RAMBLES WITH A FISHING ROD

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BY

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PREFACE.

THE following sketches are the results of some vacations chiefly spent in rambling about the Continent with a fishing-rod. Written on leisure evenings on the spot, they can pretend to have little literary merit, and will doubtless appear trivial to the serious traveller in search of information. Indeed I should scarcely have thought of republishing this selection from desultory work done in hours of idleness, had I not often been asked by friends and others for hints upon fishing expeditions. Nor am I certain that the angler who stays at home may not find something in these pages to interest him. I have even a faint hope, judging from what people tell me at dinner-parties,

that there are some unconscientious readers without the moral courage to undertake the perusal of the tremendous volumes in which modern travellers are wont to tell us their experiences—not always of unknown lands—who may read a little book like this when they are tired.

I can safely say that the actual sport obtained during the tours I tell of was less than a fisherman who intended to get as large baskets as possible would meet with. For these expeditions were not undertaken with the business-like and earnest energy with which we go fishing in this country, if we make it the chief object of a holiday, be it of a day or of a month.

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RAMBLES WITH A FISHING-ROD.

I.

'AN AUTUMN RAMBLE IN THE SALZKAMMERGUT AND TYROL.'[1]

A PLEASANT and striking sail of fifty miles down the Danube from Passau brings a traveller to Linz, a hot and dusty town, from whence it is easy to find the way to the mountains of the Salzkammergut by Gmunden and the Traun See. This lake contains plenty of fish—trout, pike, and char. The last is the kind which seems most prized, but one hears of very large trout being taken from time to time in the nets. Throughout its length of eight

[1] 1873.

miles it is a characteristic piece of Tyrolese scenery, for there are the limestone mountains with their grey summits and dark pine-covered slopes, which on calm bright days are reflected in the placid lake. Gmunden is a bright and pretty town, with a good deal of local colour from the whiteness of the houses and the redness of their tiled roofs; but half-way down the lake is a more lovely spot, Traunkirchen, which would be a charming place from which to fish the Traun See. At the upper end of the lake the Traun flows in, and then, by taking the road for twelve miles, you follow the course of the stream to Ischl, through a deep valley magnificently clothed with wood, made more attractive to the fisherman by the pretty stream which is continually in sight, the sides of which are, except here and there, fairly free from trees.

At Ischl it is or was possible to obtain leave to fish the Traun by paying two florins for a card which allowed one person eight days' angling; and as the water is rented by the proprietor of the Kaiserin Elizabeth Hotel, the permission had to be obtained there. But the amount of angling which I had was very small. We reached Ischl late in the afternoon, and I

had hardly more than what can be called a look at the water before dinner. Indeed I had only risen a couple of fish when a dam in a mill-stream was opened, which poured forth a quantity of muddy water, and at once put an end to any sport for that day. The trout-fishing was, from what could be gathered about it, fair in the spring, especially in May—and in the autumn there is the grayling in season; and to any fisherman who takes a pleasure in his art, the Traun must always have a kind of literary interest, from being the stream by whose banks so much of the delightful chat in 'Salmonia' is supposed to take place. Still Ischl is too full to be pleasant, and rather expensive, though if you live in a place frequented by an imperial court you cannot expect to pay peasants' prices; and being low in a valley, it has not the mountain freshness of a more open spot. From Ischl the Traun may be followed to the lake of Hallstadt. The fishing on this part, which is called the Hinter Traun, belongs to the same tenant as that below Ischl, but is generally considered the best piece of water. Then above this lake comes another stream, the Ober Traun, which descends from Aussee, and is in the hands of

the landlord of Seeauers Hotel at Hallstadt; but except for the last two miles there is next to no fishing, for the river runs between tremendous precipices of limestone rock, the Parstein descending hundreds of feet to the right bank of the river. It would not, however, be easy to find a finer walk than that above this turbulent stream; still, it is rather an expedition for the pedestrian than the angler.

It would be out of place to describe our walk across the mountains from Ischl to the hamlet of Alt-Aussee: the character of such a path is familiar to any one who has passed his holidays in the Alps. But intending it to be an easy beginning to our mountain scramble, we lost our way, got utterly out of our reckoning in the thick mist which came down upon us, and had about two hours' extra walking of a rough and fatiguing kind, made more troublesome by having to carry a knapsack and a fishing-rod. An incident of the walk was not without a strange interest. Near its end we met a fisherman just about to begin in a small stream. He was fishing with a minnow: an ordinary double hook appeared from the body near the tail, and the head was half hidden by a bell-

shaped piece of lead, through which the gut ran and thus connected the hook with the line. Forty-seven years ago the same tackle was used, for Sir Humphry Davy almost on this very spot was struck by it. "A fisherman of Aussee went with me," he writes in his diary. "His flies had a hair link, too coarse; his mode of fishing with a minnow curious, and not bad, had his tackle been finer—a loop of lead, two hooks; the lead supplies the head, so that it is the drop minnow reversed. He caught two fish to my ten." A rude sketch in the margin of the book can leave no doubt of the similarity of the tackles. So little do the methods of angling improve among these mountaineers.

Very glad we were to find ourselves at length at the Hotel Am See, which is within a stone's throw of the water, as its name implies. The Aussee is about a mile and a half long, and half a mile in breadth, is surrounded by mountains, and is quite 2000 feet above the sea. At the north end the mountains retreat, and a green slope, dotted here and there with trees, touches the water of the lake, whilst to the south the contrast is striking. Here the Aussee is bounded by a magnificent amphitheatre of

rock, and the Loser and the Lammersberg seem to have divided to let in this little sheet of water. As regards facilities for fishing it, the proprietor of the hotel I have mentioned can give permission to angle; and if a boat is required, one which will hold two persons costs fifty kreutzers an hour—that is, about sixpence; and one which will hold four persons is charged for according to the number of those who use it, at the rate of thirty kreutzers a-head. In spite of the fatigue of the previous day, we were early out of bed, and by half-past eight were in a boat on the lake. It was as smooth as glass, reflecting the mountains which overhung it, and the air was invigorating and fresh, as it is on a fine morning in the mountains. We were assured that no one takes fish *mit der angel*, chiefly, I imagine, because no one ever tries. However, we were determined to make the experiment, unfavourable though the morning was, and I soon had a phantom minnow out, and set my companion to scull leisurely along where the shallows were joined by the deeper water. In less than ten minutes, I confess rather to our surprise, we had hooked a fish, and he was presently landed, somewhat

over a pound in weight. Another run soon followed, though nothing was added to the basket; but it did not take long to secure a second, a little smaller than his companion. To make a long story short, we had several more runs, but obtained only one more addition to our basket—a nice fish, nearly a pound and a half in weight; and so returned, after a couple of hours on the lake, with these three. The fish we had taken were *corregoni*, but which variety of this still little-known species I cannot say. They were called at the inn *alten*, but these local names tend rather to confuse than to enlighten a traveller. The noticeable fact, however, about this take was, that as a rule it is popularly supposed that the *corregoni* are only to be caught with nets, and not by angling; but the rapidity with which they came to the minnow seems to show that the species which inhabit Aussee are by no means shy fish, or disinclined to take a bait. It would have been interesting to have spent more time on this lake, and to have obtained more definite conclusions from a longer period of fishing than we did in this wander through the Salzkammergut.

I may pass over a nearly unsuccessful afternoon's fly-fishing in the upper part of the Gosau Bach, a tributary of the Hallstadter See, which has its rise in the two blue Gosau lakes, which in their turn are fed by the great Dachstein Glacier. Nor was better luck in store when we reached Bad Gastein, after several days' fine mountain walking. Permission to fish was duly obtained at Straubinger's hotel, but a morning was spent quite fruitlessly. Nearer the junction of the Gastein stream with the Salzach, in the more open part of the valley, would probably be a better spot than so far in the heart of the Hohe Tauern range as Bad Gastein lies. But throughout its course, from its rise among the glaciers of the Venediger Alps to where it pours its grey waters into the Inn at the edge of the Bavarian plains, the Salzach is nourished by tributaries which, in some part of their rapid course, will be found to contain trout small or great. It is one of the chief attractions of the district which goes roughly under the name of the Tyrol, the Salzkammergut, and the Bavarian Alps, that t is so intersected by mountain-streams, by stately rivers, and by sheets of water from

mountain-tarns, like the Gosau See, to navigable waters, like the Lake of Gmunden. They all add to the charms and variety of the scenery, and they all afford more or less amusement to the traveller who would fish from time to time. At Heiligenblut the rod was quite laid aside for the alpenstock; and at last to descend from the snows of the Gross Glockner and the ice-fields of the Pasterze Glacier to the glowing valley and rich vineyards of Botzen and Meran, was one of those changes which make up the pleasures of travelling. The richness of the valley of the Adige is such that to English eyes it has something almost of unreality. Take one step from the roadside, and you may walk for miles beneath canopies of vines, from which the ripe grapes are hanging; and these, with the variety and colouring of the peasants' dresses, and the distant peaks of the dolomite mountains, broken into sharp and jutting points, create a scene of great fertility and beauty. But my stay in this rich land was short. Fifteen miles of dusty road, and Meran is reached, lying completely underneath the mountains, and greatly frequented in the autumn by delicate persons, who sun them-

selves, and imagine that they have found a panacea for their complaints in the very pleasant "grape cure"—about as harmless a system, if moderately indulged in, as the "whey cure," and if anything more agreeable. From Meran through the Vintsgau and valley of the Upper Adige, or Etsch, runs one of the trunk-roads which connect Italy and Germany. Thirty-five miles from Meran comes the small town of Mals. Here the Trafoi Thal branches off to the west, and the traveller passes through it over the Stelvio Pass to the Baths of Bormio, and on to the Lake of Como. Still another seven miles, and the highest part of this long valley is attained, and here is the little village of St Valentin auf der Haid, or, more properly, der Heide—the village on the heath.

A stage further is the village of Nauders, on the river Inn; one road proceeds up the valley to the Engadine, another down the valley to Innsbrück, which again "bifurcates," as the French say, at Landeck, and forms one route to the Lake of Constance. At the top of this valley lie three small lakes; that nearest Mals is known as the Haid See. On its banks is St Valentin, then comes the smaller Mitter See,

and next the dark Reschen See, in which the Adige rises; at its upper end are the white houses of Dorf Reschen. Most travellers pass these lakes by without much notice, intent only at gazing at the Ortler Spitz as it rises high above all the other mountains. But years ago I had observed a little Gasthaus zur Forelle, and could not now leave these lakes without a short stay. The inn at St Valentin is the Gasthaus zum Weissen Kreuz, where I found myself about nine o'clock on a cold and cloudy morning, which made the place look somewhat dreary and desolate. The little lake was ruffled by a good breeze, so I lost no time in putting my rod together, and was soon at the water's edge. But for an hour I fished without success; and then, having noticed that the river entered the lake a field or two off, hoped for better luck about the gravel banks at the mouth of the stream. I was not disappointed; a fine grayling was soon hooked and landed, a good pound in weight, after much anxiety of mind, for, travelling with as little luggage as possible, I had come without a landing-net, and the banks were somewhat steep. Very soon there was another rise; and before an hour was gone,

I was the possessor of three handsome grayling. Then the sun came out, and the wind went down, and the clouds cleared away, and there was an end of the fishing. But there was still the magnificent Ortler Spitz to gaze at. In the foreground was the sparkling lake, then came darkly wooded hills, and last of all the white mass of the Ortler towering above Monte Cristallo and the peaks of the snowy range. It is one of the finest views I know, and is best seen from the doorstep of the Weissen Kreuz; it is quite equal in all respects, except that of gracefulness, to the Jungfrau or Gross Glockner, and should be some consolation to the unsuccessful fisherman who cares at all for beautiful scenery.

After dinner a visit was paid to the *Fischmeister*, or fisherman, who rents the lake and river as far as the Mitter See, Carl Stocker by name, a thoroughly obliging man, who was ready to give all the information he could. He and the others who rent the other lakes send their fish to Botzen, Meran, or Innsbrück, and obtain for grayling and trout twenty-five kreutzers (sixpence) per pound; so, when the expense of the journey and the innkeepers' profits are taken

into consideration, it is no wonder that the innocent foreigner, who imagines he is eating a cheap dish, finds, when he gets the bill, that he has been indulging in a luxury. This same amount per pound the angler might perhaps be required to pay for all the fish he takes; but, as a matter of fact, a gulden when he leaves is all the fisherman expects. Indeed he would not take any money at all from me, but begged to have two or three of my flies, with which he was quite captivated. He made his own flies, and rough specimens they were, not very various—though that matters little; but they were very rude, chiefly things which had a distant resemblance to large red palmers—the body a piece of red wool, and the hackle long and straggling, of a light-brown colour. Having soon got on friendly terms with this man, I was able to borrow his curious old boat, but it leaked like a sieve, and from its peculiar build persisted in turning round and round; so it soon became apparent that it was hopeless to look after both the trolling-line and the boat. A better amusement seemed to be to accompany the fisherman in a netting expedition up the stream. He used a triangular net on a long pole, which he

scraped along the bottom, and round stones and into holes. Soon he had a nice grayling, and then, to my horror, a fine trout became a victim—a beautiful fish, which one longed to have at the end of the line. But I was almost glad he took no more while I remained with him—not very long, however, for it began to grow dark, and visions of broiled grayling for supper, and an appetite excited by mountain air, made a return to the inn necessary.

Next morning a cloudless blue sky greeted me on rising, but I was soon off to the head of the Mitter See, half an hour's walk beneath some rugged mountains, which surround the lakes on all sides. It was a likely place for grayling, as a stream entered here, and there were plenty of gravel banks, but there was no wind, and the sun at nine o'clock was very hot; so I turned to the main river, the very first part of the Adige as it flows between the Mitter and Reschen Sees. To my delight, after all the torrents I had lately seen, it proved to be a narrow but bright clear stream, with a gravel bottom, large clumps of weeds, and some splendid pools, high banks—flowing through meadow-land, in which herds of pretty fawn-coloured

cows, belonging to the neighbouring hamlet of Graun, with tinkling bells, were feeding. But it was low and clear; I scarcely hoped for sport; but to overcome difficulties is not the least of an angler's pleasures. Then my rod came to grief; it had to be temporarily patched up, and the sun grew hotter. But with a little blue dun fly and fine casting-line, and a good deal of manœuvring about the banks, I was not yet without hopes of sport. Soon a nice fish came up, looked at the fly, and went off again; then a little fellow inspected it; and at last came one with a rush, and the blue dun had not been in vain. The banks were very high, and there was some difficulty in bringing safely out of the water a grayling of three-quarters of a pound. Another completed the morning's total; but I lost—quite deservedly, for he was treated too roughly—a fine fish, in the best pool in the stream; and another or two ought perhaps to have been taken, but catching soft-mouthed fish like grayling with very small flies is delicate sport. The heat at last grew too much for me, and I stopped fishing shortly before twelve o'clock. In the afternoon I borrowed both the old boat

and the fisherman's son, and took a minnow all round the lake, but without any success. But some fishing when the sun went behind the mountains, about the mouth of the stream, added four more grayling to my day's basket. The artist or the tourist would have sighed for such a brilliant day, but the fisherman would have done better with a sky of less Italian clearness and splendour.

Next morning, I determined to have a real good day, fishing up the stream to Graun. By the way, I ought to say that there are two inns at the village of Reschen, and two boats at the lake, so a change of quarters from St Valentin is easy. I intended to dine there, and go over the same water when the sun went down. At eight o'clock operations were begun with a small whirling dun. There was a pleasant north wind blowing, which tempered the sun's rays and ruffled the water on the pools, and some clouds at the end of the valley seemed to portend a good day's sport. It would be tedious to a reader to relate each little circumstance of the morning. Soon the clouds gathered and the rain fell in heavy showers. The grayling were hungry; by half-past eleven my bag con-

tained a dozen. One o'clock came: I was wet and hungry, and not inclined to go on with the fishing; so I took down my rod and returned to St Valentin with a dozen and a half of grayling, some strung schoolboy-fashion on a stick, for my bag was but small. The "Englischer Herr," as he passed through the village, created quite a sensation among the unsporting peasants. A few ounces over 10 lb. weight of fish had been taken, the largest being rather more than $1\frac{3}{4}$ lb., the smallest $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Several more would have come to hand with the aid of a landing-net, others escaped from various causes; but on the whole, it was a pleasant morning's sport.

The stream, after half a mile, divides into two branches, each of which is excellent ground; it then reunites again opposite the village of Graun. There is scarcely a tree upon the banks, though here and there a solitary willow dots the plain. Fishermen, like everybody else, must live: and I can honestly say that the Weissen Kreuz, though rough to look at, affords excellent quarters; and that were every landlady as kind and attentive as Frau Paldorf, inns would become almost homes.

But one trait of the Tyrolese, which every traveller will vouch for, is their unvarying kindness to strangers; it is a pleasure to wander among so happy and good-hearted a people.

St Valentin stands 4000 feet above the sea-level. To the east are the snow mountains and wild valleys of the Oetzthal Alps, which can be easily reached. The Langtauferen Thal from Grauns leads right under the snow-capped Weisse Kugel. Around the hamlet is the heath, cultivated entirely in square chessboard-looking patches of hay, grass, or corn; then pine-trees, and then the rocky peaks. In May and June, which is the only time of the year when the *Fischmeister* uses a fly, the fisherman will get some trout. My sport shows that grayling may be caught in September. The largest fish taken in the lake with the net this year was said to be 9 lb. As to the number of anglers, you fish for days and weeks, and are alone. Within mortal memory this place appears to have been visited only by two, a gentleman from Vienna and an English captain; so the fish are not like their Welsh or Scotch brethren—ever sought after and terrified. Nor is it likely that this state of things will change; and should I re-

visit St Valentin, I shall probably be able to repeat with satisfaction a Latin pun which was painted on a library door in an old German castle, and which anglers as much as students can appreciate—

"Solitudo sola beatitudo."

II.

PIKE-FISHING IN THE BLACK FOREST.[1]

IT is probable that the very nearness of the Black Forest to one of the chief routes to Switzerland is a cause of its being so little frequented by travellers. Of all those who are hurrying to and from Switzerland, and passing by the main line of railway which runs along the valley of the Rhine from Strasbourg to Bâle, not one in a hundred forsakes the beaten track for the primitive recesses of the Schwarzwald. A hurried look from the carriage-window is cast at the hills darkened in places with the sombre green of the pine-trees, and lighted here and there with the bright pastures and cheerful villages which form the outskirts of this interesting tract of country. For interest-

[1] 1874.

ing it is both from the natural attractions of its scenery and from the admirable character of its people. But forest, in the common acceptation of that word, it is not. Indeed, the general idea that a tract of country denominated by this name is necessarily overgrown for miles on every side by ancient trees, is absolutely erroneous. In medieval days the forest was what would now be termed uncultivated land, on which, no doubt, trees to a great extent were the predominant feature. Thus the great forests of Normandy were never simply and solely masses of trees. But the main features of the people of the Black Forest are certainly their simplicity and their industry. Probably throughout Europe no class of men are more well-to-do than the clockmakers of the Black Forest. By their own exertions they have localised in a comparatively small tract of country a trade requiring ingenuity and cleverness. For if Tryberg and Furtwangen be taken as the centres, the clockmaking trade of the Schwarzwald will be found in and around these two towns—or rather, populous and flourishing villages. But a most interesting industry is passed by innumerable travellers,

many of whom, from the nature of their occupations and studies in this country, would find an inspection of this ancient and flourishing trade a source of long-continuing pleasure. Without an actual visit, it is almost impossible to understand the wonderful hold which clockmaking has taken over this ingenious people, and how thoroughly the Schwarzwalder must be identified with the clockmaker. His trade is an hereditary and ancient heirloom, handed down from generation to generation since remote medieval times.[1] But even the most interesting industry would not be a sufficient attraction for the stranger without those natural beauties which are one of the chief pleasures of the holiday-maker. The country has a certain sternness and wildness which are quite different from the grander beauties of Switzerland, or those alternations of magnificence and sweetness which are presented by the mountains and valleys of the Tyrol. It may be that this is one of the reasons why this tract of country is so little visited by the English tourist. He is here comparatively unknown; but schools from Heid-

[1] See Appendix—"The Clockmakers of Schwarzwald."

elberg or other German towns, university students walking from place to place, are, on the other hand, frequently met with. Thus the absence of American and English travellers has prevented the construction of large hotels, and the tourist must be contented with the rough accommodation of essentially country inns. But it is the houses of the Black Forest which give not a little the peculiar character to its scenery; for the upper storey of many of them serves as the hayloft of the farm which lies outside the village. The great black and wide-spreading roofs are thoroughly in keeping with the dark background formed by the neighbouring pine-woods.

But it is time to leave these generalities and introduce the reader to our hotel at the village of Schluch See. The Gasthaus zum Sternen is a fair example of the half hotel, half beer-house which serves the stranger for a resting-place in the Black Forest. As the top storey is a hayloft, and as the smell of the hay pervades the whole house, it is not surprising that the stranger is continually under the impression that he has got by mistake into a hay-bay. Bedrooms fill the first floor of the long low

building, whilst a somewhat dreary *Speise Saal*, adorned with portraits of the Emperor and Empress of Germany, takes up most of the ground-floor. The Schluch See itself is nearly two miles long, and from a quarter to half a mile in breadth, lying almost due east and west. The hills to the south are covered with thick pine-woods, which come down to the edge of the water, giving the lake a dark and sombre character. But below the village there is plenty of cultivated land, chiefly these carefully tended and closely mown fields, crossed by tiny water-courses, which are so different from the English meadow. Among these, perched on a hill well above the lake, stands the village, some 2000 feet above the sea, which from its situation is undeniably healthy —more so than many places which, standing at a greater elevation, are locally less fresh and airy.

In the Black Forest the lake is well known as a good fishing-ground; but unfortunately, this reputation is caused only by the pike-fishing. No angler will despise a good day's pike-fishing; but it is, piscatorially at least, sad to see a fine sheet of water, fed by and supply-

ing small trout-streams, almost devoid of trout, excepting a few large ones which have survived a youth of peril. As soon as I began to talk to Herr Otto Ganter,—the landlord of the Zum Sternen,—I soon found that he was a fisherman himself, and, like all of the craft, greatly loved to catch his fish over again. As proof of his skill, he showed me in his tank a jack of seven pounds which he had taken the previous day. But what pleased him most was to tell of the huge pike which, a year or two before, an Italian prince had had the good fortune to catch in the lake. It was 30 lb. in weight; and this piscatorial feat was preserved for future anglers by a photographer at Ober Lenzkirch, who pictured the prince like St George over the Dragon, with the pike lying at his feet. A photograph had also been taken of the fish alone, and certainly I have seldom seen a finer specimen of a pike. It was easy to understand he would be hard to land; indeed Herr Ganter affirmed that the contest between prince and pike lasted for three hours. The result of mine host's best day's fishing this summer (1874) was 30 lb. of fish; but he seemed to consider from 15 to

20 lb. to be a fair day's sport, he and the said Italian having during seven days' fishing taken 150 lb. weight of pike.

The first morning of our stay was too hot and still for fishing; and though we went on the lake, we returned for the mid-day *table d'hôte* at half-past twelve, to find the table graced by a German school master and mistress, with a dozen pupils, who were engaged on one of those holiday tours through the Black Forest which are so common in Germany. It is a practice for which there is much to be said. It gives boys and girls an opportunity of seeing the world in an intelligent way; but it is one which could not be followed in England, where the expense of hotels and railways would soon disgust parents. At half-past five we again wended our way to the lake, as the sun was sinking, and the opposite side beneath the pine-woods was fully shaded. We had not rowed for ten minutes in the pleasant shade of the dark pines before we hooked and landed a jack of 3 lb. This was an unexpectedly good beginning, since the air was hot and the water quite calm; but though we rowed about for another hour, not another pike would look at

the minnow. Here live bait is considered inferior to artificial bait, and that which is generally used is a bright piece of metal shaped somewhat like a dace. The shores are lined in many places with beds of reeds, which stretch some way into the lake, and afford excellent hiding for pike. But in many parts the sides slope quickly down, and the water is deep close to the bank. In addition to pike, the lake is full of roach—or *Schoppen*, as they are locally called—which may be seen playing about in shoals in the still water. One of the boys of the school which I have mentioned, took a dozen or two in the morning with grasshoppers, —a bait which is easily procured, as the meadows resound with the "click, click" of this brisk little insect. Fishing for roach can scarcely be dignified with the name of sport, but it must afford as much pleasure as catching gudgeon from a punt beneath the woods of Bisham and Cliveden; and to sit in the shade of a fragrant and weird pine-wood, with scarcely a sound to break the stillness but the tinkle of the cow-bells, and see the sun lighting up the pastures and village opposite, is a pleasant form of quiet enjoyment. The same tranquil pleas-

ure is found, too, in the evening, whether one is walking home exchanging "good-nights" with the cheery peasants, or later on is listening to them as they sit round a table with big pipes and equally big tankards of beer, singing some of their simple songs.

The following morning was again too hot for fishing; and when "the noonday quiet holds the hill," and the sun shines from an unclouded sky, it is more enjoyable to sit and read on soft cushions of moss, with a sturdy pine for a support, than be scorched in a boat on the water. But as the afternoon grew cooler, we were tempted on to the lake—though, so far as fishing went, we might as well have remained on shore. We did not get so much as a run from a small jack; but in truth, the beauty of the day and the scene compensated largely for the absence of sport. Every yard we rowed showed us the distant landscape in varying forms and under different shades of light, whilst a bit of foreground, a grey rock, a lichen-covered pine, were noted as we passed along. It is this existence of compensations that is one of the greatest of attractions to a fisherman who is not wholly absorbed in the

mere pleasure of capturing fishes; for when they are in an unfavourable humour as regards the angler, it is probable that nature is visible in her most attractive forms.

Before we had finished our breakfast next day, Herr Ganter appeared in the *Speise Saal* with an invitation to accompany him on the lake. The day was overcast, and the surface of the lake was ruffled by a brisk breeze. As we went off to the boat, I could not prevent a laugh to myself at the comical appearance of my host. His short little body was arrayed in a grey suit, bound with green. His little felt hat was pulled well down over his nose, which was ruddy with exposure to the sun and wind. His small eyes twinkled behind a large pair of spectacles, and a perpetual laugh was on his face. A rod and a reel he despised, but used a large wooden winch and a large flat steel artificial bait, made by Hearder of Plymouth—the relic, probably, of some other English visitor. English fishing-tackle is always the envy of foreigners. More than once I have had offers both for rods and tackle, at prices which would have been distinctly remunerative.

It was nearly eleven before we were in the boat, and we at once rowed across to the other side of the lake, and had not been fishing for more than eight or ten minutes before a small jack was safely housed in the tank beneath the seat. This looked well as a beginning. The dark waves, too, were becoming larger, and the cloudy sky made the air cool and pleasant after the recent hot weather, and the sombreness of the day harmonised well with the gloominess of the pine-woods; so that, more than on previous days, there was a feeling that we were in the Black Forest. Soon came another "Aber noch ein" (here is another) from Herr Ganter, and his little eyes twinkled excitedly behind his spectacles, and he puffed energetically at a huge cigar of horrid tobacco. But the exclamation was premature, though presently we did secure another fish in the great triangular landing-net — a small pike of 3 lb. But we had now to wait for some time before we had another run; at last out went the line with a rush, and a distant splash showed that we were fast in a better fish. But all anglers know that a pike has no pluck; and whereas a trout of similar size would have fought gal-

lantly, a pike of 6 lb. soon allowed himself to be landed.

We had now been out somewhat more than an hour; and as I was to leave the Schluch See early in the afternoon, I could remain no longer with my good-natured acquaintance. But often in Germany, to vary the French proverb somewhat, man proposes, but the postmaster disposes. It was so in our case; for an inexorable rule obliged the traveller to have his luggage at the post an hour and a half before the *Post-wagen* departed. Five minutes were amply sufficient to label and book it; but red-tape was victorious. We had to remain, or to go on ourselves without any clothes; and to the astonishment of the officials, we preferred not to desert our garments, having no reason to urge us on our journey in a state of inconvenience. Once before much the same thing had happened to me; but in that instance I overcame the dominant spirit of Germany. It was at Offenburg, on the Baden State Railway. My portmanteau was lying in the office, whither it had been sent to await my arrival. The train was about shortly to depart, and everything was in order. But it was impossible for me to

have my property, because the superintendent had gone to his dinner, and the clerk on the spot was not authorised to give out luggage. But eventually perseverance prospered, and I went off with my portmanteau. But to return to the Schluch See. My enforced stay had one good consequence, at any rate. I was enabled to ascertain the result of Herr Ganter's fishing. He returned home at half-past three; but he had added only two more to the three fish I had helped him to take. The weight of the whole basket was between 13 and 14 lb.

Next day, with the sun shining brightly, we said good-bye to the Schluch See and its pure and bracing air, where we lived on comfortable German fare for seven-and-sixpence a-day, a higher rate than we should have paid had we remained for a longer time. Two hours' walk, and of course less time in a coach or carriage, brought us to St Blasien, a small village in a pleasant wooded valley, with some neat *pensions*, two or three small hotels, and an ancient abbey. The Alb rises some way above the village, where it is a small and rather shallow stream, and flows on through the fine scenery of the Albthal to join the Rhine at Albruck. When

I have been along it—which I have more than once—it seemed to contain plenty of small trout; but the water was so low and clear that I never cast a fly in it. But at St Blasien, at least, it is what we at home should call "poached." The Schwarzwalders' method of catching trout was in this wise: A number of stones are placed together at one end of a pool in the shape of a V, though the two sides do not join as in the actual letter. A net is held in this narrow part; and then the sportsmen proceed to splash about the pool, turn up stones, and do all they can to drive the fish between the two walls. Once inside, the only means by which most can escape is into the net at the bottom. When this sort of thing goes on, the angler is naturally not only disturbed from time to time in his day's fishing, but no little havoc is played with the stock of trout, especially when the water is low.

Some five or six miles below St Blasien, in the best part of the valley, is a neat little inn, Zum Engel, which, from all appearances, would be the best headquarters for the fishermen in the Albthal. These surmises are apt to be misleading. Still, I may add that the Kinsig from

Offenburg upwards has always looked to me a stream which should hold some fair trout and grayling; and it will lead the wanderer not only into the most characteristic parts of the Black Forest from the point of view of the sketcher, but to the interesting villages of Tryberg and Furtwangen, ideals of neatness and contentment, and the centre of the clockmaking trade, an industry the growth and nature of which is full of attraction to any thoughtful observer.

III.

IN CONNEMARA.[1]

IT is inconceivable that there can be any pleasure in undergoing the various discomforts which are shortly summed up in the two words "roughing it." Some people, indeed, seem to like discomfort for its own sake, and in a boating tour, for example, prefer to be under canvas, with all its attendant nuisances, such as cooking your own breakfast, and making your own bed or what is supposed to be a bed, rather than in a country inn. But there are times when a considerable amount of inconvenience can be borne if a sufficient recompense is found for it. Good fishing, cheap living, and pure air seem fully to counterbalance many temporary annoyances. The rea-

[1] 1876.

son of these remarks would be fully obvious if the reader would place himself for a moment by the writer's elbow. The room contains a somewhat rickety deal-table; a fireplace, which at this hour of the evening is full of brightly burning and fragrant peat. There are also two queer-looking beds, upon one of which the ceiling threatens shortly to descend in fragments; and two tables, to which it is difficult to assign a specific name. They can scarcely be called side-tables, though they contain a few odd glasses and a plate or two, not to mention the whisky-bottle of the establishment. Nor yet can they be termed dressing-tables; for though they bear a looking-glass and some few pieces of crockeryware, the elements of the sideboard must not be left out of consideration. It is needless to add that the floor is uncovered by a carpet; that the once white walls would be all the better for a new coat of whitewash; and that a few chairs, some fishing-tackle, and portmanteaus complete the furniture of the room. Another function still does this room fulfil; for unless the door, opening to the road, is securely locked, it forms the entrance-hall to the little Irish cottage, half

tavern, half farm, twenty-nine miles from Galway, known as the Half-way House. Here dwells one Lynch, who, when he is not farming his thousand acres, mostly bog and moorland, for which he pays a trifling rent per acre, looks after the passing traveller, or acts as boatman to the fisherman who may be living in his house. It is a spot which is habitually resorted to by a few enthusiastic fishermen, some half-dozen or more during the season, who have known the place for some length of time. The mail-road between Galway and Clifden passes three yards from the door, in front of which is a piece of ground which, almost in any part of England or Scotland, would be turned into a neat patch of pretty garden. Here it is a desolate bit of waste ground full of weeds and rank grass. In describing the fishing-places adjacent to this half-way house—which, by the way, stands in a wild moorland, or rather bogland valley, on the highest piece of ground between Clifden and Galway—it may be well to give a brief sketch of the fishing of Connemara.

The fishing-ground of Connemara proper may be said to lie between Killery Har-

bour on the north and Galway Bay on the south, some twenty-five miles apart as the crow flies. Up towards Westport and Clew Bay, and still farther north towards the Donegal Highlands and the northern coast of Ireland, there are many rivers flowing into the sea, and loughs, which white trout enter; and other pieces of water, which, though not joined by any stream to the sea, contain plenty of brown trout. But it is this mountainous district, cut up by river and lake between the two points named, which contains the fishing-places of Connemara. The coast is jagged and broken by numerous small bays, into which descend short rivers. They are too numerous to be mentioned here one by one. There are, for instance, the Dawros, the Owenglinn, the Cashla, and the Owenboliska. A peculiarity of this district is, that nearly every one of the rivers unites several lakes, forming a continuous chain of water, up which, to the farthest points, the enterprising white trout force their way in swarms after a heavy downfall of rain. A mail-road from Galway cuts through this country, at first some distance from the sea, and then close to the coast, passing by Clifden and

Leenane, until it reaches Westport, where the railway is again met. The last part, from Leenane to Westport, is somewhat out of the district described in this paper. It is among these mountains, moorland from the summit to the bogs at their foot, devoid of trees, and—except when the sun throws upon them those delicate tints of light and shade which are so beautiful on the western coasts of Scotland and Ireland—gloomy and depressing, that some of the best sea-trout fishing in the United Kingdom is to be found. It is a part of the world which can have few attractions for the ordinary tourist. The beauty of the land (except the actual sea-coast) is inferior to that of much more accessible spots; and though the compilers of guide-books may be loud in its praises, it may be said with some certainty that no one who has seen it once will ever care, for its own sake, to revisit it. This is a sure test; for who would not be ever ready to spend holidays again and again at scores of places in England or abroad which every one can call to mind for himself? But the fisherman will not echo this sentiment; for to him it is a land of sport, if the various elements which go to afford good fishing are in

any way favourable. But at the same time, with hardly an exception, all the rivers and loughs containing "white" trout (this one name must be taken to express all the different species of sea-trout) and salmon are let either to proprietors for their private use, or to lessees, who make a profit from the fishery either by hauling with nets or by hiring out the fishing to those who are residing at the adjoining hotels. Thus, when the wandering angler arrives in Connemara, he no longer finds, as he would have done ten or twelve, or even five or six, years ago, that he can fish in any place. *Nous avons changé tout cela;* and unless he is a friend of some proprietor, or cares to pay in most cases a good round sum for his fishing, he must not unpack his rod. The prices of the fishing vary, so that it is not fair to give one or two as anything like those which may be considered as general. Angling, however, on the Ballynahinch fishery costs ten shillings a-day, and two pounds ten a-week.[1] Again, at Skreeb, where

[1] For full particulars, apply to G. J. Robinson, Esq., Roundstone, *viâ* Galway. The river Erriff at Leenane can also be fished at the same rate.

there is a small piece of river and two lakes near the sea, there is a solitary house; and in this fishermen are lodged, and a certain sum is paid for the fishing. These lakes, again, are joined to others—the Lake of the Fall and the Heather Lake—which again are joined to another, locally known as the Causeway, which again is connected with the topmost lake of the chain—Lough Shindilla. Nearer Galway, too, we find, for example, a stream at Spiddle which is in private hands. But it is quite possible that a fisherman may come for a week's fishing, pay a good deal for his rod, not a little to boatmen, and something probably for car-hire, and have bright, dry weather, and absolutely get no sport at all. On the other hand, he may be fortunate, and think his sport cheaply obtained — though this, indeed, will depend to a large extent on the length of his purse.

The white-trout fishing does not commence, unless the weather be exceptionally wet, so as to bring up the fish earlier than usual, until the middle of July, and it continues till the end of October. Skreeb and the other places on the coast can be reached by devia-

tions from the main road already mentioned, which carries the fisherman right past Shindilla, round the topmost lake of what may be termed the Ballynahinch chain, and within reach of Derryclare, Inagh, and the other lakes and rivers more distant from Galway. But the angler is not confined to white trout, for capital brown-trout fishing is to be had in all these lakes, and in others scattered among the hills, some of which are mere ponds in the bogs. Thus any one who chooses to come to Connemara for a fortnight in May or June will obtain many an excellent day's sport when the brown trout are in the heyday of their season. Let him look out for an inn near a lake, and once having got some sort of idea of the country, the line of the roads, and the situation of the lakes, he ought to have no possible difficulty in amusing himself for some time. But the sport shown by the fresh-run white trout is often so brilliant, and they come up at so convenient a season for the fisherman who is also a man of business, that the brown trout of Connemara are neglected, generally speaking, when they are in the very best condition for sport and for eating. There is Lough

Ross, Lough Arderry, Lough Inagh, and many others which might be mentioned, if it were worth while to spin out a geographical list of brown-trout lakes. Indeed, from Galway to Clifden there is plenty of fishing after the village of Moycullen, six miles from Galway, is reached. There is a mountain-stream at this village. Farther on, at Outerard, a busy and more cleanly village than most in this desolate part of the world, there is the pretty Owenriff river, with some good pools, and likely, if there be plenty of water, to amuse the angler for a day or two. Beyond this, he comes upon a perfect chain of waters, some of which have just been mentioned, and many of which only possess local names, and are unmarked on any except the larger-scale maps. They are all of the same character—a mile or two in length, with low boggy sides and dark water, full of brown trout up to a pound in weight, and if connected at all with the sea, inhabited also temporarily by the venturous white trout. They are seldom fished, except by some local angler on a Sunday or a saint's day, until you come to Shindilla and approach those lakes, where the comfortable hotel at

Ballynahinch has caused fishermen and travellers to remain. Is not this, then, a rich country for the fisherman?—where, if nature is not to be seen in her most genial aspect, she at any rate has not been unkind to the fisherman.

Just below the Half-way House lies the head of Lough Shindilla, a piece of water about two miles in length, and in breadth from a quarter to half a mile. It is dotted over with two or three wooded islands, rare features in this bleak landscape. On the one side extends a boggy moorland, above which rise the three summits of the Shonafaola Mountains; on the other side, the green sides of Mount Oorid separate the fisherman from the Atlantic Ocean; whilst at the western or upper end of the lake, the prominent rounded summit of Mount Cashel shows where the coast extends. The Twelve Pins of Bunnabeola form a striking background in the distance. To the east the hilly moorlands which border upon Lough Corrib sink away in the distance,—generally a melancholy landscape, unless lighted up by the fine tints of the setting sun.

But a description of the favourite flies for use

on this and the neighbouring lakes will be more apposite than of the scenery around. Those most in vogue are generally large lake-flies, and nothing is more justly a favourite than one made with grouse or guinea-hen feathers for wings, and a claret or rather blood-red body roughly tied. Smooth bodies are not, as a rule, in favour here; but two of the best fish of our visit—a brace of white trout of a couple of pounds each—were taken with a small-sized lake-fly, with grouse wings and a red-silk body with a twist of gold. The more gaudy flies which find favour at Galway are not of much use, unless "the shades of night are falling fast." An excellent fly on the smaller Scotch lakes—familiar, doubtless, to all who are acquainted with the north,—namely, with a rough scarlet body and wings of the blackcock,—was not tried; but, if others had failed, it would have been interesting to observe how this fly served on the waters of Connemara. It is very often the case that local people find one or two flies kill well, and then assume that any other fly is useless. As a matter of fact, though the local favourites are no doubt very good (for there is nothing like experience in

these things), yet what may be called, for the sake of distinction, some foreign flies, will do just as much execution as those more generally used.

The lakes of the west of Ireland were this September exceedingly low, and two hours' fishing during the first afternoon only yielded a half-pound brown trout. The succeeding morning was all that could be desired by the tourist, —just what was not wished for by the fisherman. The lake glimmered in the sunlight, which stole through the scarcely veiling clouds; and the rocks of the shore, and the green mountains, were distinctly reflected in the waters, whose stillness was only broken now and again by a gentle autumn breeze, which scarcely ruffled the surface. It was a pleasant day enough, as we found, to stroll about the islands among the blackberries, and browning ferns, and the tufts of the large-blossomed bell-heather. But it was quite impossible to get what friendly Mr Lynch called a good drift—that is, to drift well before the breeze from one end of the lake to the other. For this, in his parlance, a good "duster" was required; but no "duster" did we meet with on that pleasant September day—so that half-

a-dozen trout alone rewarded our day's fishing, two of which turned half a pound, and one was, fortunately for our breakfast, a "jackeen." By this name are those spirited little fellows, small sea-trout, known in the west of Ireland, which, for their size and strength, are the gamest fish that swim. Now if, as is the case on some of the lakes, considerable expense has been gone to for the sake of this day's fishing, a wandering angler might well feel disgusted. But who, with such weather, could hope, in such a season and after such a summer as that of 1876, for better, or indeed any sport? The next day seemed rather more favourable, though the wind was bitterly cold, which boded ill for the feeding propensities of the trout. But before luncheon, a little basket of a dozen had been collected, which averaged about a quarter of a pound apiece. After luncheon the great cold was explained, for there came a heavy downpour of rain; but three hours' fishing again brought another dozen, including a pretty white trout well over half a pound in weight, and three or four smaller fish of the same kind. Of course this was not much of a day's sport as compared with many that are experienced in this

district, but still it kept a light single-handed rod not altogether idle. There is certainly, in many ways, more satisfaction to be had out of a nice single-handed than a powerful double rod. Smaller fish make a much better fight, and one does not get into a rough way of handling fish, which is fatal to good fishing, when clear water and light tackle necessitate plenty of care and skill. A white trout of three-quarters of a pound, on a small rod, affords not bad amusement for a few moments. On the other hand, if the day is at all rough, and the fish to be taken are at all likely to be large, there can be no question that a double-handed rod should be used. Much greater command can be had over the line, and no well-hooked fish is likely to escape. There is also this further advantage, that if in a lake it is blowing freshly, and a good fish is hooked, it is a matter of some importance to be able to land him without loss of time; otherwise, whilst the oarsman is handling the landing-net, one may be drifted far away from one's ground, or the boat may knock the paint off her sides on some projecting rock.

The rain of the night was succeeded by a heavy gale from the westward, which promised

better sport, though many were the lamentations of our boatman as he came to us in the morning, that more water had not come down from the hills; but, at any rate, we should have a good "drift," and, not, in his language, have to "dodge down" some particular bit of shore. And a true "duster" the wind proved to be, raising white and tossing waves at the far end of the lake. But the sport was not satisfactory; good fish were not moving, and the double-handed rod was ignominiously employed, for no trout of more than half-a-pound would rise. At length our patience was rewarded, for in the half shelter of a rocky point a fine white trout bounced bodily out of the water at the red-bodied dropper, and was soon sailing away, firmly hooked. After a frantic rush or two, a handsome sea-trout of a couple of pounds was adorning the bottom of the boat. Then another throw or two, and another fierce rise, and off flew a vigorous white trout, with a couple of those preliminary leaps which are the sure characteristic of these fish, and which have before now secured the liberty of many a good trout, and bitterly disappointed many

an eager angler. The sport seemed now to be about to become really first-rate; but this momentary gleam was all that came that morning, though when luncheon-time arrived fourteen trout were laid on the grass.

The "drifts" were still good along the moorland shore, underneath whose overhanging banks, when the lake is at its normal level, the large trout love to lie and dart out at a fly dropping unwarily from the fragrant bog-myrtle. But "jackeen" and suchlike small fish were alone basketed, and things did not look well for the afternoon. After sunset, however, when the gloaming was fast verging into darkness, a final try was made round some isolated rocks near the outflow of the lake. At length there was a pleasantly loud splash, and a good fish was evidently fast on the little single-handed rod. Some vigorous leaps showed that a sea-trout was at the end of the line, and the strong runs and deep bendings of the light little rod were pleasing to see. At last the fish was tired out, and was safely in the folds of the landing-net, proving to be a well-fed sea-trout, which scaled, when brought home, just two pounds and a half. Night was now setting in, and a row of

a couple of miles had yet to be gone through. But this day's fishing was the best of the three, and gave a hint of what might be done among the mountains of Connemara with plenty of water and plenty of wind; for two dozen and a half of trout were brought to book that day, three of which alone made up six pounds and a half between them. And what fish shows finer sport than a good white trout? Until one has caught him and has eaten him, it is impossible to understand the enthusiasm that all fishermen who have had sport with him feel when he is mentioned. What fish leaps so high from the water as he does, and then rushes wildly away with the line?

I am far from feeling a contempt for those milder kinds of fishing which are the delight of metropolitan anglers, but there is something in the union of the fresh mountain air, the rushing breeze, the tumbling waves of the lake, and the wild fish, which makes sea-trout fishing one of the most enjoyable of the fisherman's pleasures. A good day on this and the other lakes of the district would be some three or four dozen trout, with several two or three pound white trout among them, and perhaps

a dozen and a half or more of the latter species of fish in all. But then to ensure a good day you require a combination of several things. First of all, there must be plenty of water in the lakes; for water the white trout must have to ascend from the sea, and water they must afterwards have to induce them to feed. Then, for lake-fishing, a breeze—and the stronger the better, so long as it does not make the boat unmanageable—is necessary. However, the story of these three days will have already shown to any reader not accustomed to lake-fishing, the absolute or almost absolute uselessness of fishing on a calm day. When considerable expense is incurred for the hire of boats and men, and payment given for the right of fishing, a bad day becomes a serious mortification to many men. With us this was not a matter of consideration: a moderate sum for the man and boat was only due; and the living, as might be expected, from the description of the Half-way House, was not very extravagant. The fish which fell to our lot, some fresh eggs, and milk-cakes, sufficed for breakfast,—and who could wish for a better? A duck or a young goose, which had lived his

short life in the clear waters of the lake, and fed in the oat-fields, and which tasted more like a wild-duck than a Michaelmas goose in England, formed a dinner to which, though simple, the air of the mountain proved a sure and appetising sauce. And the whisky of the country, or the water from a mountain-spring, formed as good and healthy a beverage as could be desired. The hens and the ducks might cackle at night in the next room, as some inmate turned over in bed, and a child might cry; but exercise and air rendered the sleeping angler quite undisturbed by these usually irritating noises. At the same time, though very suitable for hardy bachelors, there are many men who would prefer more comfort, who might like to bring ladies with them. A place like this could hardly be considered suitable for such fishermen, and these would have to go on to the Glendalough Hotel, close to lakes forming part of the chain of which Oorid is the last lake. Here comfort and fishing can be combined, though not without bringing their usual consequences —higher charges. When people come so far to fish, as many persons do, they are in

no hurry to run away again, and therefore, comfort is of more moment than it is in some other kind of pleasure. Once in a way one may not object to pass a night in the hay in a mountain *châlet* on the Alps: a week of such a bed would be intolerable. Still, the Half-way House, a lonely cabin in the mountains, —the most annoying characteristic of which was the beggars, old and young, who persecuted one as soon as the door was opened, and who seemed to spring out of the ground—is a place one leaves with a certain regret; and that regret is especially felt when one sees the lake rippling under the influence of a fresh morning breeze, and one recognises each point and bay, one may almost say each rock and stone, where a good fish has been taken, or a fine white trout has been raised.

Let me say another word about flies. No large variety is required for these lakes. But any one who wants good flies and advice has only to go to Mr Flint, the fishing-tackle maker in Essex Quay, Dublin, who will supply him with all necessary flies. He is in the habit of fishing in these lakes himself, and therefore is a better person to go to than

those who are not fishermen themselves. All the lakes in Connemara are of the same character, surrounded by the same kind of soil, and therefore require the same kind of flies. It is a most interesting question, the reason why trout in one lake refuse certain flies, and greedily take others. Probably the state of the bottom is to some extent the cause, which affects the colour of the water. But the principle that the natural fly should be closely imitated—which, as regards what the Irishman of the west contemptuously calls "midge flies," is undoubtedly correct—clearly does not apply to lake any more than to salmon fishing. Nor does nature produce any flies bearing a resemblance to a clean lake fly; on the other hand, a wet one may possibly be taken by a fish for some kind of grub or caterpillar.

IV.

FLY-FISHING IN THE BAVARIAN HIGHLANDS.[1]

AMONG the tributaries of the Danube none has a better reputation for fish than the Iller, which, commencing in the three streams of the Trettach, the Stillach, and the Breitach, among the Alps of the Algau, passes through the Bavarian plains until it reaches the chief river of Eastern Europe. In the first thirteen miles of its course this stream flows down the picturesque mountain valley generally known as the Iller Thal, at the head of which is the flourishing Bavarian village of Oberstdorf, surrounded on the south by the high summits of the Madelegabele, the Trettach Spitze, and the

[1] 1878.

other peaks which form the group of mountains called the Algauer Alps. It is about a mile and a half below this village that the Iller as such receives a distinctive name, where one river is formed by the junction of these three streams. Oberstdorf is about thirteen miles from Immenstadt, through which runs the main line from the Lake of Constance to Munich; and thence a little branch line runs up the valley to Sonthofen, half-way to Oberstdorf,—so that the head-waters of the Iller are within seven miles of a railway station. It would not be easy to find a place more suited for a stay of a few days or weeks than this picturesque Bavarian village. Among the numerous and very beautiful valleys which branch up into the surrounding Alps, are many walks suited to all capacities; and the peaks which rise above them will afford a field for the exertions of the active climber. But few English tourists come to Oberstdorf, though throughout the summer and autumn it is a favourite resort for many Germans; and the two inns—the Gasthof zum Mohren and the Gasthof zur Goldenen Sonne—are generally well filled from the beginning of June to the end of September.

During a stay of a few days in this pleasant spot, a couple of them were devoted to fishing in the Iller; for since Herr Max von dem Borne, in his useful little handbook for anglers ('Wegweiser für Angler durch Deutschland, Oesterreich und die Schweiz:' Berlin, 1877), points out that at Immerstadt the river contains heavy trout, grayling, and pike, and by Oberstdorf is an excellent trout stream, it seemed well not to neglect a good opportunity.

The fishing in the three tributary streams, and two small mountain lakes which contain char—the Freiberg and the Christales Sees—is at present the property of one of the usual peasant fishermen who form so curious and distinctive a class among the mountains of Austria and Bavaria. He has it for three years, and has paid for it for that period 1700 florins. But our introduction to him was far from happy. We arrived at Oberstdorf about mid-day, and during the course of luncheon made careful inquiries of the waitress as to whether strangers could fish in the adjoining streams. Whether we misunderstood her or she misunderstood us does not matter, but we left her with the impression that the fishing

was free. It was then the most natural thing in the world to stroll up these branches, fly-rod in hand,—though, so far as any success went, we might as well have left our tackle at the inn. In the middle of supper our afternoon's fishing was recalled to our minds by an inquiry by the host as to whether we had been fishing that afternoon, as the fisherman was complaining about it. As he was actually in the hotel, it was obviously best to smooth his ruffled feathers, make our excuses, and obtain permission for a day or two's angling. But our diplomacy was in vain,—the fisherman was angry, not to say rude, and the interview ended to everybody's dissatisfaction. We thought we had done with our friend, but he seemed to have the knack of surprising us at the most unexpected moments. Next morning, as I was preparing to shave, arrayed in slippers, knickerbockers, and shirt, a rather loud knock made me expect a supply of hot water. But it was hot water of another kind to what I anticipated. To my astonishment, on opening the door, I found myself confronted by quite a fine-looking person in green uniform, with a sword by his side, who proved to be the Oberstdorf edition

of that mild limb of the law in England, the rural police constable.

The mission of this magnificent person was to convey us before the tribunal at Sonthofen, there to answer for our offences of the previous day. But all's well that ends well, as the saying goes; and after a considerable amount of talking had taken place between the policeman and my brother, who was more familiar with German than myself, the constable expressed the opinion that the fisherman's wrath might be mollified by a pecuniary gift, which would put an end to all further legal proceedings. Such a hint as this was too obvious to be let slip; for amusing as this interview would certainly have been to a bystander, it was not wholly pleasing to us; so very soon a ten-mark piece not only caused bygones to be bygones, but brought forth a permit to fish in the Freiberg See,—a permission which had a certain irony about it, as though we had a most glorious day on the miniature sheet of water — boating, and sunning, and bathing—not a fish could be moved. Sometimes when we met the constable making his rounds, with rifle slung over his shoulder, and looking very soldier-like, a grin broke over

his face, whether of mere friendly recognition, or whether of amusement at our having been *exploités* by native ingenuity to the amount of half a sovereign, we never knew. Into such troubles as these even the best-intentioned rambler must sometimes fall, when in search of fishing in foreign countries. But it would never have done to have left Oberstdorf without fishing in the Iller; and fortunately better success attended our application to the person who rented the fishing in the Iller from the junction of the three streams as far as the village of Fischen, a distance of about three miles. For the sum of 5 marks (5s.), and without any condition as to giving up the fish which were taken, Herr Schwarz Kopfse gave leave for two days' fishing for two rods—though he also kept strongly impressing upon us that we were on no account to use nets, so little idea of sport, as regards fishing, is there in the German mind. The Iller is a very rapid stream, often divided into several branches, for its wide bed of white stones and gravel is never wholly covered except after a flood. Therefore, under ordinary circumstances, the fishing along quite half the course of the stream has to be done

from the bed of the river, as there is often an expanse of small stones between the actual stream and the actual bank. But this is in many respects an advantage to the angler, for there is no danger of losing casts and flies on the branches of trees. On the other hand, there is a great deal of very rough walking and scrambling in many places, not only up and down the banks, but among slippery stones of all shapes and sizes; and often there must be no hesitation in wading above the knees.

The first day we took the right bank, which proved, however, in one sense, to be the wrong one; for near the village of Rubi, where we struck the river, high wooded cliffs begin, which overhang it for a mile, and these proved quite a bar to fishing downward from the village. The day was hot and bright, and a morning's fishing up stream only produced half-a-dozen small trout. But in one deep pool beneath a rock, clear as crystal, fifteen or twenty half-pound fish were seen quite still at the bottom. The most lively grasshoppers, the most tempting worms collected in the meadows, on the finest of gut, let down from the rock above, merely caused them to move with languid

contempt from one part of the pool to another; and yet they would not depart from the tantalised gaze of the angler above. And this reminds me of the characteristics of the trout of the Iller. They are almost white, with faint pink spots, showing, like the black little fish which one takes in a Highland loch, the great effect of the place upon trout; for the bed and sides of the Iller are absolutely devoid of vegetation and earthy deposits, and the rapid grey waters rush over a mass of bare and smooth white stones.

As luncheon-time was drawing near, and we were more inclined to eat than our friends in the pool below, we crossed the fields to a cottage in the village, which is also the inn — and which apparently has no custom in the middle of the day, since it was left in charge of a number of children, the eldest only fifteen years old. There we got a wholesome repast of bread and milk, and then a start was made for the river lower down, wherever it might be accessible; but after walking through meadows lawn-like and bright with the autumn crocus, and peering through pine-woods and over cliffs at the river below, it was opposite

Fischen before the banks became low, and we were enabled to approach the river. Here two very small grayling were taken, and presently another grayling was fast on the little yellow dun, and he gave some spirited sport in the rapid water before he was placed on the stones —a fish of three-quarters of a pound. A smaller one managed—thanks to the strength of the current—to escape; and no more were stirred till the sun began to sink behind the opposite pine-woods, when, in a pool beneath a rapid, another grayling was raised, and, being well hooked, was landed after showing good sport. This time it was a fish of a pound.

We had now come to a place where no more progress could be made along the bed of the river, so we hoped by following a woodman's path to find a way round the steep cliffs. It was a picturesque and charming walk, with the pretty peeps of the river below, and the cultivated lands and bright villages beyond; but it was also a very hot and tiresome one, for in the narrowest parts of the pathway a branch would be sure to hinder the passage of rod and line; and when most careful management of our tackle was needed, the path would be the slip-

periest. At last, after following it for some time, we were abruptly faced by a precipice, caused by the earth having slipped away, thus bringing the slight path to a complete and sudden end. With much scrambling among pine-trees and fir-branches, our way had therefore to be wholly retraced, and when we again were opposite Fischen it was time to turn homewards, for the white rocks on the summit of the Rubihorn were rosy with the setting sun, and Oberstdorf was already in the shade. So taking down our rods, we began our tramp back; and when the Gasthof zum Mohren was reached, darkness had quite covered the valley, and the evening star was bright above the Himmelschrofen, though the industrious Bavarian peasants were still here and there bringing home their loads of autumn hay.

A basket of thirteen was the total for the day for two rods, one of which was in less experienced hands than the other; but as hardly a single rise had been missed, scarcely more than a dozen and a half would in any case have been secured.

The next day was dark, and the clouds hung low over the surrounding mountains. This

time we took the left bank of the stream, which is bordered all the way to Fischen by a thick pine-wood, rich in delicate mosses and graceful ferns, and through which the small mountain cattle wander. A rough cart-road skirts the stream. The trout taken were somewhat better in size, and again a basket of thirteen was the result of our fishing, consisting of two small grayling, each about a quarter of a pound, and eleven trout, from an eighth to a quarter of a pound. A small dun with a yellow body was quite the favourite fly on both days, though a March brown and a red-bodied dun also took one or two fish. Probably in May and June much better sport would be had with the trout, since many are certainly taken by the fishermen in the course of the summer with nets; and more continuous fishing than we gave to the Iller would in the autumn certainly reward the angler with some fair sport with the grayling.

But Sonthofen would really be the best spot to fish from; for the Iller there, though swift, is yet a more tranquil stream, and the trout would certainly be larger and the grayling more numerous. On the other hand, Oberst-

dorf is better situated for mountain excursions. The living, too, is both cheap and good: for five shillings a-day a comfortable room and good food can be had. A dinner of fair soup, good beef-steak, and excellent native cheese, with beer or wine, will not cost more than eighteenpence.

These few days at Oberstdorf are good examples of the difficulties and pleasures which await an angler who rambles over the Continent. The best part of the first day, when preliminary difficulties at the village were overcome, was spent in gaining a knowledge of the water; and even the second was to some extent experimental. But the beautiful scenery, the grey crags of the mountains rising from the sombre pines, whose graceful forms are also scattered over the bright green of the hill pastures, and the brisk mountain air, would outweigh even smaller baskets than were secured on the two autumn days we gave to fishing in the Iller Thal.

From Oberstdorf we made our way to Thannheim, a high village in a broadish valley at the junction of a small side valley, some miles up which is a little lake, the Vilsalper See,

a gloomy sheet of water lying in broad green alps, dotted with scores of cattle in the summer time, and shaded by the precipitous mountains which rise from the sides of the green basin. This lake is fished with nets, but I was unable to see the fisherman, and it was so still that there would have been little chance of sport on it. A small stream winds through the meadows in the main valley, and here we caught plenty of small trout, and once I took two or three ide, which were feeding in a weedy shallow. But these fish are not superior to any of the coarse British fresh-water fish; and though their acclimatisation in England would increase the number of our species, there is no apparent gain to be obtained from their cultivation from any other point of view.

The inn at Thannheim was more primitive than comfortable, and the innkeeper more kindly than desirable. In the little back parlour, where he regaled us on trout "done blue," and potatoes with long fibres, and the universal veal, he conceived it to be his duty as a host to sit and smoke and watch us at our meal, and try to carry on a conversation which his *patois* rendered nearly incomprehensible. But it sud-

denly occurred to him that Thannheim possessed an attraction for us strangers of which it would be wrong to deprive us, so "the American" was quickly brought on the scene. This man was a villager who had emigrated, made a little money, and returned to his native village; a person of considerable shrewdness, but who had lost the simple courtesy of the mountaineer, and caught the free-and-easy style of the Yankee. The chief thing he seemed to have gained by his stay in the States was an impression that the whole art of conversation is to mix it with as many oaths as possible. In fact he adopted the principle of the well-known whist maxim, and when in doubt of a word, invariably substituted the most horrible oath his vocabulary possessed. So the last state of the dinner was even worse than the first, for neither of these excellent villagers dispensed with a pipe, and we had finally to bid them good-night in rather a peremptory manner. They subsequently, however, never forgot to appear at meal-times, and it was necessary to cut their interviews shorter than they probably considered courteous.

The Post Inn of the village of Thannheim

possessed only a single *einspanner*, so the result was that a singularly loaded vehicle appeared one September afternoon at the little Austrian town of Reutte. Inside were two of the party comparatively comfortable, but perhaps too tightly packed. On the somewhat narrow seat in front were seated the third rambler and the driver, with their feet resting on the long pole. To this was harnessed "Johannes," the greatly admired steed of the postmaster, more used to the hay-cart than the carriage. As his natural paces were erratic, the whole progress of the vehicle became somewhat curious, since the driver was so little of a whip that he could not at the best of times steer a straight course; and moreover, the carriage, like the tail of Lord Dundreary's celebrated dog, did not a little in the way of moving the horse. But this was one out of the many little incidents which must be put up with in the Tyrol or the Bavarian Highlands. There was a bitterly cold east wind blowing straight up the Lech Thal when we reached our destination, but after a walk, inquiries were made as to the *Fischmeister* of the place. His abode was discovered in the main street, but he him-

self was absent, and his wife spoke an utterly unintelligible *patois*. However, it turned out that he had only the fishing in the Plan See (about three miles from Reutte), and in the stream which flowed out of it, in both of which, by the way, early in the year there is said to be capital trout-fishing, whilst there is a convenient little inn on the shores of the lake.

So more inquiries had to be made; and, satisfied by the assertions of the postmaster, the tobacconist, and the ostler of the Post Inn, that the fishing in the Lech was free, we determined to try it in the morning. Like all the rivers which run from the Eastern Alps and are tributaries of the Danube—such as the Iller, Loisach, and the Isar—the Lech is a rapid river, running over a wide bed of grey stones and gravel, through which it winds its devious way in streams and pools. To fish it well, a double-handed rod would be best, even though it is cumbersome among the stones and bushes—not, however, that the latter are numerous here. We fished about half a mile of the Lech on this cold September morning, from half-past ten to half-past one, with only an occasional gleam of sunlight breaking through

the heavy clouds. Our bag was a dozen and a half of trout and grayling. The former were very small, but the latter were in fine condition, broad and hard, and with sides shining like silver. There were three half-pounders, and the rest were almost below a quarter of a pound each. In these rapid streams a grayling in good condition shows excellent sport. He lies generally against a bank of gravel where the stream is not the strongest, but when he is hooked he is at once away for the quick water, and with his tender mouth he is not at all unlikely to escape. Moreover, if, as is very likely the case, one is fishing on a bed of gravel, at the end of which the river is deep and rapid, there is no possibility of following a fish down stream, so that a grayling is often lost, when a trout, with his strong jaws, would be secured.

In the afternoon we intended, after walking down the opposite or left bank of the stream with the third of our party—a lady—to fish up, and leave her to move along homewards sketching at her leisure; but the heavy clouds burst into rain when we were about two miles down the stream, so I had to

return home with my wife, leaving my brother to try a cast or two. He secured in an hour only three small trout. Having seen my wife safely secured from the rain in the hotel, I was quickly off to the ground of the morning, not ten minutes' walk from the inn. During an hour's fishing alone, a couple of small trout and a half-pound grayling rewarded me for the time spent in a biting east wind and downpour of rain. But it does not seem an undue conclusion to draw from such a leisurely day's sport, that two rods on a favourable day, working well from "morn to dewy eve," could come home with a heavy basket of good grayling. A visit to the river early on the following morning, with the rain still pouring down after a fourteen hours' descent, showed it thick and rapidly rising, so that there was no chance of fishing that day, and time would not permit the third day to be spent in Reutte.

But the place is very accessible, either by way of the railway to Kempten, and thence *viâ* Fussen by coach or carriage, or else by way of Innsbrück from the south-east. So we left somewhat reluctantly, with decidedly expressed hopes that on some other autumn holiday we

might be able to establish ourselves at the Gasthof zur Post (where the usual five shillings a-day will cover all expenses), and, though the village itself is by no means attractive, enjoy ourselves by having several days' good steady sport with the grayling in the Lech.

Between Reutte and Längries no attempt was made to fish. At Partenkirchen the days were given to walking, and the Walchen See was, while we were there, never ruffled by a breeze. As we passed through the quiet woods and pastures of the Jachenau Thal, the stream, a tributary of the Isar, from which the valley takes its name, raised tempting visions of spring trouting. But when we struck the Isar "rolling rapidly"—rather too rapidly, in fact, at Längries —we tried to have a final day's fishing before we quitted the Bavarian Highlands. The possessor of the fishing in this fine river at this place is the Duke of Nassau, and when we had found his agent, we had no difficulty in obtaining a card from him. The *Fisch-karte* in question was available for the months of May, June, July, August, September, and October, for rod-fishing for trout, grayling, and "white fish." In addition to specifying the limits to

which the angler's leave applied, it stated that trout under fourteen and grayling under twenty-four centimetres in length were to be returned to the water. But unfortunately there had been heavy rains in the mountains; and the Isar rolled through the valley in thick volumes, bearing down to the plains great rafts of timber, on which the woodmen and raftsmen steered on their unrestrained way with noticeable skill and strength. The result was that we secured but three small grayling in one shallow, and in a short time left the river, as it was hopeless to wander longer by its banks. Our next view of the Isar was when we stood on the bridge at Munich, but our fly-fishing was then ended for that autumn at least.

V.

A SPRING RAMBLE IN NORMANDY.[1]

IT is probable that Normandy has been more often the subject of works widely different in their character than any other part of France. Some of them, it is true, are rather worthless, and it is not very creditable to modern travellers that their writings should be inferior to those that were composed years ago. Thus Mr Henry Blackburn's 'Normandy Picturesque' will bear no comparison with Mr Dawson Turner's 'Letters from Normandy.' But considering how so much literature has been devoted to this small part of France, and how accessible it is from England, it is singular that it is not by any means overrun by English travellers, and

[1] 1878. Reprinted by permission of Messrs Sampson Low & Co.

is essentially more purely foreign than numerous places hundreds of miles more distant from London. There is scarcely a hotel in Normandy where it is considered worth while to take in the 'Times.' At Rouen, at Evreux, at Louviers, the tourist is free from the daily doings of English politicians and the fluctuations of railway stocks and shares. It is needless to point out that it is in such complete changes as necessarily result from this absence of the daily routine of English life that the greatest relief is found by all those who really are in want of change of scene. Neither is there much doubt that April and May are the proper months in which to visit Normandy. At this season of the year the country is free from English travellers, and it is possible in the towns of Eure and Calvados to live completely the life of the inhabitants; and thus the cost of living, though higher than it used to be, is more moderate than in many parts of the Continent.

But there are other and more solid advantages to be found in a visit to Normandy in the early spring. The heat and the dust in summer are considerable; and though more hilly than

many parts of France, it is in no respect a mountainous country, and any walking that has to be done must be done along roads, and not over mountain turf. If there is one thing more to be avoided than another, it is hot and dusty roads,—and hot and dusty roads form a natural part of a fine summer in Normandy. Most travellers, also, are more familiar with the Continent in the summer than the spring, and hence the spring-time adds many charms and novelties to the natural features of the country. The orchards, masses of white and pink flowers —the banks, rich with cowslips and wood-anemones—and the bright silver foliage of the poplars which line the streams in the meadows—are features partially characteristic indeed of English landscapes, but which derive new charms from the clearness of the atmosphere in which they are set.

But it must be confessed that the possibilities of trout-fishing occupied our minds quite as much as landscapes and flamboyant architecture, when we arrived at Havre, from Southampton. Crossing by steamer to Honfleur, and thence by train to Lisieux, the first night saw my companion and myself housed in the

Hotel du Normandie. Next morning, some time was spent in looking over this quaint old town, whose antique features are, however, now rapidly passing away. Then, setting off with our rods up the valley of the Toucques, we prepared to see whether there were any fish to be taken in the stream. Having got well outside the town, and gone about a mile along the road, we struck the river. What a sight it presented! A rapid current of chocolate was what it most resembled; obviously it was utterly useless for fly-fishing purposes: still, we asked a few questions of a civil labourer on the neighbouring farm, who told us that any one could fish there, that all sorts of fish lived in the waters of the Toucques, and that the trout were fine. But, as a matter of fact, unless a Frenchman or a German happens to be a fisherman himself, his information is, as a rule, seldom to be relied on. He either speaks solely from imagination, or with so slight a substratum of fact, that his remarks are quite valueless. If cordially minded, he will fancy that he has heard of trout being taken, and consequently will endeavour to please the stranger by assuring him that the

river is alive with fish. If he is in a hurry, or cross, he will probably forget if he ever heard of any one taking a trout in the waters in question, and he will say, in a downright fashion, that no fish inhabit the stream. However, we followed the river another mile, as far as the hamlet of St Martin de la Lieu. We could admire the fertile valleys, covered with orchards in the pure beauty of their white blossoms, even if our feelings as anglers suffered disappointment. True, it had rained heavily the previous day, but it is doubtful if at any time the Toucques can be of much good as a fishing stream. The rivers more to the north, in the department of the Eure, as we afterwards found, were clear enough. At any rate, as it is natural to have heavy rains in the spring-time, and as the ten days' traveller cannot afford to wait three or four days for a stream to fine down, I put a mark against the Toucques, as one not to be thought of by the angler travelling in the spring. So much for essay number one. We had seen much charming country—a richer and a sunnier England—but trout there were none brought home that night. The next day, Caen being one of the places to be

visited, it was determined to pass on further, taking a look at the Dives where it passes by the large village of Mézidon; but it was in exactly the same state as the Toucques. The accounts as to fish were contradictory; but it seems doubtful whether the trout are numerous enough to make it worth while for the angler to take the Dives into his calculations.

Faute de mieux, it seemed the only course, after Caen had been thoroughly visited, and consequently the second most remarkable town of Normandy had been made familiar to the mind, to turn back into the department of the Eure, to try what the Charentonne at Bernay was like; and if that were useless, finally to make the best of the Iton near Evreux, which I had of old discovered to be a good trout-stream. Bernay is a town charmingly situated—much more primitive in its manners and customs than some of the larger Norman towns. Thus, the *maître d'hôtel* sat down to dinner as one of the company, and in all respects considered himself the equal of his guests; whilst at the same time, with true French tact, he was always on the *qui vive* to take care that every one obtained what they

required. But the accounts of the Charentonne were far from favourable: it appeared a sluggish stream, more likely to hold coarse fish than trout, and it seemed very doubtful whether, even some miles above the town, it would be worth trying. Still, we determined that if the morning were fine, as the scenery was pretty, no harm could be done by walking up to the village of Broglie—which is also the seat of the once famous political duke who has disappeared into political darkness—and trying on our way for a trout.

But the first of morning sounds was the steady pour of the rain. So, soon after eight o'clock, the railway station, and not the road to Broglie, proved to be our object; and before noon we were at Evreux, in the valley of the Iton—a town three hours' distance by rail from Rouen. The wet morning turned into a warm day, with puffs of west wind, so that, after a good walk, the cider of the country was very acceptable. The cider of Normandy is an excellent beverage, and is always given gratis as part of the dinner; and many a thirsty traveller must often, as he quaffs it, think of old Oliver Basselin, the typical poet of medi-

eval Normandy, who, in his simple fashion, sang, in the Vaux de Vire, "Hommage aux Cidre"—

> "O soulas de gosiers,
> O très bon jus de pomme,
> Prions pour le bonne homme
> Qui planta les pommiers."

A walk of a couple of miles from the Hotel du Grand Cerf brought us to the village of Arnières, where a large mill stands on the Iton. Permission was obtained here to fish on M. le Duc's — the miller's — property. The stream was rapid for some distance. There was a dam, then a long stretch of dead water, until the rapid flow from the mill again changed its character. Nothing seemed on the move, though the water, unlike that of the streams of Calvados, was but little affected by the late rain. At last a small trout fell a victim to the attractions of a March brown, and then another or two. In the dead water there were undoubtedly good trout; but the puffs of west wind ruffled the water only here and there, and a stronger breeze was needed to make it really satisfactory fishing. However, at last, dropping the cast gently beneath a willow, a good fish

dashed at the March brown. Whir went the reel, and away went the trout. But then there was a sudden rush toward the bank, and the dropper was securely anchored in the low overhanging branch of a neighbouring willow. The fish was out of reach of the landing-net, and before the branch could be brought within reach of the net, the trout gave himself a twist and disappeared. Another small trout or two was added to the basket, and a fair-sized fish was risen at the beginning of the dead water above the mill; and by that time it was necessary to turn our steps homeward, with only half-a-dozen small trout. This first afternoon on the Iton was rather provoking, because at the mill a gentleman from Evreux was encountered—also, like ourselves, an *amateur de la pêche*,—who, with his small artificial minnow, had secured a fine trout over a pound, and a second nearly half the weight.

Of course, in an English trout-stream, a minnow would not have been allowed in water which should have been kept exclusively for fly-fishing; but in the *chasse*, the foreigner looks rather to the bag than to the sport, whatever be his nationality, as I have found

whenever I have encountered him in this pursuit—in the Tyrol, in the Black Forest, or in France.

The following day was chiefly passed in a walk down the valley, through crofts and past mills, so that a thorough investigation of the river was made for fully ten kilometres down stream, to below the village of St Germain des Angles; but from the amount of water carried through the meadows for the purpose of fertilisation, and the many cuts, it was pretty clear that the real fishing-ground of the Iton was above the town of Evreux.

Next morning we started off up the valley, with a bright sun and a blue sky above, and a feeling that the day would be more like one in England in the leafy month of June, though in Normandy the primroses and wild violets, the wood-anemones, the more stately purple orchids, graced the banks in profusion, and the meadows were yellow and fragrant with cowslips. About a mile above the village of Arnières there was a large mill, with a good piece of water below, so we determined to try for permission here. But on demanding if monsieur the miller was at home, we were re-

ferred to a stout lady, who, with great abruptness, refused permission. We pleaded that we were strangers, and in all probability might never have the opportunity of fishing there again. This appeal *ad misericordiam* only caused madame to refuse even more decidedly. The offer to present her with any trout we might take made a look of scorn break over her not very beautiful features; and argument and entreaty being alike exhausted, we retreated in no very amiable frame of mind from the mill-yard. Half a mile higher up was the village of Aulnay, where there was yet another mill. Here we were confronted with another madame, the wife of M. Delille, the miller, but quite different from the person we had just left. The old Norman type of countenance, the signs of a descent from the old Scandinavian rovers, the followers of Roric and Rollo, are still to be seen in Normandy; and Madame Delille preserved them in her fair hair, her bright complexion, and her clear blue eyes. At first she hesitated, but soon she seemed to come to the conclusion that her husband would not object to her exercising his authority, and presently she ended her sentence with "*Allez*

pêcher, messieurs." But it was unfortunately a *jour de fête*, and consequently all the dams in the river seemed to be discharging their waters: it was fully a foot and a half above its usual height, and somewhat muddy into the bargain. However, before long two small trout were taken, and then I moved over a half-built wall into the next field, where I was confronted with a hard-featured old peasant, who vouchsafed the information that it was his property; and apparently his dignity was so much injured by the mode of entry, that he would in no way budge from his obstinate "*Non, non!*" The next cottage being empty, the following one was tried, and here another blue-eyed matron kindly vouchsafed her leave, and also went to the part belonging to the empty house, which belonged to her brother-in-law, and I was soon joined by her husband, a handsome and kindly peasant proprietor. Presently one trout, which was, however, less than a quarter of a pound, was landed; and in the meantime, much conversation on all subjects, from angling to politics, took place. The main gist of the political subjects was that, before all else, Frenchmen desired peace. And then a small

trout or two were taken before two o'clock; but the water was very unfavourable, and the "pounders," which seemed to inhabit the waters, were not to be allured. We parted from our friends in a properly cordial manner. The family were seated at dinner—not at the cabbage and bacon of an English labourer, but at rolled veal and asparagus, camembert cheese, washed down by cider, and followed by *café noir*. But a bottle of Bordeaux was opened in our honour, and mutual healths were drunk with much clinking of glasses.

As we came out of the village we met the fisherman who shared with a gentleman from Evreux the right of fishing for half a mile down the stream, for which he paid seventy francs a-year. He was a professional fisherman, who sold the fish which he took, and his sole instrument was a net. His companion in this fishery was a professor at a *lycée* in Evreux; and as we watched the former deftly cast his bell-shaped net into the stream, the companionship of the two seemed, to the English mind, incomprehensible. So far, indeed, as regards fishing, it would seem to have been a case over again of the iron and earthen pots sail-

ing down stream together. However, eight casts did he ineffectually make, with many good-humoured growlings at the *mauvaise pêche* and the *eau forte et troublée*, which were doing him out of his day's earnings. Of course the trout he sometimes took were monsters, 5 to 7 lb. in weight — a tale I question; though doubtless in the deep mill-pools there are some fine trout, very likely 2 or 3 lb. in weight. Another small trout, nearer M. le Duc's mill, was basketed on the way home; but half-a-dozen was the result of the day's fishing, thanks, we may fairly opine, to the flooded state of the river. Two days' fishing on the Iton had thus only brought a dozen small trout, and from the point of view of sport alone, were essentially poor days, though in other respects they had been most enjoyable; for we had seen many charming landscapes, such as we associate in our minds with Corot's pictures, and had met with rebuffs from some people which amused us, and with kindness from others which was genuine and hearty.

Next day the time had come for us to leave Evreux; but having a few hours to spare in the morning, they seemed best spent in M. le Duc's

meadows, especially as there was a fresh breeze from the south-west, and little sun. The river at Arnières was still more or less abnormally large; yet it was worth trying, especially in the usually dead water, which to-day was not a little ruffled by the wind. Before very many minutes of fishing, a nice trout was hooked and safely brought to the bank, turning the scale at half a pound. Presently another rise, and another fish was hooked; but managing cleverly to secure the line to a branch in the stream, he made his escape. Soon after, the more rapid water was left, and the rest of the bank was lined with willows and poplars some little distance apart, bordering a more slow-flowing portion of the Iton. Here the fishing, with the strong wind, became rather delicate; but the trout were clearly on the look-out for insects dropping from the trees, and some of them were nice fish, which showed good sport when secured. Nearly at the end of the reach, just as the fly was making a circle with a gentle eddy beneath a willow-tree, there was a barely perceptible breaking of the surface, and away went a trout for the opposite bank, running out several yards of line before his

course was completed. Delicate handling, under the circumstances, was needful; but after a little patience, an excellent trout was placed among the daisies and buttercups, which brought the scale down to the pound mark. He was the best and the last trout I took from the Iton. When the contents of the basket were counted, nine trout were placed side by side—one a pound, four half-pounders, and two under a quarter of a pound. This was a very pleasant morning's sport for the two hours we were at work. The fly which took every fish was a moderate-sized February red, or rather one with a roughish claret body; while the March brown was quite out of favour. The two fishermen with whom I had a talk on the previous day assured me that larger flies were better, and that mine were too small. This I doubt, for the morning's fishing clearly proved that the trout of the Iton took a moderate-sized English fly very readily. As a matter of fact, the French fishermen do not understand much about artificial flies. I bought a native-dressed fly, the *Papillon jaspé au soleil*, a clumsy thing, with big wings of a cock's wing, and a large red body, which I have kept as a curiosity. The

better class of flies resembled an English May-fly, and had all large light wings. The common kinds were all very gaudy, red and blue, some palmers and others winged, but all quite inferior to those of English make. Indeed you scarcely ever see a fishing-tackle shop in France, and these flies were quite an exceptional sight to me among the wares in an ironmonger's shop. Where there is any fly-fishing to speak of, there must be plenty of flies to be sold; and the fact that you seldom see artificial flies for sale in France is a kind of circumstantial evidence that fly-fishing is really scarcely practised at all—and therefore, that anything which is said as to the best size of flies by native fishermen, is probably based on the merest prejudice, and should not weigh in the balance against the judgment and the experience of an English angler.

VI.

A WEEK AT A GERMAN CASTLE.[1]

I HAD the good fortune this autumn to be out of the beaten track of tourists, and to find myself resting in an old German castle on the borders of Bavaria and Würtemberg. Its massive walls and deeply recessed windows, its courtyard ruddy with the warm hues of the Virginian creeper, its spacious oak-staircases and the sombre panelling, the armour and the weapons of a bygone age, carried me back into distant years. But of all parts of the house, the most delightful was the library. Though its windows did not open, like those of some of the rooms, above the topmost branches of the ashes and the firs which clung to the bank below the castle walls, and almost hid the

[1] 1882.

glistening waters of the Argen where it gleamed below, yet its own attractions compensated for its more contracted views.

Opposite to one sitting at the writing-table was the door, the two panels of which depicted, in elaborate carving of the period of the Renaissance, a strong castle, with courtyard and towers; the panelled walls were likewise enriched with foliage and heads, and on the door-post was plainly to be seen the date 1539. Leaning back in the chair, the eye would rest upon the handsome bosses and tracery of the wooden ceiling. Imagination would carry one back to the days of medieval Germany, were it not for the well-filled bookcases, and bronzes after the antique, which showed that the room of the noble of the past had become the library of the reader of the nineteenth century. It was the gem of one of those architectural remnants of the past which tell where a noble family at one time dwelt, possessors of the land which is now covered by the farms of the peasant proprietors of Bavaria and Würtemberg. Below in the valley wound the Untere or Lower Argen, which there for many miles forms the frontier line of Bavaria and Würtem-

berg. If you went up the hill at the back of the castle, your eye ranged over an undulating country of hedgeless fields of grass and corn, much intermixed with clumps of dark fir-trees, and sprinkled with solid-looking dwellings, half farmhouses and half cottages, with cheerful red roofs and white walls, and a square bit of garden bright in September days with phloxes and dahlias, among which rises a tall pole surmounted by what seems to be a doll's house. This is where the starling lives in spring, ready to devour the insect known hereabouts as the May-bug. These are the dwellings of the freeholding farmers of Bavaria and Würtemberg, who own nearly all the land, and cultivate from twenty to sixty acres apiece. The agricultural labourer, who exists only by selling his labour, is unknown, for the larger farmers employ their smaller brethren, and the whole of the farmer's family toil in the fields. You see a woman reaping whilst the husband and children are making hay in the next field, or a husband and wife managing an ill-matched team in the shape of a leggy horse and a small cow. When a farmer dies, his possessions are equally divided; but in practice, one

son will usually buy the shares of his brothers and sisters if the farm is too small to be usefully subdivided. None of the evils which are supposed to follow the compulsory subdivision of property seem visible here. Poverty is unknown; every house is comfortable and roomy. Here, too, there is no high farming, but thrift and hard work have produced a contented and flourishing agricultural population.

But turning to the southward of the height on which we stand, the summits of the Algauer Alps are visible, whilst a hazy line to the west shows where the Sentis and surrounding mountains rise above the opposite shores of the Boden See. The Argen flows into this lake, between Friedrichshafen and Lindau; some ten miles higher it passes the little town of Wangen, where it divides into the Upper and Lower Argen. In its course from the mountains the Upper Argen passes the large village of Isny, which is but a few miles from the other branch. Both Wangen and Isny can now be reached by rail from Stuttgart or Ulm, and also by carriage from stations on the Munich and Lindau line—the Bavarian State Railway — Wangen from Hergatz, and Isny from Kempten. Wan-

gen is perhaps the best situation, as it commands the lower reaches of the Argen, as well as the upper and lower branches. The right of fishing is mostly in the hands, not of the riparian owners, but of several proprietors, some of whom retain it in their own control, whilst others let it out to one or more persons. But, once arrived at either Wangen or Isny, there is no difficulty, I understand, in obtaining leave to fish.

There had been heavy rain before my arrival at the castle, but the river—the Untere Argen—had had time to fine down, and when I got to its banks it was thick with a grey sediment, but yet clear enough for fly-fishing. Immediately under the fir-covered bank which rose precipitately from the river to the castle, was a weir-pool; and here, on a bright and warm September morning, I made my first cast. No one who has fished in Germany would think of fishing without a green-bodied fly, and to this was added, to make up the cast a red-bodied one, with some gold twist, and blackcock wings. The appetites of the Argen trout I found of the keenest; and in a couple of hours ten nice trout were in my basket, which

turned the scale at 2½ lb. Ten or a dozen more had been returned to the water, as I did not consider them large enough to keep.

Upon getting back to the house, my friends told me that the fishing which they rented extended down, and not up, the river, and that this pretty pool was not comprised in their water; so after luncheon I began to fish down stream. The Argen ran through meadows over a bed principally composed of white pebbles, mixed here and there with marl and sand. It was, piscatorially, indeed a charming bit of water. Here it ran lightly over shallows, and there it inclined with circling eddies under a bank shaded with alder-bushes. Again it would make a sudden curve, and rush over a bank of gravel into a deep pool; and then it grew calm and widened, till again the ripple showed where was the shallow barrier from the next deep water. The only fault to be found with this stream was, that in many places it was guarded on both sides by the thick alder-bushes, backed by young firs, so that from time to time it was absolutely impossible to cast with safety without wading to the depth of a foot or two. I very soon found that the fishing

was even better than in the morning, and took fish after fish. In one broad pool a hardly perceptible movement showed where a fish was feeding. I threw over him, and another almost imperceptible break of the water proved that my invitation was accepted. After a brisk struggle, a handsome grayling between three-quarters of a pound and a pound was credited to the little green. A German grayling in sharpish water in the autumn is distinctly a gamer and stronger fish than a trout of the same size, and will show a surprising amount of sport. I have seldom fished for them in England, but those I have taken were not so game as their German brethren. Possibly the more rapid character of the German streams makes the grayling in them a stronger and more active fish.

The dinner-hour at the castle was a quarter past four, and I quitted the banks of the river a quarter of an hour before that time. Sitting down on the edge of a meadow covered with the delicate pink of the autumn crocus, varied with the pale-blue flowers of the wild succory, which were very abundant, I turned out the contents of the basket at the foot of a clump of

dark-blue monk's-hood. It would have been a charming picture for one who possessed the brush of a Hunt. There were eleven bright and shapely fish, which turned the scale at 4½ lb. Fully a couple of dozen others had been returned to the water, many of them but little short of a quarter of a pound. The sport of the afternoon but whetted my appetite for the evening, so at six o'clock I was again throwing the fly with equal success. In half an hour I had taken nearly a dozen trout, from half a pound to 2 oz. But enough is as good as a feast, and I began to grow tired of the ease with which trout after trout was hooked; so at half-past six I climbed up to the castle, well satisfied with my first day on the Argen.

The following day was brilliantly fine: white clouds flew across the sun, but in the intervals he shone with a power which we do not know in our cooler climate. This is one of the drawbacks to Continental fishing in the summer or autumn. It is impossible to stand under a big white umbrella; and after half an hour's roasting, one becomes wholly disinclined for more fishing. However, during the worst part of the day some two dozen and a half of trout

were taken, though I only actually killed seven, each of which was between a quarter and half a pound; each, too, was a bright and well-shaped trout, showing the effect of the light stones and equally bright-coloured water from which he came. A whirling dun and the green body were about equal favourites.

The next day the Argen had become much brighter and clearer, and the sun was everything which the industrious hay-makers, who were gathering in their second and third crops, could desire. But it was too warm for mid-day fishing; it was evident that even from three to four was too early, for nothing but some small fry and a quarter of a pound grayling rewarded an hour's stroll. However, an hour in the evening, from six to seven, afforded some pleasant fishing; the soft pure air was in itself delicious; the river rushed downwards in the still evening with a music which is one of the most delightful of sounds to the town-dweller, suggestive as it is of freedom and sport. I came home with six or seven fish, including a half-pound grayling, which had been compelled, after a brave fight, to leave his gravelly home at the foot of a rippling

stream. Other smaller fish were returned, to give sport when they had attained more mature years.

The weather remained delightful for the traveller, making the somewhat sombre country charmingly bright and cheerful; but it was not such as to tempt me for long hours to the river-bank. However, on the next evening but one, I took a regretful farewell of the Argen, by basketing four half-pounders and some small fry in the still evening. In some respects this more delicate fishing was pleasanter than the easier-obtained basket of the first day. There is a greater attraction and excitement in dropping a fly neatly under a root-entwined bank, and enticing a fish from his home, than in securing a hungry feeder in mid-stream in thickish water. Any one who likes this contemplative kind of fishing might enjoy many pleasant evenings on the Argen; sometimes standing on firm dry banks of gravel, at others wading on equally firm ground in mid-stream, where the water swirls gently over a wider bed. The pools and deeper runs always would be fishable, even in the driest weather, so that from four o'clock to seven one might be sure to get some

fishing. Probably no one would care to go so far as the Argen solely for the sake of the angling; but whoever wished to see something of Germany, and especially of the most flourishing kind of peasant proprietorship, or desired to have a few days' trouting during some part of a summer holiday, might certainly have many a pleasant hour on its banks. He would have the water almost entirely to himself. I never saw a single angler—the country-folk are far too busy with their daily toil to trouble about fishing; and the river holds abundance of fish. My first day's fishing shows what may be done under very favourable circumstances; the others, that even in brighter weather, with clear water, fish may also be taken.

VII.

A DIARY AT DAVOS.[1]

NOTHING is more difficult than to form a fair estimate of the angling value of a lake or river after giving it only a short trial: it is for this reason that so little reliance can be placed upon the recommendations which are given of this or that locality unless the sum of a number of experiences can be obtained. On the other hand, information as to fishing on the Continent is so often asked for, that some short notes of recent fishing experiences in Switzerland may be useful, especially as, having had frequent opportunities of trying the lakes and streams of most of the neighbouring countries, the nature of the fishing was more or less familiar to me. But the object of this expedi-

[1] 1882.

tion to Switzerland was not primarily for the purpose of fishing. As usual, however, I was quite prepared for a day's angling.

The valley of Davos is known by reputation —as a celebrated "health resort," at any rate— to most English people; but it should not be forgotten that, in fact, there are two places of this name about a mile apart: the upper one, Davos-Dörfli; the lower, Davos Platz, a spot which is now a village of hotels and their attendant shops, not to speak of the invalids who frequent them. Two routes lead to this place; one from Landquart, up the Prättigau— another from Chur, up the Albula valley and the Davoser Thal, following the course of the Landwasser, a road which abounds with magnificent scenery. I journeyed from Landquart to Davos, going as far as the village of Klosters, through the Prättigau, and by the stream which waters it—the river Landquart—an ever-foaming cataract. Some fourteen miles up the valley, at the little village of Kublis, I had a morning to spare, and, with fly and minnow, tried to entice a trout from the rushing waters—but absolutely in vain. I had one fellow-angler, a small boy, with a short rod,

fishing with grasshoppers. Higher up, in the neighbourhood of Klosters, there were opportunities of looking into the odd little barrels which numerous anglers carried on their backs. They generally contained two or three small trout, taken with a grasshopper. But I am sure that no real sport can be had in the Landquart; though just below the junction of the streams which issue from the Sardasca and Vereina Thäler, and which together form this river, there are some slower pieces of water, where the stream hurries, but somewhat more gently, through pine-forests and cattle-feeding alps. These I noted in a walk to the Sardasca *châlets;* but as, in the following night, torrents of rain fell, greatly raising the river and making it very turbid, I did not care to go over the same ground without a chance of using a fly, though it should have been a spot where one with a green body ought to have landed some trout.

At Davos there is a lake, "*Sehr fischreich,*" say the German guide-books, — "where good trout-fishing may be had," say the Englishmen. It is about a mile in length, and half a mile in breadth. On one side are those green well-watered slopes so characteristic of Switzerland;

on the other, the pine-woods, which cover the base of the Seehorn, darken the waters of the little lake. Davos Dörfli is not more than five minutes' walk from the lower end of the lake; whilst the more fashionable Davos Platz, where the majority of visitors stay, is fully half an hour's walk distant. About half-way down the lake is another small inn, the Gasthaus Seehorn; but the Hotel Fluela, in Davos Dörfli, is the best place for any one to take up his quarters at who wishes to try his luck in the Davoser See. It is a comfortable and homely house, carried on in a patriarchal fashion, almost by an entire family, from Herr Gredig, the proprietor, downwards. Two boats—one for rowing as we understand the word, another for rowing *à la* gondolier—are possessed in common by the Fluela and the Kurhaus Davos Dörfli. Two or three boats also belong to the Seehorn; so that any one who wishes to fish must, if he can, obtain one of these, as there seem to be no others on the lake. In the meadows below, the Landwasser runs the first mile of its course,—not quite so foaming a torrent as the Landquart, but yet a very rapid stream. As regards the Landwasser, it seems to be much

over-fished. There is hardly a moment of the day on which a weary-looking peasant, with a long rod and an appendant grasshopper, is not dangling this luckless insect on its waters; and for a very good reason, as trout are sold for three francs the pound, so that every fish is a small fortune to the frugal Swiss. The water is very clear, and there is little opportunity, so rapid is it generally, for any of the fly-fisher's skill. On a warm day two or three fair-sized fish may be taken here or there; but to my mind it is not worth any thought from an angler who does not, like one of the inhabitants of the valley, wish to make a few centimes by his rod.

I will give my opinion of the lake shortly; and then any one who may think of fishing there, can form his own views from some short notes of my fishing at Davos. There are plenty of trout, probably some large ones, but the average size is about a quarter to half a pound; a good trout is three-quarters to one pound. They seem to be shy risers; and though, doubtless, on a favourable day a good basket of fish might be taken with the fly, yet on the whole it is not a trustworthy lure. On all hands it is agreed

that the fish will not rise in cold weather; but 5000 feet above the sea-level, cold weather is necessarily more common than warm. Again, on a warm sunny day there is probably no wind, and in really fine weather in the Alps wind is generally absent. It is on the cold stormy days when there is most wind, and this is just the weather in which the Davos trout prefers not to rise. On the other hand, when there is any wind, and the sun is not too bright, a trout or two may be taken with the minnow; and again, after sunset, if there is a breeze, and the day has been warm, there is sure to be some sport for an hour or two, and on a day in which the trout are on the feed the minnow will account for a good basket. But on the whole, and taken one day with another, the Davoser See is distinctly, I think, a bad lake for angling, though it may very well beguile a day or an afternoon, when there are plenty of walking and climbing expeditions to form the staple of amusement.

First Day (*end of August*).—A piercingly cold north wind, with snow on the tops of the mountains. The Landwasser was tried in the morning with fly and minnow. It was quite

useless, as only one small trout was taken. A wet afternoon followed, with falling snow on the higher parts of the mountains, and a strong wind. Fished the lake from the bank with fly, minnow, and artificial grasshopper, but only took a small trout at the mouth of the Landwasser.

Second Day.—Bright sun and cold wind. Fished the Landwasser for an hour in the morning, and took a small trout. From eleven to one wandered about the banks of the lake, and took a couple of small trout with a dun fly. In the afternoon took a few more small things.

Third Day.—Fished the lake from ten to twelve, and took a small trout, and lost a better-sized one, but had no other rises: a fair northerly wind. On this day I made the acquaintance of Conrad Lattner, the fisherman who attends to the nets on the lake. The privilege of fishing with nets belongs to the proprietors of the Fluela and Kurhaus Davos Dörfli: it has been obtained for a valuable consideration. Lattner is rather an oddity, with some contempt for rod-fishing on a lake, though he occupies most of the

day with his rod on the Landwasser. The nets are set every evening. I agreed to meet him at half-past six on the following morning, and go with him to lift the nets.

Fourth Day.—At half-past six I was on the banks of the lake, feeling rather cold, and not well pleased at having to wait for the fisherman. From the three nets which were laid but one half-pound trout was produced, the startling result being caused by the cold wind and bright moon—so my informant said. It was satisfactory to find that the course of the net fisherman does not run smooth. The night before, four trout had been the result, and the same number were secured the following night, but of these facts I was not an eyewitness; and possibly the sport was improved for the benefit of the inquisitive Englishman. Of course spots were shown where monsters of 10 or 12 lb. had been taken; but a daily netting ought occasionally to land something out of the common. I was also treated to a story of how the said Lattner rowed an Englishman up and down the lake for three hours while he threw his fly, and how only one fish was caught—somewhat, I think, to the fisher-

man's delight. In fact, when, as on the Continent, the fisherman regards trout-taking as a serious business, the amateur is looked on as an oddity to be tolerated, but not encouraged. I gathered, also, that three or four to the pound is the average size of the Davos trout.

In the afternoon I obtained the use of the Fluela Hotel boat, having tried the bank-fishing with so little success; but though there was a fresh northerly breeze, the trout would not rise at all to any fly, large or small. It is true, there was a very bright sun; but the breeze was sufficiently strong to give plenty of motion to the surface of the lake. The fly being useless, I had recourse to a moderate-sized Devon minnow, but trolled until about a quarter past five without success,—though the magnificent view of the Piz St Michel and the Taschenhorn, closing in the lower outline of the valley, was alone sufficient to make the rowing on the lake a pleasure. Hardly, however, had the sun dropped behind the Weissfluh, and the lake grown dark with the evening shadows, than, from an absolutely torpid state, the trout became lively, and more than one run at the minnow showed that they were on the feed. By half-past

six I had secured a brace of pretty half-pound trout, having had at least seven or eight runs. Whether the trout took shyly, or whether the hooks of the minnow were too small, I should not like to say, though I have a strong opinion that tackle-makers do not dress the Devon minnows with sufficiently large hooks, and are wrong in not placing a triangle near the head, which is the spot which the trout attacks. A hook two or three sizes larger than is usually allowed the fisherman, shows no more than the small-sized ones if a minnow spins well, and will often hook a trout, or hold him if hooked, when the smaller size will only cause disappointment.

Fifth Day.—A couple of hours' trolling in the morning produced a couple of trout,—one a nice fish of three-quarters of a pound, bright and silvery, with pale-orange fins and a great broad tail, and not a single pink spot. The difference in colour and shape of the trout in the lake is noticeable. Some are dark, and resemble an ordinary lake-trout (*Salmo fario*); others, such as this, might be fresh run from the sea. The latter, so far as I can judge, are small specimens of the great lake-trout (*Salmo*

ferox), or, as it is called by Continental writers, *Trutta lacustris.* A short description and drawing of this fish is given in that handy little book, Weber's 'Die Fische Deutschlands und der Schweiz;'[1] but it is noticeable that the author states the flesh to be white, whilst that of the Davos trout which were cooked was quite pink.

Sixth Day.—After rowing about the lake in the afternoon under a deep blue sky, with a light south-easterly wind, as soon as the western side of the lake was in shadow, I went across into the darker water, and was barely within the line of shadow before a trout was at the minnow. In brief, from five o'clock to half-past six I secured a brace of half-pounders, lost another as I was about to lift him into the boat, and had my minnow carried off with a rush, as a bad swivel gave way. In addition I had several runs, so that but for misfortunes, I should have secured a couple of brace of trout.

Such were my experiences of the Davoser See at the end of August and the beginning of September. The days noted above were not consecutive, but occurred during a stay of ten

[1] C. Kaiser: München, 1870.

days in very varying weather. I think they bear out the result which has been stated at the commencement of this paper, that fishing on this charming lake is very well as a break in the regular amusements of a mountain resort; but that it is not good enough to form the main amusement, or to bring a stranger to this valley who desires to have plenty of sport.

VIII.

THE PROFESSIONAL FISHERMAN OF THE EASTERN ALPS.

THE professional fresh-water fisherman is a person quite unknown among the sporting characters of Great Britain. For though here and there in Scotland and Ireland there are men who make their living by trout and salmon fishing, it is rather as attendants on anglers than as fishermen themselves. But in the Alps, and on the various rivers and lakes which are fed by these great mountains, all this is changed. The angler as such, the man who fishes in his leisure hours for the sake of sport, may be said to be wholly unknown; and the trout and grayling of the rivers of Austria and Bavaria fall victims not to the scientific lures of the fishing amateur, but to the nets and

spears of the professional fisherman. Angling as a sport is really ignored on the Continent, though here and there in France an *amateur de la pêche* may be found. In France, the fact that the right of fishing in a stream belongs to the riparian owners, and that they are usually legion, is a great bar to any general letting or tenancy of the fishing. But in Germany, either the State, or the commune of some village or town, or some great proprietor, nearly always owns the right of fishing, and consequently there is no difficulty in finding large stretches of water under the ownership of one man. Amateurs there are, broadly speaking, none; so the professional fisherman has it all his own way, and works his will with many charming rivers and lakes. How much the epicures of large towns like Munich or Milan owe to him is scarcely thoroughly known; but as a matter of fact, live trout are sent scores of miles from some mountain-lake to appear on the table in the fashionable restaurant of the capital of a kingdom. Thus the lake-trout in the little Vilsalper See, far up in the Bavarian Alps, are despatched to Kempten and Munich; and many other lakes and rivers on the northern

and southern slopes of the Alps, would serve as similar examples. Trout in the Munich market fetch, towards the end of the season, from two marks seventy-four pfennigs per pound (about 2s. 7d.) to three marks; and even the pike, much despised in England, will fetch from 1s. 2d. to 1s. 3d. a pound: so that, since all these fish are supplied through the agency of the professional fresh-water fisherman, it will be obvious that he holds no unimportant place as a supplier of food, especially when the difficulty, if not impossibility, of obtaining sea-fish in the inland towns of Europe is considered.

Generally the professional fisherman rents his lake or piece of river by the year, and has to take it afresh every year. Sometimes it is put up to auction, and then the price for the year may be double that which was given the preceding year. Occasionally the fisherman will rent his water for two or three years, paying a lump sum down for a three years' tenancy. The rents, as may be imagined, vary considerably. As a rule, they would be considered small according to English notions; but the professional fisherman, unless—which is very rarely the case—he happens to be the

proprietor of a hotel, is never a rich man. On poor streams, where there is little or no market for the fish, a stretch of water will be rented for £1, 10s. or £3 a-year. Another lake or stream, where the fish are good, and where there is a brisk demand on the spot, or the means of communication with towns are easy, will fetch from £50 to £100 a-year.

The professional fresh-water fishermen are a class with whom travellers are not usually brought much into contact; but no one can go a few times into the Eastern Alps with a fishing-rod without becoming acquainted with them; for, with some exceptions, when the water happens to be the property of a large proprietor, it is the fisherman who has first to be sought out. Although a peasant, or a little above one, he considers himself somewhat superior to the ordinary workers of the village; for he earns his bread without the constant toil which the peasants of the Alps have to undergo. He throws his nets, and brings in his fish and sells them to the hotel-keepers, or despatches them to the town, and his day's work is done; and he has then only to mend his tackle, smoke bad tobacco, and drink five

or six pints of Bavarian beer before bedtime. Thus in his own mind he is generally a person of importance; and it is much worse to wound his pride by fishing in his waters without his permission, than it would be to injure his property by taking dozens of his trout. Moreover, he is generally somewhat toadied to by the landlord of the village inn, who naturally desires to obtain the fish which he can supply on the easiest possible terms.

The professional fisherman is no sportsman, and regards any one who angles merely for the pleasure of the thing as an oddity who is rather to be pitied. His main object is to catch as many fish as possible; and for that purpose he will net his lake or river, and spear his trout, without more thought for sport as such, than the Yarmouth herring-fishers. Sometimes he will fish with the fly or the minnow, and then his lines are of the rudest kind; and he will regard English tackle with vast surprise. But, as a rule, angling as such is wholly out of his thoughts, and not a part of his work. Yet in this respect he is not more singular than the hundreds of Germans who have good trout and grayling fishing within easy distance of their

homes without caring one jot about it. Generally speaking, if civilly dealt with, he will give an English fisherman leave to angle in his waters, sometimes gratuitously, sometimes for a few marks; but in nearly every case he is careful to impress on the angler that on no account is he to use nets; and he is generally anxious that a kind of small barrel should be borne by some small boy for the purpose of keeping alive the fish which are taken.

Of course, towards the end of the season the professional fisherman has considerably lowered his stock of fish; so that the angler has not the same chance of sport as in the beginning of the year. But since he usually, year after year, occupies the same water, he does not kill spawning fish; and has often, indeed, as fervid a dislike of poor peasants who indulge in a little poaching on moonlight nights in autumn, as any gamekeeper in England. Thus the supply does not decrease as it otherwise would do. Moreover, the heavy Alpine snows which begin to descend about the end of October are excellent protectors of gravid fish. For years to come the professional fishermen of the Alps are sure to exist as a distinct class; for there

is apparently no more love of angling in the higher orders on the Continent now than there was ten years ago, and therefore these men will long remain the chief tenants of the lakes and rivers of Germany and Switzerland. In some respects this is not a thing to be regretted by the Englishman who spends his holiday's fishing for trout or grayling in the rivers which rise in the Eastern Alps.

IX.

ON FISHING TOURS ABROAD.[1]

IT is a curious delusion, especially among writers of guide-books, that when an Englishman crosses the Channel and takes up his abode as a traveller in a strange country, he thereupon necessarily ceases to care for that truly English pastime angling. The sportsman is expected to become a connoisseur of architecture, to delight in nothing but sweet or majestic landscapes, or to feel unwonted pleasure in a continual series of mountain walks. That some such delusion must exist, is shown by the persistent manner in which hundreds of persons who at home are ardent fishermen, and who gladly take a holiday in

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Hampshire or seek some Scottish river, pass by the excellent streams and lakes which abound throughout the Continent. The angler, with a martyr-like resignation, thinks only with a sigh of the trout feeding beneath the old grey willow-tree at home, but never attempts to try that skill in foreign waters which practice from boyhood has often rendered almost perfect. It is singular, indeed, how fishing is neglected on the Continent by those who would find it a continual pleasure; for in whatever land it may be pursued, no amusement is more refreshing to the brain-worker, with its variation of gentle or strong exercise, and its pleasant alternations of monotony and excitement.

The number of those who ever cast a thought to the obtaining of their favourite amusement when they have left Dover behind them, or who seek to vary the regular tourist's round by a day or two by the side of some little stream, where the inhabitants look upon a fishing-rod as quite an unusual sight, is singularly small. And yet many a man who, as he drives along a Tyrolese valley, or passes a sombre lake shaded by pine-trees, must in-

voluntarily recall pleasant days spent by some Highland stream. The river ripples by the roadside, the trout are "on the feed"; but flies and fishing-rod are safe at home, and the alpenstock alone is at hand.

But if angling is a fascinating pastime to numbers of thoughtful minds among the familiar scenes of an English landscape, it is quite as attractive when practised amid the scenery of a country new to the beholder. The angler finds many features in the landscape, charming perhaps in their minuteness, which the through-going traveller, who rushes quickly from place to place, can never enjoy. Nor are the opportunities of mixing with the various country-folks to be lightly prized; for the increasing number of large hotels, the numerous railways, and improved systems of travelling, not to speak of the numbers of actual travellers, render a leisurely acquaintance with the natives more and more difficult. And it must always be a pleasure to look back to the quaint, honest, and kindly folk with whom the traveller would never have come in contact had he left his rod and tackle at home.

One of the great drawbacks to modern travel

is the fact that only a few common features in the mere outward lives of the people are observed; and even of their habits but few can really be properly gleaned by the passing traveller. The self-inflicted melancholy and unfortunate reserve of most English travellers is also a strong barrier against familiar intercourse with foreigners. The English tourists who flock to the spots where their countrymen congregate, have not yet fully acquired the secret of enjoyable outing, and often get but a poor return for their money. Certainly modern travellers would do well to notice how Wordsworth, for instance, and his sister Dorothy, associated with those among whom they travelled; how Dr Johnson would talk as readily with a gillie as he would argue with a Presbyterian minister.

Whilst the most imperfect fisherman hardly ever sets out for a holiday in Scotland or Ireland without his trout-rod, the keenest angler generally leaves his tackle behind him when he departs for Germany or France; yet for the pleasantest and most satisfactory fishing tours these latter countries are the best. To enjoy Scotch or Irish fishing one place must be

selected; and then in a stay of two or three weeks the weather and the water are certain to afford sport; whereas if a day or two's stay only is made, it is quite as likely as not that the water gets into the right trim just as the unwilling angler is paying his hotel bill. But in a fishing tour, paradoxical as it may seem, fishing should not be the sole, but only the chief or central, object of the traveller's wanderings. He should be prepared to do a great many other things besides fishing; though the arrangements and the plans should always be made with a view to obtain as good fishing as is compatible with such other objects as picturesque scenery, good air, and the other aims of a Continental tourist. One of the great advantages of an angling tour is that it usually counterbalances the miserable consequences of wet weather, especially among the mountains. A day of rain and mist is to the mountaineer a period of purgatory; on the other hand, the fishing and mountaineering traveller only finds one amusement superseded by another, unless it has caused the rivers to descend in floods. This in itself is a strong recommendation in favour of fishing tours. But while wet weather

is thus rendered comparatively harmless, the same amount of rain is not required as in this country; for most of the rivers are of a larger size and greater length, and therefore do not run down with the same quickness as Scotch rivers, and often the smaller ones are fed from a more permanent source—namely, the glaciers of the Alps. The glaciers thus prevent the smaller streams from becoming as fine after a spell of dry weather as streams of the same size in Scotland or Wales. Thus the passing tourist is much more likely to obtain fair sport *en route* in the Tyrol or Switzerland than he is fishing in the same way in this country. Neither must it be forgotten that foreigners care but little for the sport of fishing; so that it is much easier to find lakes or rivers where the angling is quite free, or where rod-fishing is looked upon by the proprietor of the fishery as a harmless way of taking fish, and the stranger has but little difficulty in obtaining a day or two's sport. For where the fishing is in any sense preserved, it is usually done for the sake of the netting, the taking of fish being regarded solely from a business point of view; and therefore, as we have said, the fly-fisher is looked

upon as a person who need not be interfered with.

Of course, if the upper classes were as fond of this sport in Germany or France as they are in this country, the number of anglers might very soon affect the netting or spearing; but fishermen for the sake of sport are so few and far between on the Continent, that for years to come there is little danger of their being regarded with suspicion by the proprietors of the fisheries. In France the greatest exceptions to this general rule exist; for if there are trout-streams near towns of any importance, an *amateur de la pêche* will from time to time be found who strictly preserves for his own use his own and his neighbours' share of the river. But the considerable subdivision of land in France among a large number of small proprietors makes it almost certain that even if the fishing tourist does happen to light upon the ground of an *amateur de la pêche*, he has only to move a little higher up or a little lower down the stream to find himself on the plot of some person from whose land he may fish as long as he pleases.

The choice of a companion is one of the

most difficult matters when you are projecting a fishing tour. Many an ardent angler is not satisfied unless he is continually throwing his fly or trolling his minnow; but, as we have already hinted, the genuine travelling angler must be able to enjoy other things besides fishing. He must also be prepared for disappointments; for it is a different thing to hunt out your fishing-ground and then to explore it, to stationing yourself at places such as Ballynahinch, or Loch Tay, or Loch Leven, where you have only to pay your money and catch or try to catch your fish. Again, of two friends, if one possesses the instincts and aspirations of the mountaineer only, and the other those of the fisherman only, it is unlikely that the tour will be a success.

No two persons suit each other better for a foreign fishing tour than an artist and an angler; for both find materials for their skill in the same places. Where David Cox could paint his grand picture of the "Salmon Trap," the follower of Izaak Walton will assuredly not be without hope in the exercise of his delicate craft. Nor are ladies, if with proper tastes, unsuitable companions for the angling

traveller. Even if both companions do not actually possess some common taste, such as painting, still sketching and fishing, or fishing and walking, or simply fishing and quiet travelling, can well be combined, provided each possesses a fair share of that cardinal virtue of all travellers—forbearance. Thus, with a moderate capability of walking, nothing need prevent a brother and a sister, or a husband and a wife, from pleasantly enjoying a tour which shall include angling.

Neither does a fishing tour, generally speaking, add much either to the expenses of the journey or to the amount of the necessary *impedimenta.* In places where some kind of demand for the fishing has been created, a small fee may be charged. Thus at Ischl, for instance, in the Austrian Tyrol,—which has been rendered rather a fashionable place among Southern Germans, owing to the partiality with which it is regarded by the Austrian Court,—a charge of a gulden a-day is made for fishing in the river Traun; but, on the other hand, you may find plenty of places both in Germany and France where the fishing is equally good and quite free—though two shillings a-day for

fair trout and grayling fishing may well be regarded as a merely nominal charge. A fishing tour does not add to the luggage, because nothing more is needed than two rods—one a single-handed fly-rod, the other a double-handed medium fly-rod of about 14 feet, with top joints, which will enable it to be used either for fly-fishing, or, on an emergency, trolling, if carefully used—and a good supply of artificial flies and minnows. Any touring angler who runs short of tackle after he has left England must either give up his fishing or wait until he can procure more tackle from home; for the flies even of the professional fisherman are of the rudest kind, and half-a-dozen of a first-class English make will be regarded by him as a most gratifying gift. Indeed scientific fishing is really almost unknown abroad; the grasshopper, the worm, or the live minnow exhaust the *repertoire* of the Continental fisherman's lures. In comparatively unfished waters a moderately skilful angler, with good English tackle, may thus have often really excellent sport, and not only in out-of-the-way places, but in those where travellers most resort. Thus, at a frequented

place like Schaffhausen, plenty of grayling in the autumn months, when the English traveller most roams abroad, would reward the fisherman who was prudent enough to bring his fishing-rod with him; though, as a matter of fact, probably this is not done by one per cent of the tourists who visit the falls of the Rhine. But dozens of them, with the love of sport inherent in most Englishmen, would infinitely prefer the pleasure of taking a dish of grayling to gazing for half an hour at the foam-covered waters of the Rhine. If the fishing abroad is sometimes disappointing, there is usually something novel or picturesque to amuse the fisherman; whereas in Ireland or Scotland, generally speaking, the scenery is of a familiar type, and the habits and characteristics of the people are well known. In the mountains it is remarkable how many curious and quaint legends still remain connected with the different lakes. This is more especially the case in the Tyrol, where almost every tarn has some story belonging to it. Even in more frequented parts these mythical tales are to be found. Thus there is a curious one connected with the little Seelisberger See, which, far above the

Lake of Lucerne, is sheltered by the dark precipices of the Niederbauen. The story goes that in it there lives a monster known as the Elbst. This beast can, Proteus-like, change its form; and the trustful swimmer, resting as he supposes on the floating trunk of a fallen pine, is carried by it for ever beneath the waters of the lake. But the legends of the Tyrol are not only of interest as mere fairy tales; they show the way in which in bygone times the powers of nature were personified, for most of them arise from natural phenomena of a striking kind. Thus, if the angler is attentive to the stories of the mountaineer and the fisherman, he will be certain to obtain a knowledge of the folk-lore of the Alps, which in no other way would he be so likely to acquire, or if he did hear, to heed.

But a certain amount of forethought must naturally be taken, though help from guide-books in this respect may be looked for in vain; and no one has yet done for the Tyrol and Switzerland what Mr Watson Lyall has for Scotland in his admirable 'Sportsman's Guide to the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland.' For though Herr Max von dem Borne's little book

is a creditable and by no means useless work, it is not sufficiently full and detailed to be of much help to a stranger.[1] No one will be far wrong in going to Normandy for trout-fishing in spring or the early summer; but he will find in the autumn the country hot and dusty, and the sport poor. If he wants the best trout or grayling fishing, he will not wander about the Black Forest, though in a lake such as the Schluch See he may have excellent pike-fishing. But in many parts of Switzerland fair trout-fishing may be obtained, and in the lakes and rivers of Southern Germany or of Northern Italy trout and grayling may be taken in abundance. Again, one for whom the study of ichthyology has any attractions can scarcely fail to find much to interest him when wandering through Europe fishing-rod in hand. Not only are there the trout and grayling, with whose habits we should be so familiar, to study in new localities, but in many of the lakes of

[1] Wegweiser für Angler durch Deutschland, Oesterreich, und die Schweiz. Von Max von dem Borne. Berlin: Verlag von Wiegandt, Hempel, und Parey: 1877. Some information of use may occasionally be found in the Deutsche Fisherei-Zeitung and in Dunker's Fisherei-Kalendar. Stettin: Herrche und Lebelung.

the Tyrol and Switzerland he will meet both with char and with various species of that fish so unknown to English anglers, the *coregonous*, which, under its various names of *palée*, *renke*, and *fera*, puzzles the traveller who comes across it in the *menus* of *tables d'hôte*. A fishing tour, therefore, it is obvious, is a strangely neglected mode of passing a holiday, for it suits many tastes. The men who desire to live solitarily or gregariously, in lonely villages or in crowded hotels, can all compass its pleasures. And both the complete enthusiast in fishing, and the person who looks upon it as the merest pastime, will find that it is by no means to be despised, since it brings the traveller into new scenes, into contact with the inhabitants of the country, and is not more costly or more troublesome than an ordinary tour. So, to use the words of Herrick—

"On with thy fortunes, then, whate'er they be:
If good, I'll smile; if bad, I'll sigh for thee."

X

SEA-TROUT FISHING.[1]

THE literary description of angling—that it is the contemplative man's recreation—is an expression which, though descriptive enough of one aspect of the pastime, is, as applied to the whole art of rod-fishing, singularly inappropriate. So I mused, after a capital day's fishing on a sea-trout loch, sitting over a bright fire in the little parlour of a quiet inn, far away from tourists, on the wild western coast of Scotland. To wander through the fields in June among pastoral scenes, such as were long ago touched on with such delicate enjoyment by Walton, is to enjoy a recreation essentially contemplative. The scenery of the English meadows—the sober scenery which George Eliot has well portrayed, and the feel-

[1] Reprinted by permission from the 'Pall Mall Gazette.'

ing of which runs so markedly through Mr Matthew Arnold's 'Scholar Gipsey, and Thyrsis,' possesses an intrinsic quietness and calm which are very productive of meditation, and what Wordsworth has well described as "the tender peace of rural thought." If the fisherman on a June evening be casting his fly on the Kentish Darent, as it circles in quiet pools by the banks, white with ox-eye daisies, or sways the green trails of the long-growing weeds, while the notes of the nightingales sound from the neighbouring elms, and "drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds," keen sportsman as he may be, eager as he may be to take fish, and heavy as his basket is, his mind will yet be contemplative, and his mood will often be the same in secluded glens or by lonely mountain streams: he is engaged in a contemplative man's recreation. But there is a very widely different kind of angling, perhaps as an amusement the most perfect sort of fishing, if the chief object of an amusement is to take the thoughts of the fisherman from their accustomed groove and to absorb him in the pursuit of the moment; and this is fly-fishing for sea-trout — albeit it will pall

on the taste long before the more sober kind of angling has lost any attraction. Pure and simple sea-trout fishing is unfortunately not a common or easily obtained pleasure; but when once it has been enjoyed, an angler ever looks forward to the day when he will be once more, perhaps in wind and rain, eagerly watching for the rise of this dashing fish. It is not common, because the lake or river which must be the scene of the amusement must not be too far from the sea; and because in this country it is confined almost entirely to the lakes and rivers of Scotland and Ireland. A proprietor who possesses a good sea-trout river or loch can always, if he does not need it himself, find plenty of men who will give him a good round sum for the tenancy; and if it be in the hands of a hotel-keeper, the charges are almost certain to be very high, for the stock of fish is renewed with every heavy rain, and their condition is as good in September as in May. Here and there the fisherman may sometimes have the good luck to meet with fair sea-trout fishing at a small cost; but if he does, he must be prepared to put up with decidedly rude accommodation, and probably uncertain sport.

Sea-trout fishing, so far from being a contemplative amusement, is quite the reverse. The perfection of a day for this kind of angling is one on which a strong gale is blowing from the south-west, when now and again a drenching shower reminds you that the mists of the Atlantic are at last encountering the Highland hills, and when, standing up in the stern of a substantial boat, a few moments' contemplation over the field of morals or of art will end in your losing your balance, and finding yourself spluttering in the water of the loch. But in the excitement of the sport you are unmindful of wind or rain; and when the sky is clearer, when a fresh but modest wind raises the surface of the water, and the colours are most charming on the mountains, you are too engrossed with the sport to do more than take momentary notice of hues which at another time would monopolise your attention. For sea-trout fishing, on a good lake with a proper breeze, or in a river in which the water is in good condition, must absorb an angler if he is an angler at all. There is none of the uncertainty of salmon-fishing about it. If there is a fair supply of sea-trout, they are—given the

above conditions—almost certain to rise to some extent. You do not know what size they may be—they may be half a pound or five pounds; you do not know the moment when they may come dashing from the water, or shoot like a silver arrow through the crest of a wave. There is no deep eddy beneath a shady alder, which you, as it were, besiege at your own will and time—where you watch a rising trout, and lay your plans for his destruction: you are throwing your fly over a rapid pool or on a brisk loch, and at any moment and anywhere the sea-trout may rise. He comes at the fly with a rapidity which requires the utmost quickness in the tightening of the line or he will be gone. He must be struck and played with a dash which a regular south-country angler scarcely understands, who is inclined to treat him with a ceremony which causes the gillie to have an unreasonable contempt for his skill as a fisherman. If the fish misses the fly at the first rise, or is untouched by the hook, he will, unlike any other kind of trout, often be ready, if you give him the chance, instantaneously to return with fresh vehemence; so that without a moment's loss of time the fly must be over him again.

And a sea-trout as a rule affords such excellent sport, because he has twice the strength of an ordinary trout; and, especially if lightly hooked, or with a fine line or with a hook of not very large kind, will make a surprising resistance. The fish has, too, a peculiar and noticeable manner of attempting to escape; in which again he differs from other kinds of trout, and by which he can, even if he is not landed, be invariably distinguished. He makes from time to time a succession of leaps, which, if he is a fair-sized fish, are as trying to the tackle as to the hopes of the angler. He dashes now a foot, now two feet, now three feet, into the air; he rushes off as if for the other end of the lake or pool, rapidly carrying out the line, and then returns with such quickness that the line is slack before it can be reeled up; and with it in this state he makes a succession of leaps, which, if he be not well hooked or quickly checked, probably end in his escape. And if it be remembered that this is often taking place on a wild day, when it is difficult to keep your feet in a boat, and when the craft has to be well managed, it is easy for the most unsporting of men to understand that this is anything but a

contemplative recreation. There is also another characteristic of sea-trout fishing which seems to show that this species of the genus *Salmo* swim in pairs or shoals, and differ in this respect from all the rest of the salmon family. For in many cases you are sure when you have one rise to have another shortly afterwards; so that, it may be, before you have recovered from the ruffled feeling of missing one fish, another may give you a chance when you are least capable of accepting it. And if a rod at the stern of the boat hooks a fish, it is very likely that the angler at the bow will presently be fast in another. Moreover, the sea-trout are in themselves singularly beautiful: their small head, slender but vigorous body, powerful tail, the silver of their sides, and the delicate green or pink tints which merge imperceptibly in the light glitter, are all points for special admiration. To contemplate a fish as it lies dead at the bottom of a boat, may appear to some to resemble too much the study by a butcher of his carcasses as they hang at Christmas-time before his shop. But there are few more beautiful natural objects, whether you take the actual lines of the form or the colouring,

than fish fresh from the sea or the river. Perhaps the only part of the pleasure of the sea-trout fisher which can at all be considered as contemplative, is that which consists in the satisfied admiration with which he regards the fish which has just fallen a prey to his skill. But this cannot make sea-trout fishing in any sense the recreation of a contemplative man.

APPENDIX.

THE CLOCKMAKERS OF THE SCHWARZWALD.

The Baden State Railway, running in an unbroken line from the Rhine plain at Mannheim to the shores of the Boden See at Constance, forms two sides of that part of the Grand Duchy of Baden which in Germany is called Badischer Schwarzwald. Along this line go great numbers of English tourists hurrying to Switzerland, and rushing back again to England; but they seldom set foot in any part of this district, except in the town of Freiburg, a pleasant point to break a long and somewhat tedious journey. The dark hills thickly covered with pine-trees, which the traveller sees from the windows of his carriage, generally serve to remind him of the grander mountains he has left, or of the peaks which he hopes to climb. But among these hills is much picturesque and quaint scenery, of a character at once unique and distinct from that of countries more frequented by

the traveller. From any high ground, lofty hills can be seen extending towards the horizon, more or less clothed with black pine-forests, broken here and there by the lighter foliage in the valleys, or by open patches of cultivated land. There are cottage farms, with huge black and spreading roofs, better built, and showing signs of greater prosperity and comfort than in most mountainous districts. The village houses are less thickly grouped, and everything indicates an active and industrious people. In the valleys are many charming landscapes: the scale is small, but the perfect union of water and rock, of wood and meadow, produces harmonious and delightful pictures. Among the thick and fragrant woods the scenes are different—more weird and wild, but none the less attractive. Among these woods and hills dwell a people who unite the simplicity and kindness of the mountaineer and agriculturist with the shrewdness and energy of the artisan of the town. They cultivate their land with surprising care, and work at the manufacture of clocks and watches, glass and straw articles, with a diligence which has been rewarded by great success. They are so energetic and desirous of doing well in life, that like the men of the Canton Graubünden and the Oetzthal Alps, they willingly leave their own country and go away to England, America, or France, where they work hard, chiefly at clocks and watches. But to this desire for bettering their condition is united a strong love of home, so that in three or four years they come back with sufficient money to buy themselves a piece of land, on which for the rest of their days

they live; they settle down, and their children will do as they have done.

The first thing to be done at Furtwangen is to see the exhibition of the Gewerbevereins, and at Tryberg the Gewerbe Hall, open from May to October. The latter is a wooden building of some taste, where every variety of clock can be seen which the ingenuity of the Schwarzwalder can devise or his fingers execute. Round the walls and on the tables are clocks of every sort. Nearly all are of wood, though here and there is a fragile one of straw or ivory. The first which attracts attention is a very fine specimen of wood carving: the figures and design are cut in lime-wood, and it stands two feet high; the fingers and hours are of ivory. The attendant puts it to two o'clock, and it forthwith plays a melodious air, as of the most delicate flutes. The next is still larger; and as the hour strikes, a miniature band plays "Der Wacht am Rhein." We pass on to one made of beech and walnut, the dark and light wood being charmingly blended. As the fingers touch the hour, two helmeted trumpeters step out and blow the *réveille*. Then there are cuckoos which strike up at the hour, and thrushes which sing at the quarter; venerable monks standing beneath the belfry ring the hour when midnight comes. The automaton clock comes next, and we watch a sort of Pickwickian fat boy feed himself with rolls till three has finished striking. The taste and minuteness of the carving in the largest or the smallest point are very great; the regulator on the pendulum of the smallest clock represents, perhaps, an oak-leaf, or some simple but still

graceful object. Nor are more methodical and stronger-looking clocks wanting; they are of every kind; they will suit the kitchen or the boudoir. The excellence of the external work is equalled by that of the machinery; for having once gained a reputation, the inhabitants of these hills take care that it shall not be lost. The Gewerbeverein, or Union, guarantee the goodness of each clock which hangs on the walls.

Thirty years ago a really good little clock could have been bought for sixpence or eightpence, but now, with communication more easy, the small ones are sold for four or five shillings, the cheapest trumpeter for six pounds. Every workman has his special piece of work,—one carves the figures, another prepares the dial, a third the wheels, a fourth the pendulum,—so that on one clock many hands are employed. Under this system, within a radius of sixty English miles, the number of clocks or watches turned out annually is nearly seven hundred thousand. Figures convey but small impressions to the mind; but if it is remembered that five thousand men are working at this trade, and that there are only about two thousand five hundred inhabitants in Furtwangen and fifteen hundred in Tryberg, it will be seen how strong a hold this trade has upon the people of the Schwarzwald.

Glancing at the history of this industry, we find that towards the end of the seventeenth century a family named Kreuz, more enterprising or clever than their neighbours, lived in the village of Neukirch. They made a rude clock, works and frame of wood, with a weight, and this was

given or sold to the parish priest. This idea was not lost upon others of the enterprising Schwarzwalders, and the example was soon followed, and not long afterwards the farmhouses of the district began to be adorned with other wooden clocks. Two men were very apt at the work, they may almost be called the fathers of the art; their names were Lorenz Frei, called "the Woodworker," and Solomon Henniger, of St Märgen. The germs now rapidly developed; the simple carving of wooden stands or frames gave place to the more elaborate work of ornamental clockmaking; the wood, the want of other occupations, the uncommon industry, acuteness, and union of the people, the freedom from political and other disturbing causes, all promoted this quick growth. Hawkers sold the clocks throughout Germany, and the Schwarzwald soon became celebrated throughout the empire.

The clocks were at first very simple in construction, with wooden wheels and carved frames. It was not until between the years 1730 and 1740 that the first cuckoo-clock—which is one of the class called *Spieluhren*, or clocks of amusement—was introduced by Franz Ketterer of Schönwald, a small hamlet on the hill above Tryberg, who is the real originator of the description of clock for which the Black Forest is most noted. This was novel enough for a time; but more minds set to work, and forty years later Anthony Duffner devised the first flute-clock. Soon a real, noteworthy advance took place, by the introduction of the first pendulum clock. Then the fancy of one Kirner, a Schwarzwalder, who had become Court

Painter to the King of Bavaria, suggested that very pleasant instrument, the trumpet-clock. There were now five hundred persons engaged in the clock trade in the Black Forest, and it had become the recognised occupation of the people. The work was all done by hand; not for some years was machinery used. But instead of the primitive fashion of each family working for themselves, masters and workmen began to appear; and as time went on, the change became more and more complete, till, in 1849, the Grand Duke Leopold was asked to assist in founding a clock and watch makers' school. The Government of Baden at once acceded, and they gave 10,000 florins for the purpose of defraying some of the building expenses and to carry on the work of the institution—the community of Furtwangen gave wood and materials — and in 1850 the Clockmakers' School at Furtwangen was opened. Thus, almost before the workmen of England had begun to think of technical schools, the peasants of a distant German province had already set one on foot. It has given new impetus to the work, and by the introduction of a special literature and instruction, has in no small degree aided the general education of the people of this and the neighbouring villages, as well as the actual technical branch which it was created to improve. The school has two main objects. Firstly, the education of the young by literary and theoretical teaching in the elements on which the art of clockmaking is composed—that is, in the general principles common to any scientific manufacture, and in the more intricate details belonging spe-

cially to this one branch. Secondly, the improvement of the trade by a practical school or workshop, where the theories already taught can be carried out, where new improvements and methods can be tried, and where practical instruction can be given. Two important principles are acted upon in carrying out these aims,—the instruction is free; and it is not in the place of, but subsidiary to, and based on, that which is given in the "Folkschule," or public elementary schools. Briefly put, these are some of the details connected with the school. The age of admittance is fourteen, and the pupil must have passed through the "Folkschule." There is a yearly examination, yearly distribution of prizes, a library containing technical and scientific books and models, and a period of study not confined to any particular time or length. The subjects taught are: (*a*) Freehand and ornamental drawing; (*b*) arithmetic, geometry, and lineal drawing; (*c*) constructive drawing; (*d*) mechanics and natural science; (*e*) heads of German industry and mercantile business; (*f*) French, when possible.

There are a few details to notice as to the workshop. The most important are, that the workers must bring their own tools, unless they can show satisfactorily that they are too poor to afford them, when they will obtain them freely at the shop; and that the Government defrays the expense of living at Furtwangen of those who would be unable to attend out of their own means. There are sawmills and other appliances for doing the rougher work, preparatory to the more delicate details of the instructive workshop. Lastly, the whole is

under the supervision of the Government. The school and shop have both succeeded well, the trade increases every year, and the prosperity of the people in an equal degree. As railways are extended, and the means of communication, not only with the immediate parts of Germany, but with the more distant countries of Europe and the world, become more easy, so undoubtedly will be seen a further extension of the business of the Schwarzwald.

It will be seen from this brief sketch that the wanderer in the Black Forest can not only receive pleasure from the charms of a peculiar and beautiful scenery, but has also opportunities of studying some social features hardly to be found in more populous places. He finds—a long way from the great centres of commerce and manufactures—a simple and kind-hearted people, carrying on an ingenious trade quietly, yet actively, and keeping pace with modern improvements; for the peacefulness of the pine-woods, and the patriarchal simplicity of the villagers' lives, seem to enable them to labour without the disturbing influences at work among so many industrial communities.

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