to the rendez-vous.

Of course, as always happens if a party of more than six people propose to go altogether by a given train - one must be last and in this case the last man didn't arrive at all.

It was suggested that he either had 'La Grippe' - or was in the grip of Morpheus - owing to being somewhat 'fu' earlier on - but being with accurate information the real reason is still what it was then - a matter of conjecture.

The Chaperone we recognise as the Chief and his pro-di-gious efforts to save the bawbees of the company of his friends at the expense of the bawbees of the company of the railway train, call for some suitable recognition.



— We may on some future occasion call his able services into requisition so will refrain from proclaiming what he did and how he did it.

Our Saloon, which was to be our home for twelve mortal hours was liberally supplied with genial company, tobacco, cards and whiskey, and time flew till at 10 o'clock we sat down to a sumptuous breakfast in the Refreshment room at Inverness, specially telegraphed for by the courteous station master at Kingussie at the suggestion of the Chief.

In due time, which in railway parlance means ~~some~~ time more or less distantly removed from the appointed time we arrived at the end of our railway journey at Fairsin where we were met by our Host, Angus, with a waggonette for the chattels and a pony trap for the goods. The weather which had been very summery all day now turned to rain and it was in a very moist condition that we reached our journey's end at Melnich Hotel after our 18 mile drive. Mrs Angus shortly put us into good form by laying on the table a repast to which every one did justice and felt that after all life was worth living.

The coffee, and a talk with mine host, ancient rivers, lochs and glies brought bedtime — and we all — yes, all, not excluding the Lawyer — we all slept the sleep of the just.

Breakfast at 8.30. and away to the conflict with wily salmon and trout: Angus took the Laird in tow for to catch a salmon — i.e. — not for Angus to use the Laird as a ground bait but to guide the Laird to bait the fish; The Chief took the Jock Boy along also to catch fish,

the Spinster walked the Southron off to a Loch and the Lawyer betook himself to the tidal waters of the Halladale for sea trout.

The company assembled at 7.30. for dinner. And now for the experiences.

The Laird avowed that his education had been neglected and that he was not equal to throwing a fly with a telegraph pole and a clothes line, with a cable drum for a reel, and so he had devoted most of his attention to the trout - much to their sorrow.

The Chief and the Fat Boy had a similar experience and brought home brown trout.

The Lawyer had the best basket of sea and brown trout.



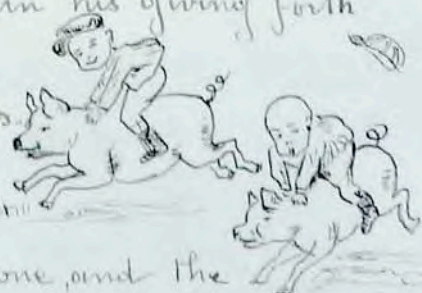
The Spinster and the Southron whipped Loch Achrain, the Spinster caught a brace with his fly and the Southron caught a single with his jigger - then over the moor down to the river where a few more brown trout and a sea trout of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lb made up the day's catch.

Dinner and exchange of experiences over, cafe noir and the weed became the order of the day - with all but the Laird who with the "reasonable pretext" of 'Lucretius' esconced himself in an easy chair by the fireside, and, presently the dinner on the top of the telegraph pole resulted in his giving forth audible but inarticulate, mellifluous and rhythmic sounds.

"Tired nature's sweet restorer,

Balm Sleep."

The dinner lay heavy on more than one, and the soporific could not be dispelled even by cafe noir - but







but the climax was reached  
when a yell from the Whist party announced that the  
Lawyer had so far departed from the path of rectitude  
and wakefulness as to trump his partner's ace.  
The uproar awoke the Laird who mildly remarked that he  
thought he must have dozed off to sleep and was it not  
time for .... no, it would not be fair, because these  
lines might fall beneath the hypnotic vision of the fair  
fanet and then what would become of the poor Laird.  
Never again would he be permitted to go away by  
his vessel. So we draw the curtain - or rather light  
the candles and retire to bed and hot-water-bottles.  
What a comfort a hot water bottle is to a married man  
when is away from home - alone.  
Thus ended Good Friday. On Saturday the Laird  
went up the river by his vessel and landed a good  
basket of brown and sea trout.  
The Chief went off to Bourie in order that he  
might once more join the Chieftain in his Sabbath  
six mile walk to Kirk.



The Lawyer and the Kat Boy  
went To Loch na h-aorach and the  
Spinster trotted the Southron to Loch na  
Seilge. The reason for taking this last  
loch on the Saturday being that it was  
rigorously preserved for the ~~moner~~ lessee of the  
shooting who was expected on the Monday  
and it was thought best to sample his  
fish before he came, just to see that  
everything was alright.



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The jigger accounted for a brace of good fish,  
but the wind being high an adjournment to the  
river was carried unanimously - calling  
for the other party en route and soliciting  
a lift across the loch when one of the rowlocks  
gave out and so put an end to their loch fishing  
for the day, so the quartet adjourned to the river  
with satisfactory results.



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Sunday opened bright and clear with high  
wind that abated towards evening.



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At 10.30. we five set off to walk across the moors

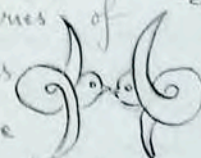
to Peay fondly imagining that at the self-same  
hour the Chief was en route for the Kirk and four and  
a half hours devotional exercise, but alas and alackady  
"The best laid plans o' mice ~~any~~ men gang aft a-gley."

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for at that very hour we afterwards learned through  
a little judicious cross-examination by the Lawyer,

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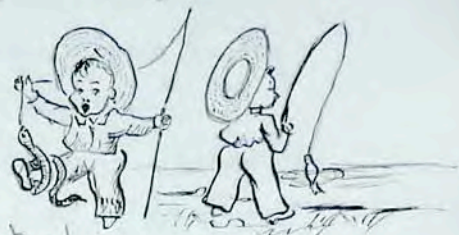
the immaculate Chief was deep in the mysteries of  
salmon flies. The hills, and moors, burns  
and lochs, the bays and headlands of the  
mainland - the evermoving sea and the beetling  
cliffs of the Orkneys made a never to be forgotten impres-  
sion upon the minds and imagination of all.



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Coming to a bonnie moorland burn, to the amazement  
 to the and horror of the more ancient  
 pilgrims — the Lawyer produced from  
 his pocket a bag of 'reduns' and the  
 Southron gut and hooks, and these two  
 giddy and demoralized beings actually tied  
 corks on to their walking sticks and fished — fished on the  
 Sabbath — and what is more produced specimens of  
 pretty brook trout which were all duly returned with  
 the exception of one greedy beggar who tried to digest the  
 hook as well as the worm. Although the old 'uns rolled  
 up the whites of their eyes and looked awfu' guid they were  
 not merely religiously but positively spiritually inclined and  
 smacked their lips over a drop of real Edinburgh which the  
 Spinster produced. He's got an awfully keen taste for the  
 Crautur has this same Spinster and very nearly upset every body's  
 taste by adversely criticising every bottle of whiskey that came  
 to table and ordering a fresh brand next time.



He and the Laird got to very high words one night about  
 a pot still and a coffin and any unprejudiced observer  
 could not but conclude that the earthy taste that so many  
 appreciate must of course come from the coffin still — though  
 who but a Goth or a Heilandman would brew his liquor in  
 a coffin it is difficult to imagine. The feelings of the  
 Southron were so lacerated by this horrible disclosure that  
 he there and then registered a vow that for the future he  
 — would take his whiskey out of a bottle.

Talking of coffins the whole country for 30 miles round  
 was in a great state of excitement over a coffin trouble at  
 the Workhouse. It seems that a pauper died — a most  
 unusual thing in Sutherland — and seven years pre-  
 -viously had arranged with and paid a man in advance  
 to make his coffin when his turn for 'distillation' should  
 come. The time came and the coffin was made but



The man who had a contract with the Guardians for making all the pauper's coffins also made his coffin. The first man had been paid in advance and he by some means got the pauper buried in this coffin.

The contractor was furious and insisted on his contract being taken up, so after a special meeting of the Board on the subject - it was agreed that the contractor should be paid for his coffin and as there was some doubt whether another coffin would be required in the future the Board sold the Contractor's coffin by private arrangement to the other fellow for five shillings.

We found the Established Church locked up and all the folks were away 3 miles at the Free Kirk.

The Establishment seems in a poor way hereabouts for in the next parish west the Minister had only one man for a congregation and on this very day we afterwards learned his congregation turned up drunk and interrupted him in the middle of his discourse to remark that "That's a d---d lie." The Minister afterwards complained that his congregation was getting unputtable.

We had a good tea at Reay and then visited the fish hatchery at Sandhills where we saw thousands of young trout and salmon in the trays just hatched out.

On the day previous there had been much discredit thrown on an innocent narrative of the Laird's because he had walked 4 miles in an hour of 60 minutes.

On the return from Reay the Fat Boy and the Southron near the summit set the pace on the high road, and pausing a minute for the sceptics informed them that they had done the last mile in exactly 15 minutes, or in other words at the rate of 4 miles an hour - the sceptics were hot and sweating and puffing like 'Cale Lovers' and they were certain that it was not at the rate of four







but ten miles an hour that they had been led over that hard heavy road.

The Lawyer and the Fat Boy disappeared completely when about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from home and were duly charged with being possessed of long noses to smell and point at dinner a mile and a half away. The Lawyer was indignant — saw it was Rhubarb not Beef — and he averred it was the most fearful sprint against time he had ever perpetrated. The only jar that disturbed the party was when setting out in the morning — 6 men had to sit 3 on a side in a waggonette constructed to carry two on a side — and the two men nearest the gate had to sit half on a cushion and half on an iron rail. This led to a little feeling at times. Of course there was a rush to get in first and leave some other fellow to occupy the rail. It was finally agreed to save annoyance and possible bloodshed that breadth of bottom should be equally divided on the two sides of the waggonette.

The weather on the whole was everything that could be desired, a little wind or rain, or heat or cold mixed does not trouble the angler and when he comes in at night and hears the pedestrian or cyclist talk of the — nasty weather he is surprised, for he has been so intent on his sport that although upon reflection he thinks there has been some rain some time during the day, at first he is prepared to swear that it has been bright sunshine all day. This state of mind is sometimes influenced by the state of the creek. On the whole every one was satisfied — the Chief and the Laird with their salmon and the others with their river, loch and sea trout.





The Laird did break forth into stout rebellion on one occasion. He made his first visit to a Lock with the Spinster for a pal and when he came home at night he was mildly furious, he had cast no less than 3601 times which multiplied by 3 flies meant that he had made no less than 10,803 separate offers to the trout, and not a single acceptance. All because the Spinster put him in a boat and took him to the middle of a Lock and kept him there on a windy day while he spun - a minnow - the Laird said the trout had never seen a spinning jenny before, and that all the trout in the Lock formed into one procession one mile and five furlongs in length and swam after that minnow - so engrossed were they with the funny thing that they would not look at one of his lovely flies. We therefore call his pal the Spinster because of this wonderful tribute to the excellency of his spinning of the artificial

The whole period was free from serious mishap - the nearest approach being an attempt of the Southron to study geology. The Laird on the Sabbath hold hold forth with mighty potency on the subject of geology - and it evidently got hold of the Southron for he made a high fly from a steep bank at a big boulder in the river to try and crack it to see if there was a toad inside - fortunately for his thick head it missed the boulder and he only got a ducking - he might have been drowned if the water had been deeper and he had kept his head under water long enough - but the Gille after hugging him out said "it was luckie ye didna break the rod."





Thursday the last of the outing came all too soon, and though the last it was the best anything day of the week. It is true the water in the river had firmed down and was on the low side and clear — but it was a genuinely fine day — spells of bright sunshine and dull clouds.

The fish were on the take, the big rise was from 11.30 to about 12.30, big ins as well as wee ins jumping high after the natural in every direction — but the fish were on all day.

The Southron said he never had such a time — not five minutes without business the whole time he fished.

His companion the Spinster creeled twelve brace being five brace more than the Southron who was unfortunate in loosing several good fish with the fly as well — one which the Gillie said would be full two pounds and which he played some time was a practised gymnast. Scores of parr and small trout were returned.

Of the Loch anglers the best fish were brought in by the Fat Boy but at dinner every one was happy but the Cokeray Salmon Anglers who were as agreeable as could be expected under the circumstances. Night after night on assembling at the dinner table our hearts were moved to pity for these Cokeray Salmon fishers who notwithstanding all the enticing lures presented by means of an immaculate White Mahoe were unable to secure a fish.

Night after night came the sickly smile, the melancholy mien. On one never to be forgotten evening as we were driving down the Strath for home and dinner the Chief





who had been gossiping with old women and nipping with old men said "There's Gillie Macbeath trying for a salmon. I'll go too." And go he did. When dinner was half through in walked the Chief with a triumphant air - "Well we caught a fish!" "Never." "Gammon." "Tell us another." was the chorus. In the midst of it one <sup>of the</sup> pair sneaked off and returned to the room with a nondescript sort of expression on his face saying. "It's true, and if we had waited as the man wished we might have had that fish." Then off sneaked the other and presently returned quiet as any mouse and sat down to finish his dinner - not another word did he say and his face got longer and longer until he looked just like a man either engaged to be married or going to be hanged. Everyone sympathising with his feelings which were evidently profound left him in peace till the Lawyer having finished his Gorgonzola and noticing a dead silence looked across the table at the suffering one enquiringly and remarked with deep sympathy in every letter - "It aye you the toothache?" What followed no one could say but the roar was instantaneous and prolonged.

Friday 6 a.m. and breakfast with The Bill - not the Lawyer - 6.30. and off to Forsinard where our saloon stood ready in a siding, and we bid farewell to a most romantic country and a charming week's sport and recreation.

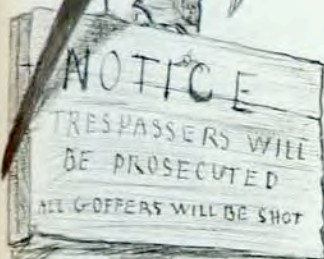




The journey to Auld Reekie was comparatively quiet and uneventful if we except the orations and conferences at nearly every station between Forthward and Inverness - objective and subjective - The Chief; and the numberless times we were invaded and counted by the curious officials of the Highland Railway.

May we all live and prosper to once more be led, and taken in and done for by The Chief.





# Why do anglers take to golf?

Read Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 1901

On the circulars sent out to the members of this Association calling the November meeting there was a statement to the effect that the proceedings would be devoted to "Angling Talk". That, it is to be presumed, meant that the subjects discussed had to do with angling, and an opportunity might have been afforded of obtaining an answer to the question "Why do Anglers take to Golf?"

I have read with much pleasure the three volumes of "Angler's Evenings" although I had not the honour of being a member of the Association, and have been much interested in the accounts of angling jaunts in many lands.

In those small dove-colored books are to be found stories of adventures in pursuit of different kinds of fish, in New Zealand, Canada, Scotland, Ireland and other places. There is even a paper connected with Japan, a new note to the tined, the management of a fishery and the correct method of building a split cane rod, which brings to mind Mr J. E. Pritt's parody,

"A rod is like an egg they say,

'Tis true, though said in joke -

You never know of what it's made -

Until it's broke.

It would seem that nearly all the subjects connected with the sport of angling have been touched upon.



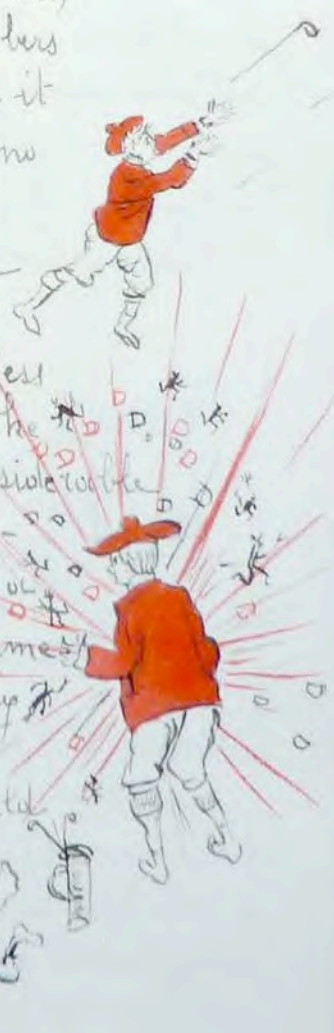
But no one as yet has been found daring enough to explain the reason of the large numbers of anglers to be found any Saturday on the links.

There is no doubt about it at all. Anglers do play golf and for the incredulous a glance at the membership list of the M. A. A. should be convincing, and the percentage of angler-golfers noted. Some of them are good players others are what a Scotch professional would describe as good partners in a foursome. It is even rumored that a certain famous Norwegian explorer has become so skilled an exponent of game that he has succeeded in holing the Trufford Park course in an extraordinarily small number of strokes, the total score being only a stroke or two worse than the record for the course.

Yet this man is one of the original members of the Association, and his case is a very sad one.

During past years there have been several matches with the members of the Wilmslow Golf Club and it seems that the anglers have by no means had the worst of it in these encounters. This, however does not make their offence in leaving the river-side any the less serious, but rather shows that the anglers have attained some considerable skill in the doubtful practice of "chasing a genuine pill around a field" as a Yankee describes the game.

In the future there will probably be a great match played "Anglers versus Golfers" and the whole world be agog with excitement.





There will be home and home matches, played on the links and on the river, each side counting the number of holes won at golf and the number of fish creel'd at the river-side. It would have to be clearly understood that, although a hole lost to any opponent at golf, counts to the opponent's side, it by no means follows that all the fish hooked and lost shall also be counted! Should such a match be played every body taking part would require a special attendant to keep his scores for him and the card would of course require to be signed and countersigned before being handed in.



THE MEASURE  
Two Rods - one Perch

Angling is a true sport and the "pot-hunting" element is entirely absent. Every man of course likes to have a heavier basket than his fellows, but most would by far prefer to land three or four good trout after good fights, than come home with as many dozen smaller fish. Why therefore so many anglers play golf is a mystery for golf is a great game for pot-hunting.

At the annual dinner last December that his honour Judge Parry made some highly amusing remarks on the subject of anglers and angling.

Judge Parry admitted that he was not an angler and knew very little about angling, but that he had in his time come across some "very queer fish indeed". He readily asserted his fondness for golf and in defense of the game went on to say that he considered "every member present that evening who was an angler and not also a golfer was not a worthy member of the Manchester Anglers Association." Nearly every one plays golf -

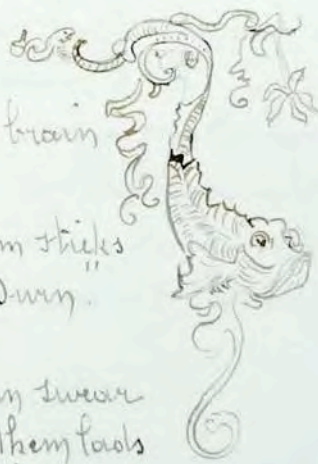




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now-a-days, so that as the rounds passed unchallenged  
it was to be inferred that there were no "unworthy  
ones" present!

Let us take another sad case. Some years ago the golfing  
maniac affected many of the gentlemen who occupied posi-  
tions on the council, and so badly were they touched  
that a course was made at Horton, at the very  
headquarters of the Association. Such daring was justly  
punished, for the course was given up about four years  
ago. Old Walker had naturally a good deal to say on the  
subject and some of his remarks were very funny.

He considered those who played as "fair cracked" to learn  
t'fishing and play with sticks like yon". So great was  
his grief that the Poet Laureate was also touched at the  
sad failings of his brother anglers, with the usual  
resultant song, a verse of which is here.



They say that poor old Walker's brain  
Is fairly on the churn,  
For he does not understand 'them sticks  
Whats brought by Master Bury.  
The Secretary he's as bad  
But I've heard the old man swear  
That he'll keep an eye on both them lads  
Who shant come pouching there.  
He will not see his darling fish  
Thown up with dynamite  
And he's a going to confiscate  
Those nasty blobs of white  
And if they think they'll gammon him  
They'll find him hard to square  
For he'll turn 'em over with iron tips  
While he is keeper there.





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Although our Poet Laureate at that date regretted his friends departure to the links, it is interesting to know that at the present time he occupies the honorable position of Captain of the Rochdale club.

Whether old Walker's sarcasm was responsible for the death of the club or that few dared to commit sacrilege is not remembered. In any case the fact that the club became defunct is in itself a triumph for angling.

A friend of mine who is both an ardent angler and an enthusiastic golfer went away for a holiday and to judge from his report made the mistake of his life. He was warned by his kind friends and acquaintances but like most people preferred his own way and took his angling impedimenta and his golfing implements with him. Imagine the result.

The weather, as is unfortunately often the case on an angling jaunt, was about as unsuitable for catching fish as November is for catching butterflies. In fact a very bright sun and the total absence of wind resulted also in an absence of fish.

It appears that the last chance of a rise was in the few moments just after dawn and at dusk when the sun disappeared behind the hill. Your enthusiastic golfer, after a long two rounds sleeps soundly at 5 A.M. and does not take kindly to such early rising.

The golf was also a failure for the course was called a course by courtesy only, and really resembled one of those links which Harry Vardon has played on in the United States describes as being of - "an iron drive - and six shots with a niblick". Thus the man who tries to fish and golf when on a holiday falls between two stools and hurts himself. He has himself to blame and should stick to angling.

The great reason why anglers take to golf lies in the fact that golf-links are always near at hand to play on. The weather is immaterial. It appears that your golfer minds not





what the climatic conditions are, and it is to again quote Mr. Pitt "hard to realize that the man who will play two rounds of golf every Saturday during the year, in hail - rain - or snow, is the same individual who cannot be induced to go to church because the pews are so uncomfortable."

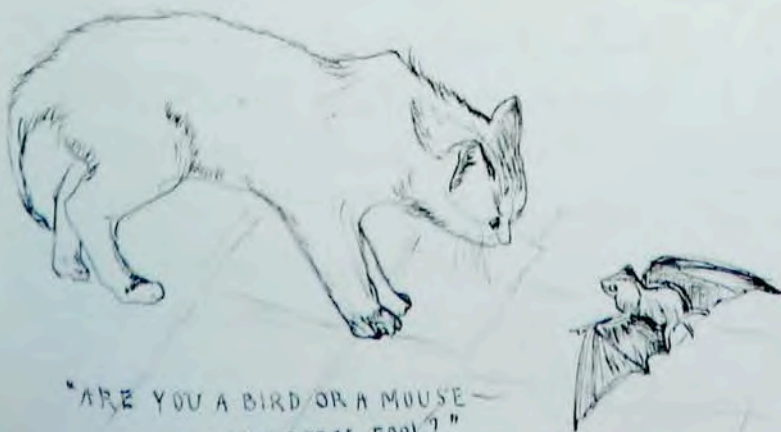
Possibly this same man is not an objector to Sunday golf, but that's another story.

As we know only too well a good fly-water, unlike a good golf course is not always with us, and it is often as well to read Hunt's weekly Telegram before going up to Horton.

Then again there is the jolly chat in the club house after around, which is very similar in character to the conversation at an angler's evening.

Instead of hearing about those big fish lost so often, we hear snatches of talk of how "the 10th hole was holed in three" "Wood was round in 16" and "won my match on the last green".

The men are the same, it is the subject which is different, but there is the same healthy look on the face of the man who has had a good game as you find on the face of the angler who has had a rattling day. The sufferer has but to play the game in order to find out the reason, "why anglers take to golf."



"ARE YOU A BIRD OR A MOUSE -  
-OR AN APRIL FOOL?"





# Lough Derg

By R. Godby.

Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> 1901



IN presenting this paper for your acceptance this evening I feel that it would be wanting in modesty on my part, were I not to offer you some little apology for its shortcomings. I shall not make any laboured apology, but what I wish to say in a few words is this. It is one thing to go away on a camping and fishing expedition with three jovial companions but it is quite another matter to sit down a year afterwards and write such an account of it as will prove of interest to a company of literary gentlemen such as I see around me. Such expeditions as this abound in pleasant incidents and humorous situations, but one feels oppressed by a sense of failure when trying to reproduce them on paper.

To give you an illustration of what I mean. How can I do justice to the back view of Harry Row seated on a smooth stone in Lough Derg immersed to about the middle of his waist, his head and shoulders a mass of lather, and baptizing himself with a large sponge.

We had hardly pitched our tent on that lovely Saturday evening on which we arrived at the Lough when Row

propounded the following question. "Has any one among the Company got a Kudak?" We all

replied that we had not. "Thank goodness for that," he said. Seated there amidst such

truly surroundings with the sun preparing to go down behind





expeditions as this abound in pleasant incidents and humorous situations, but one feels oppressed by a sense of failure when trying to reproduce them on paper.

To give you an illustration of what I mean. How can I do justice to the back view of Harry Roe seated on a smooth stone in Lough Derg immersed to about the middle of his waist, his head and shoulders a mass of lather, and baptizing himself with a large sponge. We had hardly pitched our tent on that lovely Saturday evening on which we arrived on the Lough when Roe propounded the following question "Has anyone among the Company got a Kodak?" We all replied that we had not. "Thank goodness for that!" he said. Seated there amidst such lovely surroundings with the sun preparing to go down behind the hills and giving the Lough an appearance of rippling gold I felt it a little difficult to enter into the spirit of his remark about the Kodak and it was not till I was drying my self one morning and got that back view that I have referred to that I understood the full measure of his thankfulness, that there was not a Kodak among us. Gentlemen take my advice and if you go on a camping expedition to loch Derg take not only one, but **several**



Kodaks. You will furnish yourselves with a series of views, which if you are asked to give a paper on Loch Derg, will render all writing superfluous. A sheet and a lantern will meet all your needs, and I will give you my word as an honest angler that you will spend a most enjoyable evening. If you **should** desire to go one better and to give an extra finish to such an evening's enjoyment, take with you on your camping expedition a supply of Edison's cylinders for the gramophone; place on in the tent each night, wind it up so it will faithfully record every sound within that tent between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a. m., then turn on the gramophone, and if you do not have very soon fits, then as old Jack Falstaff would say "Call me horse and spit in my face."

Now gentlemen, if I don't weary you, I want to say a few words about the question of snoring, because I was able to note certain phenomena and to draw from them certain deductions of a scientific character which may be of great value to posterity.

My three companions went to Loch Derg undoubtedly to fish! I also took a rod to give an air of consistency to the party, but I had with me what was of more importance to me, namely a note book. I had never lived with man in his savage state, when having shaken himself free from the fetters of civilization he could be studied in his natural condition, that condition which the poet speaks of "When wild in woods the noble savage ran." Scarcely had I settled down in my first sleep when my opportunities began. I dreamed that the tent was surrounded by wild Indians, who thirsted for my scalp. I started up determined to sell those few hairs dearly for the rarer the article the higher the commercial value.

I found, however, that the noise, which had awakened me proceeded not from **without** but from **within** the tent, in fact it was all round me. My first impulse was to throw a boot at the spot in the tent, where I had last seen Harry Roe's body before our candle had been put out and in the next place to tweak the nose of Austin who I knew was in reach on my left, but that was a momentary impulse and I am glad in the interests of science that I did not give way to it. This, I thought, is what is called the music of the Spheres and after listening attentively for some minutes I made my first note "Music of Spheres, the music in direct proportion to the Sphere first prize Harry Roe, second Austin. Lee who was then as lean as a shotten herring nowhere." After further observations I am able



to make my second note, which opens, up a great field for discoveries in connection with the action of the brain. It was this. The night is the period when the brain takes its relaxation. We are able in the daytime to understand by means of language the working of a man's brain, but when a man's body and of course his tongue which is part of it, is asleep the brain is unable to communicate its doings to the outside world by the normal articulate sounds. But it finds a vehicle of communication by means of **in**articulate sounds, which we famously term snoring and it is interesting to note that the brain adopts the same methods that we are accustomed to adopt when we seek for relaxation. It flies off at once to the opposite extreme. The sedentary man rises from his studies and takes his rod to the stream or he mounts his horse and goes for a good

scamper over the country. Let me illustrate how the brain does the same sort of thing. Where could you find a more imperturbable man by day than Harry Roe. Do you think that by any exhibition of impatience bustle him into a boat to start off fishing a minute before he has made up his mind to go. You might as well try to shift the Matterhorn with a crowbar. But I tell you that this man's brain at night behaves like a pair of fighting Airdales. By a merciful dispensation of Providence he makes so much noise that he wakes himself up for a brief moment every few minutes, otherwise he would be a wreck before sunrise. Take again the case of our friend Austin. Was ever a merrier guy by day than this? Who doesn't know the twinkle of his eye. Will you believe it that at night he is like a mournful quail. It is perfectly heart rending to sleep or rather to try to sleep near him.

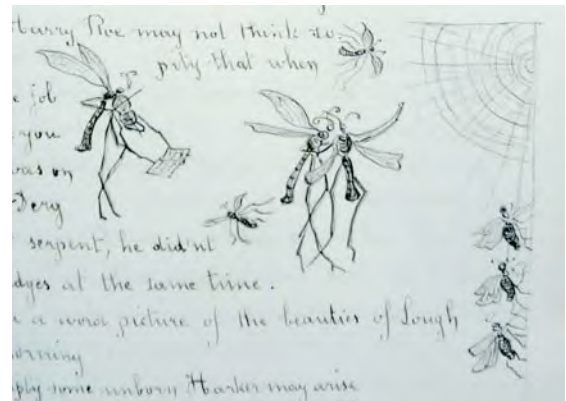
You will not wonder, gentlemen, after what I have told you--- of course in the strictest confidence, that at the break of day my practice was to steal out of the tent where the wicked ceased not from snoring and the weary could get no rest.

If you want to enjoy Loch Derg you must get up early and get away from that tent. Of course opinions differ as to the joys of early rising. For me it is nine tenths of the enjoyment of the whole thing. The midges are at their worst ay day break but that is a mere trifle though Harry Roe may not think so. All the same it is pity that when S. Patrick was on the job with the snakes, for you know it was on an island on Loch Derg that he slew his last serpent, he didn't exterminate the midges at the same time.

I cannot draw you a word picture of the beauties of Lough Derg in the early morning

"Haply some unborn Harker may arise  
To paint the glories of those morning skies,

And in mellifluous language to pourtray(sic)  
The quiet beauty of the dawning day



Apart from the study of Nature in those early hours when the woodcocks were leaving the island to spend the day on the mainland and the wild ducks were cruising around quite devoid of that fear of man which seems to grow upon them as the day runs on there were other material advantages in store for the early riser.

It is a matter of common knowledge that if you leave milk in a vessel during the night the cream will accumulate thereon. That cream, gentlemen, was one of my perquisites!

I did not consider it a crime to skim the cream in the morning, and enjoy it in a cup of tea. It was a sort of quid pro quo for playing the part of Vestal Virgin and lighting the morning fire. I should have liked occasionally to have saved a drop for Lee, but he had a bad cough and I thought that cream would not agree with him and in that I was quite right, for by keeping him to a strictly skimmed milk diet I am happy to say I completely cured his cough and I believe he has had no return of it.

I have said nothing at present about our journey. The difficulty of writing about such a subject is that you very soon find yourself dropping into the style of a Tourist guide.

It was a Friday evening June 1<sup>st</sup> that we left Manchester about – p.m. Lee and I were the new chums of the party. Roe and Austin being old Campaigners. Some of our weeping friends and relations came to see us off and Master Harry, as he is known in Ireland, joined the party at Patricroft. The ladies of his household with one of those delicate little touches of attention that lay us men under such an obligation to them, presented each of the party with a charming little button hole of flowers to remind us of that civilization which we were leaving behind us. I may mention here that Austin as he sat in a corner of a first class compartment with one of these emblems of purity in his buttonhole and an aureole of tobacco smoke playing around his brow was a sight that would have made the Angels glad. The amount of baggage that Master Harry brought aboard that train filled me with a sense of gratitude in that, throughout life he had cultivated that charm of manner that made railway officials, porters et hoc genus omne mere children in his hands. I felt, however, entirely inadequate in comparison with that sweet smile of his was the very largest bribe that I could have offered.





The sea was exceeding kind to us and the Rostrevor made an excellent passage landing us safe at Greenore about 6-30 on Saturday morning. We were duly thankful for our quick passage, seeing that a bad passage often takes a great deal out of a man. We observed in crossing that the first light of dawn was perceptible at 2 a.m. After a stroll around the Golf Links at Greenore and a good breakfast at the Hotel we left about 9-30 and reached Pettigoe about two.

What struck my attention most on my journey across Ireland was the number of small holdings, the absence of anything like a country Mansion or farm House and the abundance of magnificent gorse. Our heavy baggage was packed off in a cart while we adjourned to the Inn to take our last civilized meal consisting of a joint of excellent beef and some stewed rhubarb. The quality of the food was decidedly good but the way it was served up was execrable and the waiting was done by ourselves. A stream runs through the village and a good many trout were rising. After our

meal we started on a couple of cars with our rods and lighter luggage and passed the cart on our way to the Lough. It was a delightful drive for any who knows how to preserve his balance on an Irish car. It is wonderful what an amount of centrifugal force is developed in the body of the car when Pat takes you round a sharp corner and after negotiating a few corners you began to understand how it is that the Earth has a tendency to bulge out at the Equator.

As we rounded the last bend that brought us in to view of the Lough one of the boatmen, Robert, of whom more anon, was lying under the shade of a pine tree by the road side, basking as only an Irishman can.

He rose to greet his old friends Master Harry and Austin. Lee and myself were formerly introduced and the procession moved on to the point of embarkation to our island.

At this point we found our other boatman Tommy a half brother of Robert's. the contrast between the two men is a remarkable one. Sons of the same father no two men could be more unlike. Robert a finely built handsome old man with an intelligent face and keen eyes, Tommy a shy, shifty-looking scallywag, in appearance more bogart than man.

When our cart arrived the baggage was stowed into the large boat and the men rowed it across to the Island. I must call it an (Island) though strictly speaking I think it was a peninsular. We took the lighter articles and rowed across in the small boat which was always kept by us at the Island during our stay..

It was a glorious evening and on reaching the Island we soon got to work Austin with a little light assistance from me, pitched the tent—while Master Harry and Lee unpacked all the cooking and commissariat. Our sleeping arrangements were very comfortable. We first strewn the ground of the tent about a foot deep with newly cut rushes which the boatmen had provided. Upon this we laid strips of a rough tarpaulin like cloth, and again covered that with strips of thick packing paper. Then each man had a pneumatic mattress, which had two inflators, one for the body and one for the pillow. There was something awry with Austin's bed for the wind that he blew into the body of it always found its way during the night into the pillow part of it. He didn't understand why we thought it was because he was a little light headed.

Each man brought his own blanket and extra pillow. On the pole of the tent a small square table in two pieces ingeniously clamped together held our candles, matches and a few etceteras.

When we had made all taut and stored our provisions in the permanent wooden hut which was distant about fifty yards from our tent and which stands there as a monument of Saxon energy and Celtic apathy, Tommy lit a fire and we brewed a cup of tea. Our fire place was a hollow cairn of stone set up on the margin of the Lough. Into one side of it was inserted an iron frame work such as is in use as a plate warmer and three sticks placed in gipsy fashion on the cairn supported our cauldron or kettle. The boatmen kept us well supplied with peat from the mainland.

Austin then took his rod and captured a fish just to let them know that we had arrived. The men went off to the mainland in the large boat and later on we brewed four cups of good strong toddy and retired to bed. a few midges left their cards during the night upon Master Harry and seemed pleased to renew their old acquaintance. We found before we left the Island that they held him in very high esteem.

The following morning, Sunday, I was awake at day break. The cuckoo was calling and he was soon followed by the grouse, the robin, the thrush, the heron and the black bird, who seemed to wake in the same order every morning. The cuckoo always the earliest up and the last to bed. I turned out and as soon as I went off towards the wooden Hut the concert that was going on in the tent gradually appeared to wane. 79. Vol 9



I lit a good fire and had a cup of tea and oh! the exhilaration that I felt. I cannot describe it so must pass on. As I do not want to pursue this paper in the form of a journal I may say once and for all that our programme every day was very much as follows.

Breakfast at eight, the boatmen bringing us our daily fresh milk and eggs. Menu. Porridge, Broiled ham and eggs, or trout. Jam or marmalade--- I ought perhaps to say that before breakfast every morning Master Harry ordered every man of the party to drink a glass of lemon squash. This I understand was by way of an antidote against scurvy. The post used to arrive about breakfast time and any war news (Boer War) was duly read out chiefly by Austin.

After breakfast a good washing up took place of all plates, cups and spoons etc.,. Meat and potatoes were cut up in readiness for our return in the evening. Then lunch was prepared and stowed away in the large boat and at about ten o'clock we were ready to go out for the day. The boatmen two of the party in the large boat and the other two took the small boat and rowed and fished alternately. At mid day the boats forgathered at some appointed spot for luncheon and then parted company again to meet at home about 6 p.m. I don't think we kept any record of our fish but we always had a good show on our arrival home in the evening. The fish were in magnificent which is not to be (surprised) at when you see the enormous amount of insect life, flies and creeping things off all kinds that the Lough possesses. A mode of fishing which those in the smaller boat often had recourse to was trailing the cast of flies behind the boat. It is not like the real thing of course, but as a means of catching fish, it is very effective. Another good lure was a small golden minnow. The flies used were of a large pattern, the best all round fly in my opinion being a large red specimen dressed with a claret body and teal wing. Another good fly was a woodcock wing and yellow body. Occasionally a yellow hawk very like our may fly in shape but having a bright yellow wing hatches in large quantities and it is well to have a imitations of it by you. On reaching home in the evening dinner was our first care. The fire was re-lit and soups and stews and trout a la Norwegian with sweets and cheese to follow provided an excellent repast. Then Timmy washed up ready for the morning after which the boatmen took their departure. After they had gone we generally paddled about in the small boat smoking our pipes and trailing either a cast or a minnow until the waning light betokened bed time—then we made our boat fast for the night brewed a good stiff mug of toddy each and lit our candle and our pipes and turned into bed and one by one dropped off to sleep. That, I think, will give you a fair idea of daily life.

We got on very well on the whole with our boatmen. We had one little burst with them occasioned by Master Harry desiring a parcel of fish to be taken to Pettigo to the Steward of the owner of the Lough. Tommy declared that he had not fallen so low as to carry fish to Pettigo. Some words were passed on the subject and Robert's comment on the situation was that Master Harry had grown very coarse. However after some sulking on the part of the men the storm passed over and we had no further disturbance. About Robert and Tommy a chapter might be written but it is not my intention to inflict you with one. They were an interesting study to me a stranger in Ireland and taking them as a fair sample of the Irish peasantry they enabled me to realise as I had not been able previously to do, the difficulties of the Irish problem. They could be all sunshine one minute and all storm the next, at one time ready to embrace you at another ready and **willing** to batter your brains with a boat hook and dance a jig upon your body. Possibly the spread of education will mend much of this in the next generation. Their inquisitiveness is boundless and in half an hour they will know all about you to fifth or sixth generation. They are superstitious to a degree and if you were to a degree and if you were to betray any sign of incredulity when they are telling you some of their wondrous stories they would be extremely angry. I was told in all seriousness by Robert whose intelligence was far in advance of Tommy's, that the four leaved shamrock was very scarce owing to the fact that it only grows on a spot where a mare has seven years before dropped her foal. I had to receive this piece of intelligence with all becoming solemnity and could only laugh beneath the mask.

There is an Island in the Lough covered with buildings mostly of a religious character and at a certain period of the year pilgrims flock there not only from Ireland but from other counties. I asked Robert about the pilgrimage and learned from him that it was in this Island that St. Patrick, who has a statue there, put his foot on the last snake and freed Ireland from the pests. The preparations for the Pilgrimage season were going on while we were there and the Priest who was in office was a genial old fellow who gave me the impression that he enjoyed this snake story to the full. When the Pilgrim season is over the Island is deserted and remains so till the season again begins.

The honesty of our boatmen was beyond suspicion save only in respect of the whisky. The locality of this had to be kept secret. If this precaution had not been taken there would have been battle, murder and sudden death and I should (not?) probably have been here to tell the tale. But so long as Master Harry lives 80. Vol 9 there need be no very serious trouble in Ireland. The opportunity generally produces the right man, and you will derive comfort from the knowledge that if any agrarian or other disturbance should arise in the Emerald



Isle the Manchester Anglers possess a man in the person of Master Harry who is fully competent to cope with it.

You also posses in Austin a good cook—all he requires is the usual white paper cap to make him complete. He was our Chef. We did a certain amount of work as scullery maids, but he ruled the culinary department and you could feel his eye upon you while you were stirring the morning porridge. While there was any work to be done he was always very said and serious and anything that savoured of frivolity was visited by his severe displeasure. I recall one morning in the early days of our pilgrimage and before I realized what my responsibilities were, that I went off with Robert to meet the postman who had signalled from the mainland. I passed my rod on the way to the boat and thinking no harm I took it with me in the boat. When I returned Austin's eye fell upon me and I stood before him a guilty thing--- I apologised to him as profusely as my sense of humour at the situation would allow and then I sat on a rock like a child in disgrace and ate my porridge, and as I ate that porridge there stole in upon my memory a story that my Father used to tell about a Clergyman who was preaching in a church on the coast of Cornwall in those days when the sound of the word "A Wreck" all the population of the village used to hurry off to the Shore to participate in the spoil. As he preached a man rushed in with the cry "A Wreck" and the company rore as one man to make off to the shore. "One word" my brethren, said the preacher before you depart, and then descending from the pulpit he walked solemnly down the aisle until he reached the porch. There he hastily threw off his surplus and said "Now we all start fair". The bearings of this anecdote lays as Mr Bumsby would have said, in the application of the same. However from that day I becme an altered man save only in the question of the skimming of the cream in the morning—that I would not give up. It was my house of Rimmon.

The luncheon hour was always one of the pleasantest hours of the day especially when our fishing ground lay among the lovely group of Islands at the head of the Lough, islands where the heather and moss were knee deep and the Osmunda Regalis attains the height of several feet. Robert occasionally traps some fine otters in these islands but did not succeed in trapping one during our visit.

One day Master Harry and I had a rather rough experience in the small boat. We were caught, very suddenly, in a heavy squall of wind and rain which came up from the Atlantic, and we could not run ashore on the side we were fishing because of the rocks, so there was nothing for it but to lay down our rods and pull straight across the Lough in the teeth of the gale to a spot where we could beach the boat on a sandy spot in the shelter of the hills. It was a terrible hard pull for two old men, but we got through it somehow though in doing so we left a deal of grease at the bottom of the boat. We were very fortunate on the whole with the weather. The first few days were fine and intensely hot, but after that we had a good deal of thunder circling around us, although we escaped a direct storm overhead until the morning of our departure.

Mr Harry says, and he may be accepted as an authority on the subject that we never had a good fishing day "a real Derby day" I think he called it. I have no doubt he is right. A real Derby day, one of those days that every Angler at some time or other experiences when the fish mean business, should be enough to satisfy an Angler for a life time. We caught enough and to spare, but it makes my mouth water 6to think what a real Derby day must be.

Well every dog has his day! And our day came at last. A day of tribulation and great mourning. It was sorry work to collect the empty bottles and strike the tent in which we, or rather some of us, had snored so many happy hours away. But every cloud has its silver lining and Robert's and Tommy's grief at our departure was alleviated by the receipt of sartorial treasures, which for the next twelve months would make them the envy of all their comrades whose custom it is to foregather at the weekly market at Pettigo.

We were overwhelmed with adulation. Our Honours were at that moment of parting the foinest gentlemen that had ever come over to the old country. Tommy's face wore quite a religious aspect as he invoked the Divine blessing upon all our heads and kissed Master Harry's hand in a posture of lowly reverence. All Master Harry's coarseness was blotted out and regulated to oblivion. I could only sigh at the thought of that absent Kodak. I could have sneaked a picture of Master Harry and Austin with which I could have made my fortune by palming it off among various Sunday Schools as a representation as the reception of St Paul and Barnabus by the people of Lystra. The thunder had cleared off before we started our drive to Pettigo and the air laden with the bloom of hawthorn was delicious. We bode adieu with fond regret to the Lough wher we had spent so delightful a week.

I feel in concluding that I have done very scant justice to my subject but I am happy in the remembrance that our old friend Able (sic) Heywood has enshrined the memories of a similar visit in 81. Vol 9 imperishable (if so where?) verse. I cannot however conclude without expressing the obligation I am unde to my three comrades whose bon camaraderie so much enhanced the pleasure of the outing. I am indebted to Master for all his paternal solicitude and care of the party for his fore thought that pertained to our moral and

physical welfare, for his protection of us from the ravages of scurvy, for his imperturbable geniality, and last but not least for the respectability which his presence when clothed, imparted to the entire party.

I am indebted in the next place to Austin for his industrious activity which added much to my own leisure, for his culinary skill which did not impair my digestion, for his medical care of the party which prompted him to take with him in a small compass a cure for every possible ailment and for that powerful memory that never suffered him to forget that evening glass of grog. And what shall I say of Lee, "Our baby boy" as we christened him on account of his extreme youth. How shall I thank him for providing me with minnows and casts, which I never did, and probably never shall return, and for the efforts he made, which though not entirely successful, did in some measure abate the mighty music of his next door neighbour.

Gentlemen if any matter for discussion should arise upon this paper, let me express one parting hope that it may not take the form of an acrimonious discussion as to who shall be the happy man to fill my place in the next visit to that delightful Lough with three such excellent companions.

I have only one more word and I have done. If you intend to go on a camping and fishing expedition to Lough Derg take my advice—and Don't go--- **unless** you are prepared to make me one of the party.



## The use and abuse of our rivers

By Percy Glass

The Life History of a River is a Romance. The lines from the pen of Professor Russell which follow express this fact most eloquently, he says :---

"The study of streams involves, to great extent the consideration of the origin of hills and mountains, plains and valleys and the changes they pass through. One of the principal tasks of streams is the moving of rock fragments and their transportation to the sea. Another function is the deepening and widening of their channels and valleys---- clear water has but little power to wear away the rocks over which it flows--- it must be charged with hard particles, or rock fragments of greater or less size—tools to excavate"

-----"Not only have the valleys long and varied histories, but each roaring cascade, and musical rapid, each shadowy pool, and placid reach of the stream where the water loiters, and each graceful bend, have a cause for their existence, and an instructive, and even romantic story to tell."

(River Development. Prof Russell Michigan University 1898.)

You will be familiar with the poetic lines of Tennyson where in "The Brook" he paints just such another picture as that in these later lines of Professor Russell.

The use of a river in Nature's economy is a fascinating story and may also be said now to have been reduced to an exact Science—it is however the **artificial** rather than the **natural** use of rivers that we now have under consideration. In order however to quicken your interest in the ultimate object I have in view, I will throw upon the screen apt illustrations of the way in which rivers and their colleagues—the glaciers, carve the surface of the earth. With these aids of the lantern we must let this phase of our subject pass with the following exception. I said just now that the river story had been reduced to an exact science. This is in a very great measure due to the enlightened action of the Government of the United States of America, which has spared no expense in learning all that their grandest river, The Father of Waters, The Mississippi can teach--- for it is due to these careful observations and investigations that we owe of what we know of the laws which control or regulate the rivers.

Professor Russell points out that The Mississippi is over 4,000 miles long from source to sea it carries to sea annually

112 million tons of solids in solution.

406 million tons of solids in suspension.

It drains 1,244,000 square miles—one third of the U. S. The solid matter thus brought down annually **would cover a square mile to the height of 268 feet** or to say the top of the Tower of Manchester Town Hall. It is degrading its whole basin one foot in 4,000 years. It has been estimated that during the Geological Springtime following the great winter, known as the Glacial Epoch—it carried 11 to 20 times its present volume. (Riv. Devp. 270) Its flood plain varies from five to eighty miles across, and is from 300 to 500 feet below the general level of the bordering uplands. For a thousand miles north from its mouth, alluvial deposit, which is 200 feet thick at the northern or shallow end at the above named distance from the mouth. The Mississippi Delta and its Cotton growing land is too well known to Manchester men to require any notice here.

The river story reads something like this—first the streams then the rivers—then the glaciers then the rivers again—usually the rivers we know now. A young river goes direct – has a rapid flow – over or through rocky strata—with rapids, cascades, falls, -- the old river—winds greatly, often doubles back on itself, flows through the alluvial deposit which it has itself brought down in past times, flows slowly, and is frequently above the land through which it flows.

In Nature's Economy—the river forms the surface of the earth, by dissolving rocks, creating ridges, valleys, flood plains, peneplains, lowers highlands at its upper end and forms fresh land at its lower end. It fertilizes valleys, and lowlands, irrigates—gives drink to birds, and animals, furnishes home and food for fish and a thousand forms of insect and vegetable life.

What then are the artificial uses of a river?

**Irrigation** is one of the oldest of the artificial use of a river, but in our country there is little call for it, the normal rainfall being sufficient for all the ordinary purposes of agriculture.

**Navigation** is another very ancient use to which rivers have been put. Through the courtesy of Mr Wells I am able to put on the screen the Map of the Canals and Navigable Waterways of which there are 3948 miles—of which 1399 or 1/3 are under the control of the Railways. Through the kindness of Mr Tatton, Chief Inspector of Mersey and Irwell Joint committee I will now show you a series of photographs by which the Committee were enabled to sustain the contention that for the purposes of the River Pollution Act—the Manchester Ship Canal is a river and you will see the Mersey and Bollin flowing in and flowing out of the Ship Canal.

**Waterpower** is another of the artificial uses of a river. With the advent of steam half a century ago this use of water power very considerably declined, but in this as in so many other cases, history repeats itself and the use of running water as a generator of power is again coming very much into vogue.

**Recreation** is a both ancient and modern artificial use of a river. Boating, swimming, fishing were never more popular, and certainly were never of so great a value as today.

**But** great as the importance of a river from all or any of these points of view, there is still one greater—and of infinitely more value than any of them – viz—the use of rivers in providing water for domestic purposes-- - more especially pure drinking water, for millions of men, women and children in our towns and cities.

Growth of Population is one of the great factors. The population of England and Wales was in

1700 5,475,000

1801 8,873,000 an increase of 62%

1901 32,526,000 an increase of 266%

Already the head gathering grounds of rivers have been secured for the purposes of domestic water supply by Manchester at Woodhead, and Lake Thirlmere as well, Liverpool at Vyrnwy, Birmingham is completing a scheme in the Elan valley, Sheffield is damming the little Don at Langsett as an additional supply, Leicester and Nottingham have secured the head waters of the Derbyshire Derwent, Leeds, Oldham Stockport and many other large towns are similarly engaged, and London is at its wits end. Today the matter is of pressing importance—as many of us know to our cost in a dry season, but **what about tomorrow** in the face of the growth of population—to which I have just referred?

Our island grows no larger—our population does.

The day is not far distant when the head waters of the Ribble where we fish, will be called upon to contribute its quota to the water supply to the teeming population of Lancashire.

Dealing only with the single question of Domestic Water Supply in the face of the infinite importance of it—What has to be done?

What is being done to preserve and utilise our Rivers and streams?

What is their general condition today? This brings us face to face with **Abuse** – to the phrase so familiar—River Pollution.

Some years ago I wrote a paper upon the subject of R. Pn. the History of it, and the means adopted for its prevention and mitigation. The paper grew and grew, I had ruthlessly to cut it down—three times, **and even then had to read it at twice**, I do not propose to go over the same ground again, and so do not here propose to establish by argument or illustration the fact of Rivers Pollution, but to take that as granted.

What then are the causes—the growth of population, the accumulation in large towns and cities, the invention of steam power, and the establishment of innumerable industries on the banks of rivers and streams—many of you will remember the Map which I exhibited, prepared by the Mersey and Irwell Joint Committee, showing the distribution of works over the whole watershed of these two rivers. Sanitary Legislation, curiously enough, has done a great deal to accentuate the evil, by enforcing drainage, which in most cases means discharge into the first convenient watercourse.

The value of pure drinking water, and inversely the danger of impure drinking water—I must emphasise by one illustration which I quoted in the paper to which I have referred; it is taken from Sir John Simon's "Sanitary Institutions"--- the death rate from Cholera per 10,000 living for the population which in

1848/9 received water from the Southwark and Vauxhall Co. was	118
In 1848/9 from the somewhat fouler water of the Lambeth Co. was	125
in 1853/4 received from the Southwark and Vauxhall Co. foulest of all	130
In 1853/4 received from amended supply of Lambeth Co. was	37

These facts together with the similar, but more recent experience of Hamburg cited in my previous paper—shows at once, both the evil and the remedy.



In order to answer the query which I just now set up "What has been done? What is being done to utilise and preserve our streams?" I think the best way will be to put before you as briefly as I can what has been done in our own district of Manchester and for this information we are indebted to the City Surveyor Mr de Courcy Meade, in his Report to the rivers Committee of the Manchester City Council (1896).

The rivers Irwell and Medlock have been subjected to floods for many years. The River Irk has a more rapid fall and a freer passage and is not so liable to flooding. Irwell and Medlock are not as a rule in flood at the same time, as the drainage areas of these rivers are seldom equally affected by a heavy rainfall.

There were floods of exceptional height in 1833, 1856, 1857, 1866, 1869, 1872, 1886, 1891, July and November 1895, November 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 1896.

In 1865 the City Council obtained parliamentary powers to improve the impeded waterway of the River Medlock, which has a very circuitous course through the City, and about £50,000 was expended towards which riparian owners contributed about £18,000. In 1874 the sewage of the City flowed into the rivers Irk, Medlock, Irwell and their tributaries Moston Brook, Newton Brook, Cornbrook, and the River Tib. There were one hundred drainage districts, or areas, each provided with a main outfall sewer and emptying into one or other of these rivers, and it was then under consideration how best to divert the sewage from the rivers. In 1877 the Medlock Improvement Committee received the title of Rivers Committee and authorised to confer with other local authorities in the same drainage area to consult with a view to a combined drainage scheme.

In 1878 (Nov.28) a Conference was held at the Town Hall at which 15 local authorities were represented. In 1879 (Oct. 15) the scheme was abandoned it being found impracticable to combine the authorities.

The question of floods continued to have the consideration of the Rivers Committee during 1880 and 1881.

In 1882 the Rivers Committee reported the desirability of incorporating the out-townships

In 1883, 1884, 1885 great improvements were effected in the several river beds

In 1886 the Committee had under consideration an extensive Main Drainage Scheme.

In 1887 (Apr 7) the City Council adopted the scheme.

In 1889 (Mch. 16) the Local Government Board approved and on April 3<sup>rd</sup> the Council instructed the Rivers Committee to carry out the scheme.

Several out townships have since been incorporated—this system has consequently been extended, and is or present Main Drainage system.

From 1896 the main question before the Rivers Committee has been how to purify this vast concentrated volume of sewage, before returning it to the River.

In October 1895 Mr W. I. Dibdin—Chemist to the London County Council reported on the results of experiments on the filtration of sewage effluent during the years 1892,3,4,5. The concluding words of his report, the whole of which was before the Rivers Committee Mr Dibdin says---

"From the general results obtained by the several trials under various working conditions, it is apparent that there is no difficulty in obtaining any desirable degree of purification by means of a system of filtration conducted on biological principles--- By such a system the necessity for costly farms is entirely obviated. The results are completely under control, and the filters can be arranged to suit all requirements it is possible to contemplate."

On the advice of Sir Henry Roscoe experimental Bacteria bed were set up by the Manchester Corporation at Davyhulme and commenced work December 16 1895.

In April 1896 Sir Henry Roscoe reported favourably on the results obtained, he says "apart from these experiments, I have, however had sufficient experience to lead me to the opinion that the adoption of artificial filters worked intermittently is a move in the right direction. The conditions essential for successful purification by filtration (viz the conversion of the organic carbon, and of the organic nitrogen in the organic matter of the sewage into inorganic matter) have long been recognised and advocated but I am sorry to add, generally ignored in practice. The Rivers Pollution Commission 26 years ago pointed out that in filtration, whether through sand etc. it was essential that atmospheric oxygen should have frequent and free access to the interior of the filter; that the effluent should flow freely off the bottom of the filter, so that as the last portion of each dose of sewage water sinks into the filter it may draw atmospheric air into the pores of the material from the surface downwards. The subsequent researches of Messrs Schloesing and Muntz in France and Professor Warington in this country has shown that purification as defined above is brought about by the intervention of organisms. Prof. Warington has also pointed out (14 years ago) that sewage contains the organisms necessary for its destruction.

The result of the experiments made (1891) by the American Chemists of the Massachusetts Board of Health confirm the above statements for they state that "the purification of sewage by intermittent filtration depends upon **oxygen** and **time** all other conditions are secondary".

Sir Henry Roscoe in the same report says--- " nothing is easier than to clog and render putrid the filters, and this not only render them useless but worse than useless."

In the report of the city Surveyor (Mr Meade) which embraces the Report of Sir Henry Roscoe—he says on page 4—that the old method of land filtration disposes of 20,000 gallons per 24 hours, while artificial filtration disposes of 800,000 gallons per acres per 24 hours.

Taking the Manchester Sewage on an estimated population of 650,000 (it is now about 531,000) or 26,000,000 gallons per day the new method will require 321/2 acres as against 1300 acres by the old.

This paper would hardly be complete without a short account of the Manchester work and process as described in the City Surveyor's Report (Sept. 1896 page 209) "The 145 acres at Davyhulme is composed of Precipitation Tanks 71/2 acres, Sludge Tanks etc. 7 acres. Filter Beds(Land) 261/4 acres, land for extension 921/2 acres, Wharfs and lay byes 43/4 acres, Disused river bed 7 acres.

The sewage enters the works by the main outfall sewer. It is first passed through a fixed iron screen, which removes the largest articles, such as sticks, stones, rags etc. Milk of lime is then added and mixed in by a rotary agitator, then green copperas is mixed with the sewage and it is passed to the precipitation tanks, the copperas assists in the speedy precipitation of a large proportion of the impurities to the bottom. It is allowed to stand for one and a half hours when the effluent is passed onto the land or Bacteria filters.

There are eleven precipitation (tanks?) 300 ft. by 100 ft average six feet deep and capable of holding 12,375,000 galls. Every two or three days the precipitation tanks have the sewage decanted, the sludge mechanically extracted and taken by the sludge steamer, which has a capacity of a thousand tons, and tipped at sea at a depth of fifteen fathoms outside the North West Lightship off Liverpool.

I think it will be admitted that Manchester at all events has grasped the nettle. The Mersey and Irwell Committee are doing a great work in the upper reaches of the watershed, and if these authorities are only supported as they ought to be by the general public we shall yet have a Boulevard by the river in front of the Cathedral, we shall catch trout at the mouth of the Irk once again and our rivers instead of being a bane and a curse, will emulate "The Pickwick Pen" and become a "Boon and a blessing to men."

The Potable water question in the upper reaches is still the most important but I believe we are at last approaching a wise and effective solution even of this difficult aspect of the case.



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# TARPON AND OTHER FISHING OFF THE COAST OF FLORIDA

BY G. H. RAMSBOTTOM.

Read Nov. 1901

A run in the great steam ferry from Liverpool to New York is taken now-a-days so much as a matter of course, that most of the romance that used to surround a journey to the big continent is lost, unless one is bound for big game shooting or trapping when a certain amount of the old time rough camping is still necessary.

But if the object of the trip be to try conclusions with the big fish of the Gulf of Mexico no very great hardships have to be endured, and in twelve or fifteen days from leaving Liverpool and after a more or less (generally less) comfortable journey by sea and rail, the angler may be wetting his line in the haunts of the lordly tarpon and if lucky, barking his knuckles on the handle of a singing reel, as he endeavours for the first time, may be, to stop the rushes of something that is off like a torpedo boat on the measured mile.

I believe it is a failing of anglers in general to hanker after something large in the way of fish, especially if besides being big they show plenty of fight.

I know it is so in my own case, and ever since

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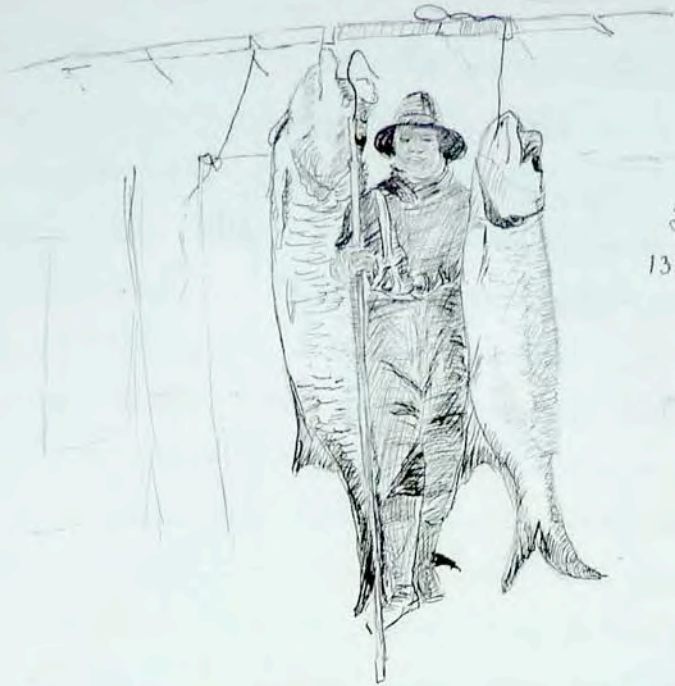
The Tarpon seems to love the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico, and is found all along the coast of Florida, over on the other side of the Gulf, off Texas, down through the West Indies and along the coast of South America. He has been taken in nets even so far north as New York but this was in the summer time. In size he ranges from the baby Tarpon of 18 inches in length and 3 or 4 pounds weight, to the record fish, taken this year of 213 lbs and over 7 feet in length, no doubt there are heavier fish than this but none have been caught up to the present. The smallest fish I have seen taken on a trotting bait was about 20 pounds.

The average weight of fish taken by the angler seems to vary somewhat with the time of year.

Early in April it would be 75 or 80 pounds, whilst later on in May it was nearer 110 lbs. Talking about weights I heard rather a remarkable case when in Florida. One of the old guides told me, that a few years ago he was working for a lady angler who one day caught a very fine fish. He measured it over with the lope and found it was only a pound or two short of the then record fish (I should say here that there is a formula, length by girth squared divided by 800 which gives a very close approximation to the true weight) The fish was carefully wrapped up and sent to the Taxidermist to be mounted but was first weighed in the presence of witnesses when it turned the scale at a few pounds over the record weight.

The strange thing about it was that when the Taxidermist came to open up the fish he found in its insides several pounds of lead sinkers. Of course one knows that these great sea fish are most voracious eaters, but that





Tarpon weighing  
135 lbs and 90 lbs

I read an account some years ago, by Alfred Starnsworth on tarpon fishing, I have had an overwhelming desire to try my hand on the silvery monsters, and when last Spring I was fortunate enough to come across a man who had been out after tarpon before and was going again in a few weeks time, I had soon fixed it up to go out with his party

Before going on with a description of the trip it might be of interest to say a few words about the fish itself, and the tackle required to capture him.

The Tarpon is a fine sporting fish of the herring tribe in shape not unlike his humbler though more appetizing brother from Loch Tyne. The colour of the back when fresh from the water is a peculiar, almost translucent sea-green, this shades off with opalescent tints into sides of burnished silver and this again on the belly turns to white; truly he is a handsome fellow

The green scales on the back turn dark blue black very shortly after the fish has been taken from the water, but the great silvery scales retain their metallic lustre any length of time if taken care of.

Hinged to one of the crossbars of the reel is a pad of stout leather which rests against the line on the drum and is forced down with the thumb when fishing, thus forming a most powerful break. The lines are generally of twisted flax, though silk and cotton are also used. A thirty-thread flax line being capable of standing when new a steady pull of fifty pounds.



The hooks have a short shank, with solid forged eye and are about  $1\frac{3}{8}$  in the band, they are attached to six feet of single steel wire with three inches of German silver chain. For landing the fish a large gaff with strong ash pole is used.

Not knowing anything about the fishing or the tackle required we got all ours in New York, though I think one might do quite as well by having it made to order at home another time, for the prices are pretty stiff over on the other side, as for example, an iron wood rod with two tips and agate top rings cost \$26.0, the reel \$35, Lines (200 yards) \$3 each. Hooks and traces \$5.0 per dozen, and other things in proportion.

There are two methods of fishing for Tarpon with rod and line. Still fishing and pass fishing, which being translated into English, mean, bottom fishing with dead gudge and trolling.

Still fishing is carried out in the shallow waters of the harbour and off the mouths of rivers.

The first thing is to find your fish, your guide rows or sails you about in a small open boat till he comes across a shoal of tarpon, here you anchor in four or five feet of water and throw out some scraps of mullet as ground bait,





then baiting the hook with half a mullet, make a cast of 30 or 40 yards, lay the rod down in the bottom of the boat, take the check off the reel also a few yards of line which are coiled up on one of the thwarts and having seen that all is clear, sit down and wait, it may be only a few minutes or it may be for days (I never did catch a tarpon still fishing though I got lots of sharks.

However we will suppose in order to save time that it is only a question of minutes, and that very soon the coils begin to disappear over the boat's side, you quietly take up your rod and watch the reel as it at first slowly, then faster and faster, when some twenty lines yards of line have gone put on the check, jam the reel with the thumb break, strike hard then look out for squalls, if he is a tarpon he will jump as soon as he is struck, and should he prove lively you will have to slip your moorings and follow him.

You play him out the best way you can till he is quiet then bring him alongside and gaff him but more than likely the run turns out nothing but a small shark, in which case you would take the earliest opportunity of putting a bullet between his eyes which soon takes the fight out of him.

For a long time this method of catching tarpon was the only one used for the mouth of this fish is so holed that it was thought impossible to strike a hook in over the barb, if fishing with a rod.

However a few years ago some anglers set to work with all sorts of spinning bait and after smashing up a great quantity of tackle at last managed to land a fish fairly hooked in the mouth, and since then, this has been by far the most popular form of fishing.



Pass fishing as the name implies is fishing in the passes or channels between the various islands, through which flows a more or less strong current depending upon the state of the tide.

About an hour before and after slack tide is supposed to be the best time, though this rule does not always hold good. The bait in pass fishing is a small shup taken from the sides or belly of a grey mullet and cut roughly into the shape of a fish some 6 inches long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  wide, the hook is passed through one end of this so that it hangs quite loose on the bend of the hook and does not spin but wobbles as it is drawn through the water.

You get into your boat and the guide rows up the pass against the tide, till he is at the end of what he considers the best fishing water. As he rows you busy yourself with getting your tackle into order, bait the hook and put on the trace a lead sinker or two as the current may require.

When all is ready you take your seat on the chair provided for the purpose facing the boat's stern and pay out about 30 or 40 feet of line.

The guide works the boat back and forwards across the tide gradually drifting down with it all the time and the current carries out the line astern and works the bait, and so you sit, rod in hand, waiting till you feel something, it may be the slightest vibration of the line or it may be a tug that almost takes you over the side, but however it comes, there is one thing to be done, which is, strike hard, just as hard as you can and see what happens, if he is a tompon he will soon show himself and then the fun begins.

Some men prefer to land as soon as possible and play the fish from the shore, but to my thinking it is far more exciting to bring a fish of 6 feet or more alongside a small boat and gaff him there, especially if there

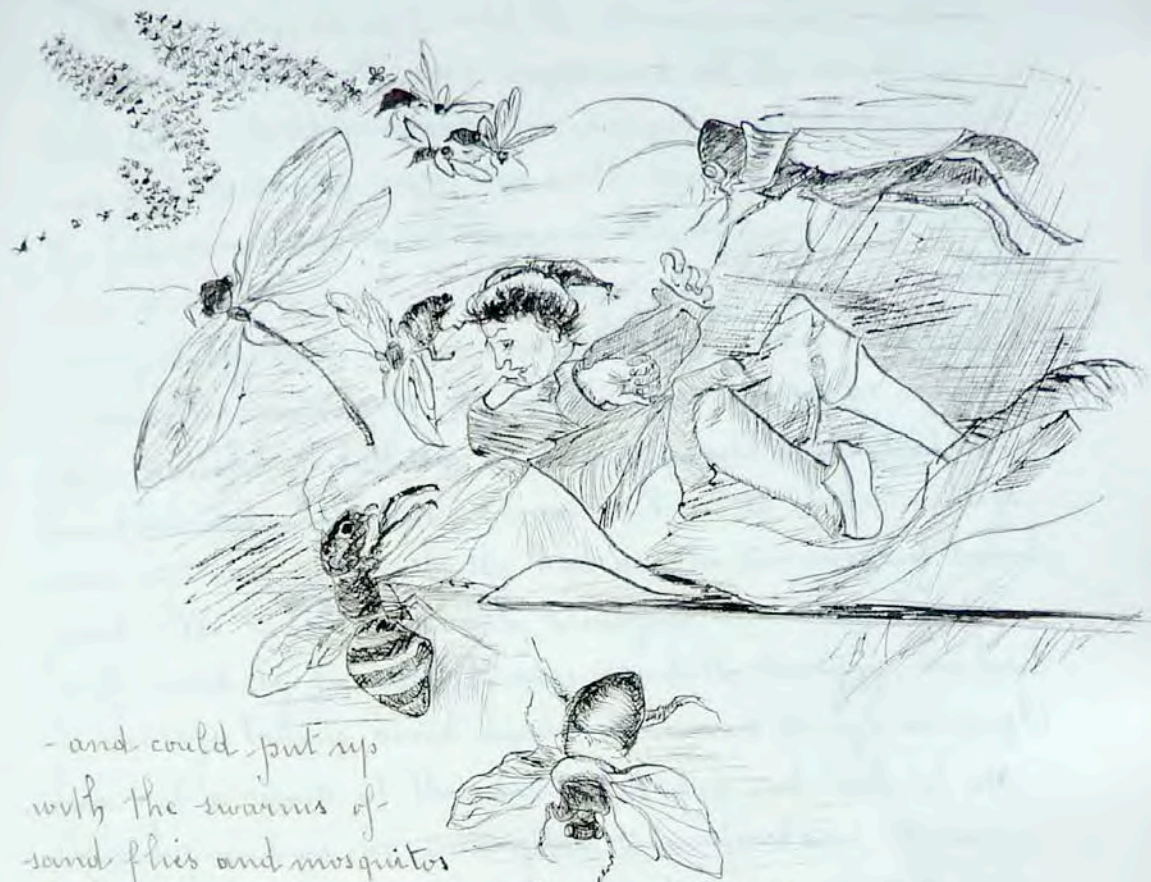


is a jump of a sea on, which was often the case. So much for the fish and methods of capture; if our friends here are not already sufficiently bored, I will go on with a few reminiscences of our trip to Florida last Spring.

We left Liverpool about the middle of March, landing in New York eight days later, spent the rest of that day part of the next, and a good many dollars at Bon-Hofes tackle shop, getting fixed up with all sorts of Gargantuan hooks, rods and gaffs; leaving New-York at midnight we got to Washington next morning in time for breakfast, and as we had an hour or two to wait for the Southern express, we paid a visit to the capital. We were away again by noon and arrived the following night at Punta Gorda, a small town on Charlotte Harbour, and the end of the plant railway system in that direction. Here we had to pass the night at what is in winter time, a comfortable sort of wooden hotel, but as they were just closing for the season things were in rather a chaotic condition and the attendance very poor except from the mosquitoes. Next morning saw us aboard a small stern wheel steamer which runs between Punta Gorda and Fort Myers, after a few hours run we were landed on one of the innumerable islands with which the harbour is dotted, where we found an open sailing boat, waiting to take us and our luggage the last stage of our journey to what was to be our abode for the next few weeks; a large house-boat or so called floating hotel.

This floating hotel is a great institution and very handy for the best fishing grounds. Of accommodation ashore there was none, certainly one could camp out if they liked -





- and could put up with the swarms of sand flies and mosquitos which infested the islands. Besides this there was trouble with provisions, for everything had to be sent by water from Puntar Gorda, so those anglers who did not live on the house boats either had yachts of their own or had chartered a small vessel of some description at one of the coast towns.

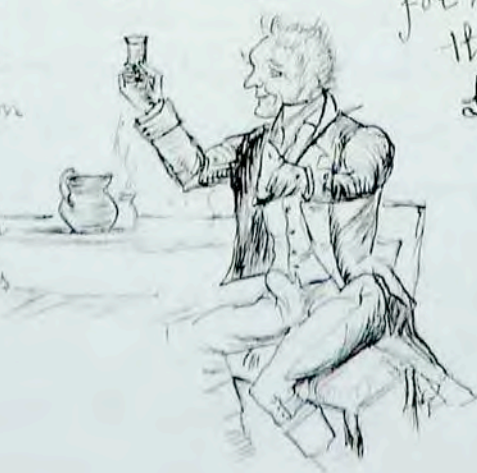
I am afraid this is more like a leaf out of a time table rather than an interesting account of a trip to Florida, but I did not wish to harrow your feelings unnecessarily with too vivid pictures of the terrors of the living deep, which most of you probably know from personal experience.

Now even enter into a disquisition on the relative merits of English and American Railway travelling. There are however one or two points in connection with that trip I would like to mention in particular. One was the very sudden change in temperature in the 48 hours



train journey between New York and Punta Gorda, we left New York on a cold blustering night, regular top coat weather, the cars heated and all the windows shut tight. Next morning after we got south of Washington, was just moderate, more like early spring at home. The following we were at Jacksonville, early in the morning and it was then comfortably warm, by noon it was uncomfortably hot, windows were thrown open and coats and collars came off, by eight that evening as many other articles of clothing as decency would allow, had also been discarded and still we were too hot, to make matters worse we were rather badly housed in the commissariat Department. We had had an early breakfast and very light lunch and by five o'clock were decidedly hungry, we had to change trains about dinner time and though we might have got a snack at the station it did not look at all inviting and as we were given to understand there would be a dining car on the next train, and these are generally very good in the States; we thought we might endure the pangs of hunger another half hour. Imagine our dismay on boarding the car, at being told by the black conductor "d'is an't no dining car, guess you should ha gotten yo dinna at de las Depot." This was most trying, however, we would drown our sorrows in the flowing bowl —

and called only to find a prohibition liquid could aboard apollinaris



for whiskies and sodas that we were in State, and the only refreshment we was some warm



Our own little store having long since evaporated owing to the temperature, -there was nothing for it but to try and sleep and dream of the good time coming when we should have arrived at Punta Gorda, (by-the-way we took the precaution afterwards, to wire ahead to the hotel to have dinner ready for us, and they certainly did their best considering the late hour and the general upset of the place). With a sigh of content we sat down to the hospitable board and again called for drinks, but what is this we hear coming from one of the negro waiters, in a most apologetic tone of voice "very sorry Sah, guess da-aint no liquor in dis house, all done get drunk up dis afternoon". For a moment we were speechless then after we had recovered a little sent for the manager and demanded an explanation. It turned out they had not expected any visitors that night as the hotel was closing next day for the summer months, so the Mayor or some other local magnate with a few kindred spirits had made a day of it and finished all that was left of their stock of drinkables, and left the cellars empty.

However the boss sent one of the negroes to search the little town for what he could find, and when about midnight he returned with a basket full of beer bottles peace was once more restored and we retired to rest feeling much better pleased with America, in general and Punta Gorda, in particular. The moral of this being, when travelling in the States, eat whenever you have the chance, and always have with you a flask of some soothing beverage for one never knows when they may run their heads into a prohibition State, the result being, a more or less lengthy period of enforced blue ribbonism.







But to return to our house-boat, which was much like much like any other, but larger, it was about 100 ft. by 40 ft over all and was carried by two long pontoons. A hall occupied the centre of the boat from end to end, and this was divided by curtains into a sitting room, a dining room and smoke room and bar; on either side of the hall were rows of small cabins opening on the inside to the hall and on the outside to a veranda which ran round the building and was provided on one side with steps that ran down to the water's edge, for landing at in the small boats.

There were some 15 or 18 of us aboard, about half English and half American, and a very jolly crew they were on the whole.

The place was tolerably cool and comfortable in spite of cockroaches, which were as large as mice and could fly wonderfully well, much to the alarm of some ladies aboard.

When first we got out to Florida, we found our floating domicile moored in what seemed then a beautifully sheltered little bay on the East coast of the Island of La Costa some 2½ miles south of Boca Grande pass where we did most of our fishing.





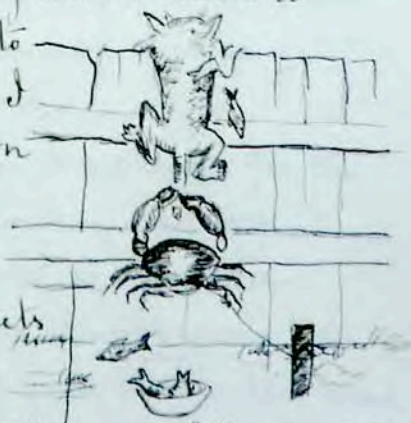
"I wonder why that cat is so sad!"

On shore were two or three wooden shanties inhabited by Spanish fishermen, who caught the mullet we used for bait and who also did a thriving trade in both black and white guides, in smuggled spirits and cigars. Besides the Spanish settlement there were a few palmetto

shacks where the negroes lived, and on a small island close by, the encampment of the white guides.

This bay was the rendezvous in bad weather of all kinds of small sailing craft, fishing smacks, sponge-boats and such like, which ran in for shelter from the stormy waters of the Gulf. That they did have storms there we were to learn later on, but that's another story.

Looking back over many and varied angling experiences I have at last come to the sorrowful conclusion that I must be a very Jonah among fishermen, it may be I am not the only one and I should very much like to hear what some of our friends have to say on the subject. What I refer to is this, wherever and whenever I go fishing I always seem to land on the very worst season that the oldest angler on the waterside has ever known. Of course one expects that sort of thing to happen now and then, but when it comes to every time and every place alike, well! it gets a trifle monotonous.



"The reason why"



43 Jan 155  
A year or two ago I thought I would try a so-called angler's paradise for sea-trout up in the Hebrides, when I landed I found 14 fishermen there and they were all calling the place, the weather and the fish (when they had the chance) names. After the usual blank week my gillie remarked to me "Man I dinna ken what's taken the fishing, a're never seen the like out, noo last year ye just could na help filling yer basket they were that keen to take yer flees."

From Scotland I went to Ireland, but it was just the same and I was expecting it, when Mick said to me one day, after I had been hopelessly flogging a pool some time "Shure, an your honour throws a foine loine, but it's no good at all, at all, Divil a bit of a fish is in the water this season and last year they were that thick there was no room for wather in the river at all, but shure, on it's a powerful dry day, your honour!"

Having had enough of Ireland I came back to give English waters another trial, and turned my steps Horton-wards, here at any rate I thought I should do alright, river stocked with fish, nobody fishing it nothing to do but show them my membership ticket and they would come out and jump into my creel - but no - after several days of blanks, ones and twos I ask Hunt for an explanation and of course get the usual one "worst season for years."

I did think and hope there might be a change for the better when I got as far away as Florida, and at first this seemed as though it might be so, for when we landed out there every one said it was going to be a good season, but after fishing for a week or two and not doing anything very grand (this was the end of March) they began to talk about the middle or end of April being the best time, by the end of April they told us we



could expect to do much before the hot weather in May, then when the hot weather in May came, they began to think there was something wrong with the season and told us wonderful yarns of great hauls that had been made in day gone by. By that time I had concluded that even American air and water were not strong enough to change my luck.

Still in spite of the bad season I must confess we had sport enough with the big herring and other fish of Florida to make me very ready to repeat the trip if ever the chance occurs.

My friend having been out before and knowing the ropes had written beforehand and engaged guides for all the party. The guides are of all colours and kinds, Americans, Scotch, Cubans, half castes and black and very from very good to quite the reverse.

Perhaps the best of all the guides were two or three white men, after them the same number of negroes, I had a very good black fellow, who rejoiced in the very inappropriate name of "Whitehead" but he was generally known by the name of "Bud".

He was about 19 or 20, as strong as a bullock and a regular glutton for work, very quiet and civil, and as keen on the sport as could be, almost too much so for he would drag me out of my bunk at all sorts of unearthly hours, "just to have another try."

He was a very good hand with a boat, and altogether as first rate a guide as could be wished for.

The guides get very good pay, from 3 to 4 dollars a day; they find their own boat but the angler has to provide them with lunch and also pays extra for bait.

There was a good deal of jealousy and ill-feeling between the whites and the blacks, the whites



seeming to think that the negroes were spoiling their job for them, and at times when the fellows were filled up with raw spirits, the rival factions vented their feelings by blazing into each others camps, at night, I don't think they ever did much harm though it might have been rather awkward for us on the houseboat if they had happened to use Winchester's instead of revolvers for once or twice we heard we heard bullets pattering round us in the water as we on the veranda taking our after-dinner smoke.

It did not take us very long to get settled down in our hotel, our boxes were unpacked, tackle fixed up, and early next morning "Bud" was round at the steps waiting to take and introduce me to his highness the Tarpon.

Some say that one's first tiger and first tarpon are the greatest events of a lifetime, I can't just say what my feelings were when we started out that glorious morning, but, whatever they were, they did not materialise, for we toiled all day and caught nothing.

I don't think I ever touched a tarpon, I did have one or two tugs but they came to nothing, and it is impossible to say from the way fish takes the bait whether it is a tarpon or no.

Sometimes he comes as gently as a roach and at other times you feel as though a bit of mother earth had come up from the bottom and hung on to your hook; the only sure way to tell if you have a tarpon on is to wait till he jumps and thus he almost invariably does as soon as he is struck. I think I only saw one fish landed that did not show himself at all till the gaff was almost in him.

The second day I did a little better for I had hold of two fish but lost them both after the first or second jump.



There is a good deal of luck in striking, for some parts of the mouth are so horny that the hardest strike will not drive the barb home.

One fish landed out of three or four strikes is about the average.

After losing the two fish I had a run of blank days, the monotony on one occasion being broken by the capture of a Jewfish or Great Sea Bass. These are unworldly bites, and give no sport at all, it is simply a question of dead hand pulling inch by inch from first to last. As soon as their heads are above water they blow themselves out so they cannot sink again and are easily brought alongside and unhooked; the one in question was 6 ft. x 4 ft. girth and weighed 190 lbs.

At last luck favoured me, we had been rowing about for an hour or two one morning when I felt a slight touch and struck as I thought very hard. "Bud" yelled at me to strike again and strike harder. I did so till I thought something was bound to go, for it seemed to me I was fast in the bottom, but away went the line with a wild shriek, in spite of thumb brake which was on as hard as I could hold it and 50 yards away, out he came.

What a glorious picture is a jumping tarpon, but it required the artist's brush rather than the pen, to do the subject anything like justice especially with the surroundings one has in Florida.

On either side low lying islands covered with vivid green palms and bordered with dazzling white strands of broken shell for background, blue sea and bluer sky and against this hanging for a moment high above you in the air, six feet of burnished silver —

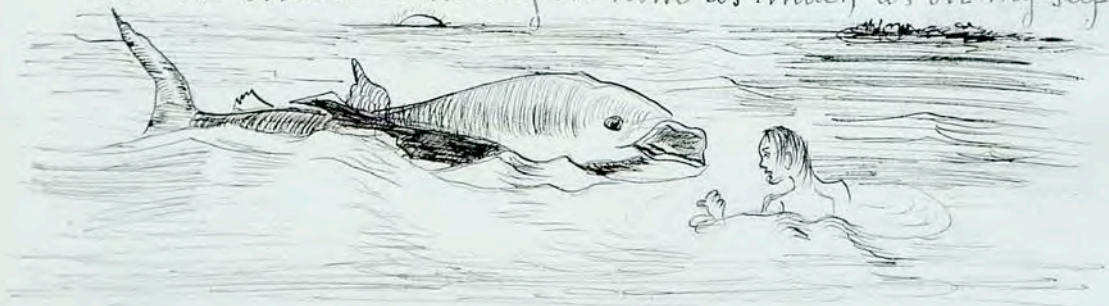




— the great scales flashing like great heliographs in the sun, as he savagely shakes his head, like a terrier with a rat, in vain endeavour let us hope, to get rid of that irritating hook.

But we have quickly to dismiss this picture from our minds for the present and attend to something more practical for he is in the water again and off with a mighty rush. By this time we have got the butt of the rod into the leather socket provided for that purpose on the front of our seat, and begin to put some pressure on him. This brings him out of the water two or three times in quick succession.

After that he keeps more to his native element and just runs round; ten or fifteen minutes of this sort of thing quiet him a little and I begin to have hopes that the strain is telling on him as much as on myself.



for I can't help thinking it is quite a toss up whether I kill the tarpon or he kills me.

Gradually I get in the line, a few inches at a time till at last I can see him near the surface of the water. 20 or 30 paces from the boat. We make for shore and land, but he's not done yet and away he goes again with another 100 yards of line. I am fast coming to the conclusion that I'm done, and not the fish, and feel that I might conscientiously say with Mr Briggs of old "Thank the Lord he's gone"; but he's not gone yet, and slowly and painfully with



aching arms, cramped fingers, and no mind to speak of, start recovering that lost 100 yards of line.

At last he is within a few yards of the shore, Bud is up to his middle in the water, gaff in hand waiting for him but it is not to be yet. Again the reel sings as he takes off line, not very much this time but too much for me, for I'm done, absolutely done and ignominiously hand the reel to my boy. Another few moments and my first tarpon was high and dry on the beach.

Sport among the tarpon was very uncertain all last Spring and I came to the conclusion that they were just as capricious in their feeding as the most educated trout.

Generally there were 20 or 30 rods out and many days not more than two or three fish were taken altogether. often none at all; then other days every one would get fish, and a fine sight it was, on a blazing hot day to see the fleet of small boats dancing about on the waves, and all around them, above them and sometimes into them leaping tarpon flashing in the sun.

I had one spell of fourteen days, fishing hard all the time and never had a touch from a right fish all the time, then one day late in the season, I ran twelve and landed four so as I said before, sport varied considerably.

But even if we could not get tarpon there were lots of other fish both large and small, to keep us busy.

Channel bass which ran up to 20 or 30 lbs were pretty numerous and gave nice sport in fine tackle.

The best fighting after the tarpon was the king fish, the largest I saw was about 40 lbs, they belong to the mackerel family the same as the Tunna of California. Even on tarpon tackle they take a lot of bringing in; in fact their catches are quicker and more fierce than the tarpon himself, but they do not jump when hooked though after small fish they make tremendous leaps.



Large turtles were often seen in the grass, the natives catch them with a harpoon and salt them down for food; we tried some in soup which was not bad, but the steaks were awful, more like old leather.

There were several varieties of the ray family, one known as the whip ray was very common. He is rather a handsome fellow with black and white spotted back like a leopard.

They run to a large size, one which was foul hooked by a lady angler and afterwards harpooned and landed, measured 8 ft. over the flippers.



These whip-rays jump a great height out of the water presumably to dislodge the suckers that fasten on them; it is rather an uncanny sensation, especially when fishing at night, to hear one of these great things land with a resounding splash within a few yards of your boat.

The giant ray or so-called devil fish also frequented the grass in very hot weather. My first introduction to them was whilst fishing in a very small boat one quiet day. Hearing a noise ahead like the sound of a great wave breaking, I involuntarily ducked and next moment was drenched to the skin; looking round to see the cause of the commotion we saw a giant ray, basking on the surface of the water, He had evidently just come up, ahead of our boat for a sun bath and had given us a wetting in so doing.



We hollered for one of the other boats, where had a harpoon aboard, and soon they were fast into him and being towed out to sea at a great pace, first one boat hanging on astern of the leader, then another and another till there was a procession of five of us, yet in spite of us having our oars out and backing water that Devil fish towed us several miles out into the Gulf. On the finish the harpoon drew and we lost him. A few days later, the same man harpooned and landed a smaller one which measured 14 ft. from tip to tip of flippers.

Large saw fish are also found in these waters or rather in the shallower waters of the harbour. I remember seeing the photo of one about 12 ft. long that Ben Hope (tackle-maker New York) caught on tarpon tackle.

One of about the same size got fastened up in the fishing nets and was brought ashore while we were at Boca Grande.

Sharks, however, were the most numerous of the big fish, the pass towards the end of May simply swarmed with them, all sorts shapes and sizes from baby sharks two feet long to big fellows 14 or 15 ft. long.

Mackerel Sharks, hammer heads, the common white-shark, shovel nose, and leopard shark; they were all there and a great nuisance they proved when fishing, for at last it was a toss up whether we could land our fish or whether the Sharks would have him first. A Shark is not quick enough to tackle a tarpon when on his own, but as soon as he gets a bit tired and played out he becomes an easy prey to these greedy brutes. Fishing one day I had hold of a 90 lb tarpon, when he began to kick about in a very unusual manner, then went off with a long run that ended very abruptly, at first I thought he was gone but as



I could feel something on the line I reeled up and found on the hook nothing but the head of my fish, a shark had bitten him clean through the shoulders. The natives say sharks are very timid, and will never tackle a man in the water. I certainly could not hear of any one ever having been damaged by them but I would not care to give them half a chance to get at me.

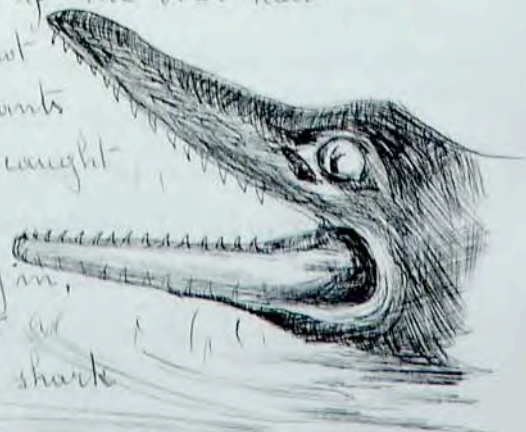
In an ordinary way they may be shy, but once they have tasted blood they are bold enough.

I shall not easily forget a sight I witnessed one day. A fellow angler had been playing a fish some little time, when his guide shouted out there was a shark after it, they backed the boat towards the fish, reeling in fast and making as much noise as possible by rattling the rowlocks and thumping on the bottom of the boat so as to scare the shark away. They managed to get the harpoon along side, but close behind it appeared the great dorsal fin of a sea-pirate. He rushed in and seized a mouthful, and before you could say Jack Robinson there two or three more big fellows fighting for the carcase. The angler tried to get his fish into the boat but as fast as he hauled it up they pulled it back again, even running their great ugly snouts up into the gunnel, although the guide was standing up and slamming them over the head with an oar, not would they clear out till they had taken every bit of the fish.

I could not help thinking that if the boat had happened to upset there would not have been much left of its occupants.

Another time an angler had caught a small fish perhaps four

pounds weight, and was reeling in, when a four ft. shark snatched it and got hooked, he played the shark





out and got it within 20 yds. of his boat when two 9 ft. sharks went for it and for a few minutes there was a grand battle royal, on the surface of the water, between these two rivals, eventually one of the big chaps swallowed the head end of the little fellow, and he got hooked but speedily smashed the tackle and got away.

Often when fishing for tarpon, small sharks would take the bait, they were rather good fun, for the first few rushes, but after that were easily brought along side and shot. Big sharks also sometimes took the bait and several times I was fast in them for an hour or more but could never get near enough to put a bullet in them. Von Hofe of New York got hold of a shark one morning about 11 o'clock, by two in the afternoon he was out of sight somewhere in the Gulf of Mexico, and was picked up by a steam launch later on in the evening, having tried of the amusement and broken his line.

Another thing that at times gave rise to a little mild excitement was the weather, the tide through the pass was generally so strong that it made the water rather lumpy in places and a little wind against this soon put on a jump of a sea; playing a tarpon under these circumstances was a pretty wet job, and how the guides managed to stand up in their small boats and gaff a fish as big as themselves I never could quite make out.

If it did come on to blow hard, there was nothing for it but to go ashore and wait till it was over, these squalls were very fierce but did not last long generally.

We had one big blow though towards the end of April. The weather had been a little unsettled for a few days but nothing to stop us fishing. The morning in question was bright and hot as usual, though on the horizon were very heavy banks of clouds piled up.