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Abbey & Imbrie

CENTENNIAL

FISH STORIES

A. B. Cunningham,
Burton, Ohio.

The Romance of Two Fish

My friend, I am an old man. This white hair---you would not think it was once black as midnight? It has been so long ago. I can't work much any more. See that hand? All drawn out o' shape. Rheumatism. Hurts when I try to do anything. So some spring, I dig me a few worms and kinda go off down to the creek.

There is a tollable deep hole down there, an' the bank is good to set on. I bait my hook an' throw it in an' wait fer the floater to go under.....

But some days they won't bite. But I don't go home. The boys don't need an old codger like me putterin' around. I just set on the bank an' think about things.

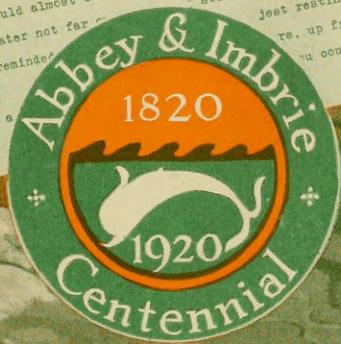
An' it was once when I was settin' there---it musta been about four o'clock. I could hear Jessie, that's my son Tom's wife, a-callin' the cows.

Yes, sir, I was jest settin' there thinkin' when I saw this thing begin that I'm goin' to tell you about. I saw the beginnin' of a love affair 'tween two fish.

Right away I hear you say this is a sure enough fish story. The love of a fish! But---my friend, I am an old man. An' what my eyes see they see.

A little lady bass, slim like a chestnut leaf an' so white I could almost see through her! This purty little thing lifted in the water not far from me. Still as one o' our evenin's up here. She reminded me of Jessie. I jest restin' a minute.

He come up from the deep hole comes up. You could see he was only a minute.



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FISH STORIES

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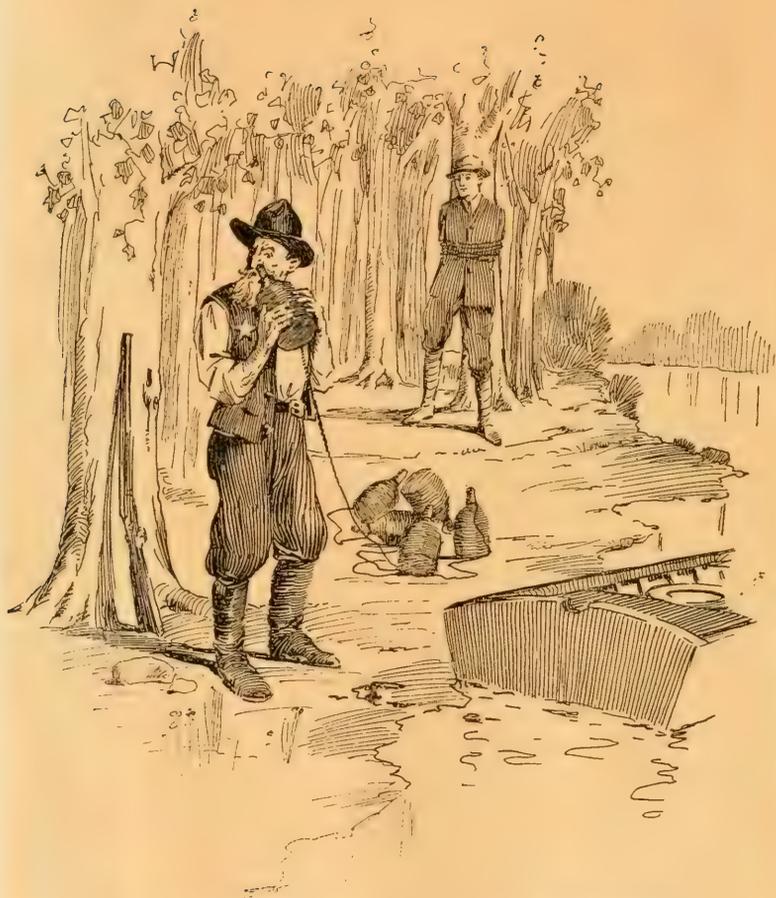
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"He picked up one of the jugs, uncorked it and took a smell."
—From "The Jugger Jugged." Page 28.

Catalogitis

By ALEXANDER YEARLEY, 3rd

There is gloom among the medical profession,
 There's an ailment which they've failed to diagnose,
With humility they make the sad confession
 That they know its name but can't prescribe the dose.
Among fishermen this ailment is prevailing
 And its symptoms anyone can eas'ly tell,
You can pick the man who suffers from this failing
 But there's nothing known to man to make him well.

When you see some men in earnest conversation,
 Books in paper binding strewn on ev'ry side,
Books which largely are made up of illustration
 (And a list of prices also do provide)
Showing rods and reels and lines and flies and spinners,
 Artificial baits and plugs of ev'ry kind—
And all of which are guaranteed as winners—
 Some with hooks in front and some with hooks behind;

When you see these men in thoughtful consultation
 As they make a list of plugs they'd like to try,
See them give the matter deep consideration
 When selecting what they really aim to buy,
Then you'll know they have acute Catalogitis
 And on fishing they are practic'ly insane.
It is far, far worse than any other—it is,
 For they're suffering from "Fishing on the Brain."

The Romance of Two Fish

By ALBERT BENJAMIN CUNNINGHAM

MY friend, I am an old man. This white hair—you would not think it was once black as midnight. It has been so long ago.

I can't work much any more. See that hand? All drawn out o' shape. Rheumatism. Hurts when I try to do anything. So come spring, I dig me a few worms and kinda go off down to the crick.

There is a tollable deep hole down there, an' the bank is good to set on. I bait my hook an' throw it in an' wait fer the floater to go under.

But some days they won't bite. But I don't go home. The boys don't need an old codger like me putterin' around. I just set on the bank an' think about things.

An' it was once when I was settin' there—it musta been about four o'clock. I could hear Jessie—that's my son Tom's wife—acallin' the cows.

Yes, sir, I was jest settin' there thinkin' when I saw this thing begin, that I'm goin' to tell you about. I saw the beginnin' of a love affair 'tween two fish.

Right away I hear you say this is a sure-enough fish story. The love of a fish! But—my friend, I am an old man. An' what my eyes see they see.

A little lady bass, slim like a chestnut leaf an' so white I could almost see through her! This purty little thing lifted in the water not far out an' stood still as one o' our evenin's up here. She reminded me o' some slip of a gal, jest restin' a minute.

An' whilst she was hangin' there, up from the deep hole comes a bigger one, thick an' black, though you could see he was only a young 'un, because he was not so very big himself and because he was kinda awkward, like he was embarrassed.

He comes up to my little lady bass an' sidles up to her like he was tryin' to make love to her. But what did she do? She turns quick like, flips him in the side with her tail, and swims off, indifferent.

"Turned him down, by Jiminy!" I cried, watchin' him to see how he took it.

There was nothin' for me to do up to the house that night. Tom, he done all the work. So I thought about my little lady bass. I hoped she wouldn't give in too easy.

I was settin' on the bank the next day when up she floats agin an' hangs there, indifferent like, but lookin' out o' the corner of her eye, I thought.

An' by Jiminy, didn't he come after her? I hadn't liked him the day before. He 'peared too overbearin'. But he was different now; kinda meek an' humble. I hoped she wouldn't turn him down.

But she did. Before he even got up to her, she turned, dropped, an' made fer the deep hole, quick as a flash. He dropped down, too, but plumb discouraged. I could tell by the way his gills worked.

"Keep after her, Sonny," I encouraged. "You'll land her yit." An' he went after her, but slow like.

I didn't git back fer nigh a week. My knee hurt me, an' Jessie thought I'd better stay in. I wanted to work about, but Tom said he could do everything. Jessie was unravelin' something, an' I got her to let me do that, makin' the yarn into a big ball.

I got to thinkin' about my fish. Had he got her yit? They might be gone, time I got back. So one morning I said my knee didn't hurt any more, an' got my bait can an' started off.

Out o' sight o' the house, I let down an' limped a little. It wa'n't quite well yit. But I got to the bank an' set down an' waited. She might a gone away, o' course.

Then I saw somethin' comin' down toward me. It wa'n't one, but two fish. I looked agin. There was my little lady fish comin', lookin' slimmer an' purtier'n ever an' beside her was Sonny.

"He got her," I crowed. "By Jiminy!"

They come up close to the bank. What was they doin'? Then I saw. Down on the bottom was a smooth place, bigger'n your two hands, an' the little lady swum up onto it, as shy and purty as you please.

"Spawnin'!"

An' off to one side like a fierce watch-dog was Sonny, keepin' watch for her. A yaller willow blow fell into the water and scairt her. Quick as a flash she was by his side; an' he was all fierce-eyed an' threatenin', but not at her. He was guardin' her.

She actually went up an' rubbed agin him, like she was sayin' "My man." An' he, though wondrous pleased, looked fierce agin. Then she slid back up on the bed.

My friend, I am an old man, an' I saw it.

Redsides on the March

By JOHN KAYE GILL

TO see that wonderful thing again, I would give my best rod; but I had that one opportunity, and it will probably never return. Yet the "redsides" throng up Scappoose and Milton rivers annually to their spawning-grounds. A pool forty yards long is sometimes so crowded with them that the bottom is completely hidden; and I have floated a worm over these myriads with never a strike.

This is the story and the simple truth.

I was fishing the north fork of Scappoose early one morning in May, a mile above the last farm, and had a dozen "Clark" trout already. I was trying out a long bend where the stream had cut deep into the farther bank—a promising situation. On my side a gravel shore, gently sloping, ten yards wide and fifty long, gave me plenty of room for my back cast. I was very busy. The trout were rising at nearly every cast. I glanced up the stretch at whose head a little fall roared above the murmur of the current at my feet. On my side the fall was next to nothing, but gradually rose to three feet at the farther bank. I was pleasantly occupied, but thought that under the fall I would be sure of a bigger fish than I had taken. Again I glanced upstream, while my flies were in the air, and noticed something queer where the fall touched the gravel. The gray pebbles were hid by a dark belt that curved around the fall into the pool above.

I fished a few more casts and again looked upstream. Then I had a real thrill! The dark belt was doubtless the spoor of a bear which had been wallowing below the fall, and "seeing me first," had floundered out around the fall into the next pool. So I moved with great discretion for the next few yards.

As I approached the dusky belt I saw that the stony beach was entirely hidden by a solid column of fish, extending six or eight feet from the water's edge at the shallow end of the fall, and curving into the river above. Many fish were leaping and scrambling over that part of the fall, which was but a few inches high, and their struggles sprinkled the horde of land travelers, which moved at a snail's pace. I am sure the outermost fish would have been half an hour out of water in making this transit.

On a trail on the far side was my brother Jim who had been watching my fishing farther down, but hidden from me some

minutes. He was just emerging from the alders. I waved my arm excitedly, calling him to come and see this strange sight. At my gesture the column broke in wild disorder. Hundreds of reddsides were flapping back into the water. I dashed among them and threw twenty or more farther up the beach. In five minutes these were dead.

The column I had surprised had doubtless begun the ascent in the night, intending to be safe in upper waters before daylight. The fish were packed as closely as buns in a pan, and were making their way over the gravel, all at a uniform pace—not one foot to the minute—by using their ventral fins *as feet*. They leaned a bit toward the water. If one had fallen on his side at the left flank of the procession, he must have died. It would have been impossible to right himself; but not one had lost his balance.

And thus certain fish of no great swimming power, surmount obstacles in their way to the spawning beds. I have asked many anglers on our “west side” streams, but none has ever seen this marvelous sight.

I hope to camp beside that fall sometime—a week if need be—and watch night and day for a similar hegira; but I fear I lost my one opportunity to observe carefully every circumstance of that wonderful migration.

The Prize Bass and the Super-Angler

By GEO. V. TRIPLETT

THEY should be joyous retrospects, these little tales of fish and fishermen; but sometimes the decrees of fate will it otherwise. Of all the sad words of tongue or pen—but let the facts speak for themselves.

We had spent kings' ransoms on our twin cabins up at the lake, not to mention dingy boats, minnow tanks, acetylene lamps, refrigerators, rods, reels, lines, bugs, plugs, wobblers, wrigglers, and a lot more things that impoverish anglers. We were a joy-loving, fish-loving, open-air-loving contented bunch of rejuvenated old sports—bankers, lawyers, doctors, preachers, *et id genus omnes*; all bubbling over with enthusiasm, plus.

And then entered the villain.

In every lake, you know, there is one more or less mythical denizen of the deep. We had one up at Kingfisher—a big, elusive, uncapturable *Micropterus salmoides*, which had broken more lines and shaken off more tangoes and wobblers than the oldest gray-beard could recount. Nearly every Kingfisherite had hooked and lost this doughty warrior, and nourished the spark of revenge deep in his soul.

Thus matters stood when, one soft midsummer holiday, in deference to our esteemed president, affectionately called Uncle Jimmy, we invited his nephew, Algy Trimble, up to the lake to have luncheon and wet a line if he cared to do so. Algy said he would be glad to interview the lunch hamper and drink a bottle of pop, but that he had never caught a fish in his life; not even a little bullhead or sunny. He abhorred worms. All boats looked leaky to him. It gave him tonsillitis to get his feet wet even in July. He was a lingerie expert; not a fisherman.

Algy arrived at the lake just before luncheon hour, nattily clad in white flannels, and after the avuncular greeting, as our guest de luxe, he needs must take Uncle Jimmy's new rock-elm rod and try a cast off the boat dock. Algy demurred, but Uncle Jimmy showed him that no worm was involved in the process, only a fuzzy inanimate contraption already fastened on with a swivel. Thus was Algy initiated into the Waltonian mysteries. He tripped gingerly across the gang plank, gripped the rod with both hands, made a wild sideswipe, and, *mirabile dictu*, dropped the bug within two feet of an old tree about forty feet out in the lake. Almost instantly there was an angry swirl and Algy's reel began to buzz like a dentist's motor. "You've got him," Uncle Jimmy shouted. "Hold on—keep your rod up—don't run. D——!" And Algy held on. The springy rock-elm rod dipped and curved, and Uncle Jimmy exhorted, admonished and swore. Algy was so scared he couldn't move. Finally, after Uncle Jimmy had threatened to inflict every form of mayhem on him and even to kill him in cold blood, Algy managed to grab the reel crank and drag his struggling captive alongside the dock. By this time half the club had rushed down to the battle-front and one of them forced a landing net into Algy's palsied hand. Algy didn't know any more about manipulating a landing net than he did about looping the loop in a monoplane, but he made another wild sideswipe and flung a big floundering object out on the dock floor. Then—but why resurrect the harrowing details? There he lay—a great dripping bronzed veteran, eight pounds to an ounce, the biggest black bass ever caught in

old Kingfisher, the one grand prize on which the hopes of every Kingfisherite had been centered for lagging months.

And Algy—Algy, who couldn't impale a house-fly on a pin-hook—whose most strenuous purpose on that eventful day was only to nibble a sandwich and drink a bottle of pop—Algy had caught him!

And today his royal remains hang resplendent in Algy's lady-like boudoir, with Uncle Jimmy's fuzzy-looking bug dangling from his mighty jaw.

Such are the tricks of destiny. Such the irony of fame.

There are still many Brothers of the Angle in our town, but in the popular estimation there is but one Super-Angler.

His name is Algy.

A Real Sportsman

By A. K. P. HARVEY

THE tackle was a curio. A twelve-foot bamboo pole, tipped with four feet of heavy wire supporting a single yard of stout chalk-line armed with three cod hooks, from each of which dangled a generous strip of bacon rind for bait. Such was the "tackle" with which the old "Cracker" outfitted me when, having concluded the consultation for which I had been summoned to Florida, I expressed a desire to pass the time before my train came in the indulgence of my favorite sport of angling.

Arrived at the fishing-grounds in the old man's rickety boat, I was ready for the first cast.

"What is the most approved method of operating this er—ah—tackle?"

"You-all jist sozzle the bait ahead of the boat an' look out for em when they come, suh."

And so, I "sozzled." As the bacon splashed into the water beside a submerged log, a big bass darted from its shelter, taking the end hook.

"Pull him in hand over hand an' don't let him jump, suh."

As I attempted the manœuvre, the fish rushed for the shelter of another log just ahead of the boat. Then came a mighty swirl and vicious tugging at the line, which nearly pulled the pole from my hands.

“What in the name of Isaac Walton have I struck now?”

“My Gawd, you’ve got a gator! He grabbed yer bass, suh. He’s a little feller, but they’re all techy, suh.”

“This one is ‘touchy’ all right. What will he do?”

“Dum near what he reck’ns ter do. Look out! He’s comin’, suh.”

“Coming” he surely was, and straight for the boat. He was about seven feet long but looked bigger than a hippopotamus. My eyes staring, my hair on end, I resolved to jump for it and get ashore. I gathered for the spring just as the alligator poked his nose through the pads directly before me. It was too late to stop; but in making the effort to do so I lost my balance, and with legs and arms extended I landed squarely upon the reptile’s back. With a lightning fluke of his powerful tail the frightened “gator” dived; while I, with a yell that would discount a Mohawk war-whoop, scrambled ashore. In the meantime the old Cracker had caught up a rope from the bottom of the boat, and, quickly forming a noose, had dextrously slipped it over the “gator’s” head. As I turned on gaining the shore, the old man was waist deep in the water having it out with our quarry, which was stirring up the lake in his mad endeavor to escape.

“Can’t ye give us a hand, suh?” he pleaded.

“Not for the whole blessed county. For heaven’s sake, man, let that thing go. Do you want to be eaten alive?”

“He don’t want to eat nobody. He’s as skeert as you-all be, suh. Give us a hand or he’ll get away, suh.”

Abashed at the part I was playing, I plunged into the fray. Our combined efforts promptly subdued our opponent and he was quickly pulled ashore, when I threw myself upon the ground completely exhausted.

“This beats all the fishing I ever saw or heard of,” I gasped. And I believe I am the only living man who can truthfully relate such an experience.

“How will you dispose of him, now that we have him?”

“He’s your meat, suh. I hope you have enjoyed yourself, suh.” And the old man grinned as he tied the rope around a stump root.

“Well then, since he is such a ‘little fellow’ and has given us more excitement than we could have found elsewhere in a dozen years, why not let him go and grow up? There is no joy in murder; and possibly some other fisherman may sometime enjoy a scrap with him as much as we have.”

The old Cracker mused for a moment; tied his clasp knife to a stick and guardedly cut the rope from the creature's neck; shifted his cud of native leaf to the other cheek and said: "I'm mighty glad to hear ye say that, suh. I jist nacherly reck'n'd that you-all was a real sportsman, and now I know it. Mighty glad ye said it, suh."

Fish Crazy!

By E. A. BRININSTOOL

IN my capacity as a drummer for a Los Angeles grocery store I stepped off a train in a small town in Southern California. I walked across the street, but there was but one man in sight. He was a native who sat on a box in front of the only grocery, mending a broken fish rod. He looked up as I approached, pausing long enough to remark, "Howdy," and then continued his repairs. I walked inside the store, but it was deserted. There wasn't a living thing in sight, save a dirty-white cat, contentedly curled up in a barrel of rolled oats. I rapped on the counter, but nobody came. Then I stepped to the door and asked the native:

"Where's the proprietor?"

"Gone troutin' up Fish Canyon. Won't be back till day after tomorry. Want anything?"

"No, want to sell something," I replied.

"Have t' call agin, mister. I'm supposed to be tendin' store, but I cain't buy nothin'. I kin sell yeh a darn good axe halve fer two bits, though."

"Where's the barber-shop? Guess I'll get a shave while I wait for the next train."

"Right across the street, but he ain't home. Gone up San Gabr'l Canyon fer th' day."

"Fishin'?"

"Yep."

"There used to be a drug-store here where I occasionally made a sale. Suppose the boss would be in?"

"I don't reckon so. I saw him a-diggin' bait when I come past his place awhile back."

"Well, that's too bad. I guess I'll just step over to the post-office and see when the next train goes out."

"It's shet. That's the postmaster a-goin' 'crost lots with that fish pole onto his shoulder. See him?"

"When can I get out of this place, any how?" I asked, considerably nettled at this turn of affairs.

"Six o'clock tonight's fust train," replied the man with a yawn, as he swished the pole up and down, closed his jackknife and arose hastily from his seat on the box.

"See here, my friend," said I. "Have you got a Tin Lizzie?"

"Yep, one o' th' kind that eats oats. She's a one-cylinder kind, but she gits thar just the same."

"What will you charge to drive me to the next town?" I asked, jingling some coins in my pocket enticingly.

"Can't do it, stranger."

"Why not?" I asked impatiently.

"'Cuz I'm goin' to try and ketch up with th' postmaster jest as soon's I tie a line onto this pole."

And I'll be darned if I didn't have to hang around that place all day, watching the cows eat grass off the public square.

One Way of Going Fishing

By MRS. EDITH ELKINS

I AM a "mere woman" just off the operating table of a city hospital and your advertisement tempts me to relate a fishing experience of my own that happened years ago. As a girl I had fished in the rivers and small lakes of Illinois and shot quail and ducks in the open season. Then I married, and for twelve long years never dared go fishing on peril of being considered "mannish" by my narrow-minded in-laws.

One early spring morning my husband said: "You'll have to milk. Jack (the hired man) and I are going fishing. Bass are coming up in slews this morning." I replied: "All right, I'm going this evening. You and Jack can get supper." "Why, I can't," he roared back, "I've got to go to town and there's no one to take care of the babies or feed the little chicks and milk the cows." I said no more but bided my time and dug worms and netted grasshoppers for bait. I packed my lunch-box, a bottle of milk, a bucket of water, and my bouncing baby boy in his cab, only to find every fish pole had been hidden to keep me at home. That didn't deter

me. I had lines and hooks, so I added the butcher knife to my load and started, still pretty sore about my treatment but none the less determined, with Baby in his cab and four-year-old Baby Girl toddling at my side, saying, "Papa said 'Mamma tan't tach a sish; takes Papa to do dat'."

That was the last straw. I cried, not that I felt so hurt, but because I couldn't swear. For once in my life I realized the value of spontaneous profanity and would have been happy to have used it as a safety-valve.

We were at the pasture-gate and the tang of the black walnut leaves and the gleam of a clump of red-bud in the sunlight said plainly: "Cut it out, you're going fishing anyway. If those darned men are hungry let 'em cook. You've got your lunch along." I listened. As I closed the gate I said "good-bye" to my grouch.

Kazan never heard the call of the wild clearer than I heard it that day. I trudged on, my heavy load growing lighter as sweet arbutus, violet, blood-root and squirrel corn peeped their welcome to me from among the weeds and ferns. We were soon at the river, overhung by elm and sycamore with maple, hickory and oaks farther back, sprinkled here and there with crab-apple, dog-wood and red-bud—God's own fragrance for his glorious woodlands. I "swiped" a hoop-pole for myself and cut a willow for Baby Girl to fish with. I had landed several small bass with the hoppers when Baby Girl called: "Mamma! Mamma! Somefins detting my sish pole!" Something had, too,—a two-pound cat,—and I got him for her supper. While we celebrated her first catch we forgot Boy who was bouncing in his cab, crowing and trying to catch the rustling leaves.

We were brought back to earth again by a "ker-splash" and a lusty squall. I grabbed my sputtering hopeful out of the shallow, muddy water, gave him a river bath, dressed him comfortably and put him to sleep on a pallet on the ground.

Then we had supper,—three nice bass broiled on the coals. The sun was down. I was ready for home, but Baby Girl was sleepy and lay down on the pallet. I fished on in the twilight wondering how I'd ever get the babies and fish home in the semi-darkness.

"Goo! Goo! Goo! Goo!" Boy was awake and had crawled out to find Mother. What could I do with that kid? I'd just got a bite and he wouldn't stay "put" anywhere on a bet. Then Baby Girl waked and came to me in the mud. I had Boy on my arm when I got another sneaky nibble. I tried to swing my line, but

could not and was sure I had a mossback. The next swing brought out a big grinnell that dropped off the hook in mud ankle-deep. I had my knee on him in a jiffy and called Baby Girl to help string him (as I couldn't drop Boy in the mud). She was shaking with fright and saying, "I'se so cold," while Boy cooed at the fish's struggles.

We got him, however, and when we finally loaded up and went home we had eight bass, ten cats and a twenty-one-inch grinnell. Baby Girl was now well convinced that Mother was the greatest fisher ever.

The First Tarpon

By CHARLES WARNER MILLS

FOR twelve days we fished faithfully for tarpon near Sarasota, Florida. The night of the thirteenth day we started fishing at 7 o'clock. Ten minutes later there was a rush at my shiner. I held my breath and struck, setting the hook. Then came what I had anxiously been waiting for—a leap from a tarpon at the end of my line.

The thrill experienced will be remembered to my dying day. "That's a beauty, and if you can land him I'll buy you a new hat," cried the guide. "He'll easily weigh 150 pounds and for heaven's sake be careful," he shouted, as the big fellow reeled off yard after yard of line.

I was actually trembling from head to foot as he made his wild rushes, first in one direction and the next minute at an entirely opposite angle. Then came the second leap and a vigorous shake of the head. He was fighting desperately, and I was using every particle of skill I had accumulated by years of experience in fresh-water fishing. My black-bass knowledge proved valuable, as the antics of the tarpon were quite like the small-mouth bass, only greatly magnified.

In twenty minutes it had grown dark. Captain Roberts commended me on my handling the fish so far, but expressed doubts about saving the big fellow as I should have to play him in absolute darkness for a half-hour, as the moon would not appear until about eight o'clock, and I should not be able to depend upon Mr. Roberts for assistance in the fight. Instead of his giving me instructions I was forced to depend entirely upon myself and to shout to the

guide to pull ahead faster, or to back the boat rapidly, as the tarpon would rip through the water at a furious rate and almost deplete my reel of line. Then he would shoot to the right or left, and I would shout orders as to how the boat should be guided.

To make matters worse, a thunder-storm formed in the east and this prolonged my fight in absolute darkness for a full hour and a half.

At the end of an hour in the blackness of night the guide began to offer encouragement. He fairly yelled: "If you can continue to play him until the moon shows up, I believe you'll land him, as he has made eight leaps and must be getting tired."

By this time I was quite calm and equally determined that Mr. Tarpon must be captured.

Finally the moon appeared and in the brightness of its reflection there were five more leaps—beautiful pictures to behold in the moonlight.

But to our dismay the clouds gathered again, adding to our difficulties.

Finally there were evidences that the tarpon was giving up, and soon the fight was over. All that was necessary to do was to draw the fish close to the boat and the gaff. I did so, and the guide proceeded to do his part, but in the almost total darkness, caused by the deep bank of clouds obscuring the moon, the gaff penetrated the fish lightly. He made a death struggle and freed himself from the gaff—and floated away with the tide, which was running fast by this time.

We were both dazed for a few seconds when I cried: "He's gone!" Captain Clarence moaned: "He has, and it's all my fault. I'll be d——d if I'll go home to-night."

I looked at my watch. It was 10.20. I had played my first tarpon three hours and ten minutes and lost him.

I threw myself in the bottom of the boat absolutely unnerved and exhausted.

The guide sat motionless for a minute, when he inquired if I would not try for another. I replied that I hadn't strength enough left to pull in a ten-pound grouper.

I found comfort in the thought that it was a great fight—probably as great as I'll ever experience—and we slowly proceeded for home and bed.

It was the thirteenth day we had tried for tarpon and he made thirteen leaps.

Maybe that was the answer.

The Doctor's Catch

By PAUL C. KUEGLE

THE Doctor swore fervently and his face flushed like a rosy sunset. A roar went up from the stern of the boat which the moss-draped live-oaks and pines and palmettoes echoed and re-echoed back and forth across the sunlit waters of the Florida bayou until it lost itself along the winding channel toward the sea.

But a moment before, the guide had handed back to the Doctor his light bamboo casting-rod and reel, which for the past twenty-five minutes had whipped and bent and sung under the tugs and lunges of an invisible monster, and rowed straight along the taut line, the Doctor excitedly reeling in. On the guide's face was that amused quizzical expression which we had come to look for when, for any of the many possible reasons, we had failed to land our strikes.

But, to go back to the beginning of things. An hour earlier, the Doctor had hooked a gamy red fish, which, after ten minutes of good sport, rested in the box under the guide's seat and added six and a half pounds to the sundry sea trout which Joe (who had done the roaring), the guide, and I had hauled in. We knew the Doctor was a master of the art by the way he had landed this largest of the day's catch.

So we trolled back and forth across the favorite spot, hoping every moment to receive that thrilling message telegraphed from the depths along the line to the quivering rod tip, and to enjoy that keen, blood-tingling sensation which every angler knows. A good tide was running and a fitful wind blowing. These things were afterwards responsible for some of the events which followed.

"I've got him," suddenly said the Doctor, standing up, his rod bent like a bow, and his reel singing the anglers' song. "Steady now," said the guide, as he put the boat hard around. Joe and I reeled rapidly in so as to give the master a clean field in which to play his catch, and contented ourselves by casting until such time as we should be needed to help lift the monster into the boat, or that being impossible, tie him on to be towed to camp.

For five minutes the Doctor stood like a statue, his pole rigid and line tight, giving or taking a little line as was necessary. Another five minutes and there was no change. Still another five and the catch was not yet near the boat, apparently having taken

to sulking on the bottom and matching its strength and endurance with that of its human competitor.

In the next five-minute period some of the line had been laboriously reclaimed by the reel, only to be released under the steady pressure from below. The Doctor was having all the fun, and, having no luck ourselves, Joe and I were becoming restless. By the way the smoke curled from the guide's pipe we knew that he, too, was uneasy. Twenty-five minutes had passed when he said: "Just let me feel that fellow a bit," and reached for the rod. After a bit of a pull, and a careful "feel" of the line, he handed it back, took up his paddle and sent the boat straight along the line, fifty yards, seventy-five yards, and as we neared the hundred mark we saw through the clear water the white minnow held rigid by the tension of the line, and attached to it a large dark object. The Doctor was fast to a stump.

White Scar's Last Battle

By ORIN P. THORSON

WHITE SCAR had now seen six summers of battle and strife. During all this time he had been the sole dominator of Pine Lake, a small lake in northern Minnesota. No other fish ever considered the possibilities of using his domain as a feeding ground, for time and again he had defeated all comers and had proven himself capable of maintaining his position. In order to know who White Scar was it is necessary to go back several years.

When he first found his way into Pine Lake he was but a year old and full of fight. He had trouble as soon as he arrived, for at that time the lake was dominated by another Muskie larger and older than himself. When the contestants discovered each other, they knew there must be a battle to decide who should dominate. It was after a hard battle for both, that the larger fish was compelled to retreat to some other waters and leave White Scar the ruler. But this was only his first battle, as we shall see later in the story.

A year had now passed and again White Scar found it necessary to defend his office. This time it was a long sleek otter that threatened him. He was also a veteran and made a good match for White Scar, as he later found out. He made a lunge for the great fish, but a clever movement of the tail put White Scar to one side.

But as quick as he was, the otter managed to dig one of his claws into his smooth coat and tore a long gash. When this healed, it turned white and was the cause of his name. An hour of fighting, however, exhausted the otter and he was compelled to leave the field with White Scar again as king.

During these years no one had yet captured White Scar. It remained, however, for Dan Hardy, an eastern sportsman, to accomplish the feat. He was a member of an eastern club who took his annual fishing trips in the northern woods of Minnesota and Wisconsin. He was a true sportsman and obtained his trophies in a sportsmanlike manner. Few handled the rod with more skill than Hardy and many fish fell before his tempting baits.

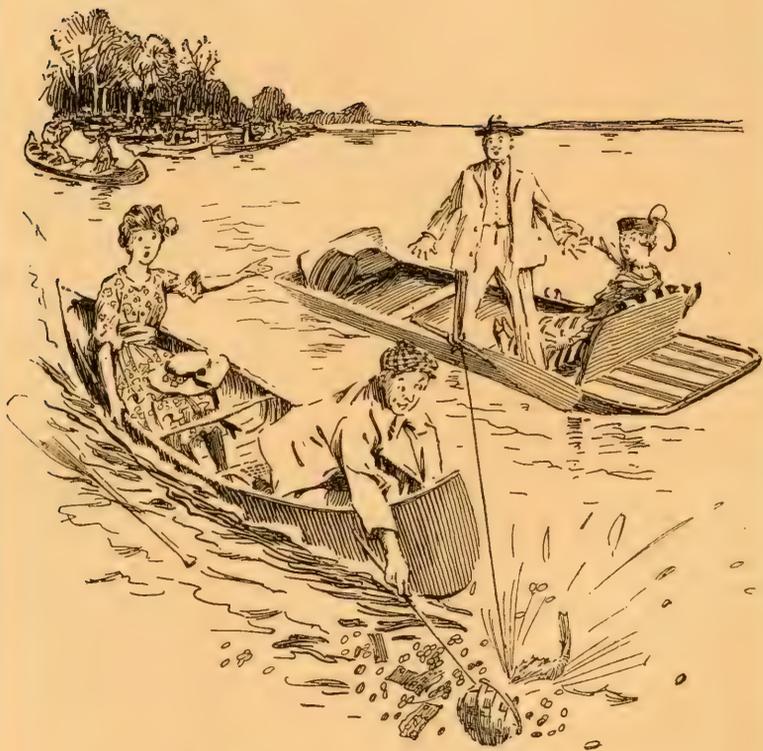
On his arrival he was informed by the local nimrods of the retreat of White Scar. They recounted the different experiences with him and some were not altogether accurate when giving his size. Hardy, however, needed little encouragement to try his skill, and departed immediately with his guide for Pine Lake. Evening brought them to the little lake, and Hardy lost no time in making a few trial casts. Not receiving any strikes, he tried new ground, but to no avail.

A week had passed and but one day remained of Hardy's vacation. He had not as yet received any strikes from the monarch, but had succeeded in gaffing smaller fish.

On the day following he arose early with his guide and prepared for a final trial to capture White Scar. Paddling to a more remote part of the lake he made a long cast, repeating it by several more, but with no results. Giving this up he baited a Number Six spoon with a large frog and trolled for a mile. They were turning when Hardy felt a vicious tug and the reel began spinning. They back-watered and began playing the fish, taking in and giving out with greatest care. Several times Hardy obtained a glance at the huge fish, but as yet the fight was not over. White Scar tried all the methods he had acquired in a life of fighting, but the hook remained firm.

An hour of fighting had begun to tell on White Scar, and it was not long ere he came floating toward the canoe with his great mouth open. When the guide struck the gaff he made a final lunge, but to no avail. A quick movement of the guide's arm, and White Scar was gasping in the bottom of the canoe with his bright skin glistening in the sun. White Scar, the monarch and victor of many battles, had at last been defeated by one superior to himself.

From
"THE OFFERTORY BASS"
Page 25



"Junior * * * made such a desperate swipe at the equally desperate fish that the coins went tail-spinning all over the waterscape."

The Offertory Bass

By CARL D. SCHUNCK

IN a large city there once dwelt a small family,—mother, father, and fourteen-year-old son. Father and son had spent all Spring and considerable money in carefully purchasing a complete outfit of fresh-water bass tackle in accordance with the specifications of the latest sport magazines. Both had the fever badly. It was a plain case of tackleitis in such advanced stages that the Mrs. could do nothing to avert the crisis which meant spending the annual two weeks' holiday at Springwood Lake. Atlantic City was her best bet, but for once she was compelled to wave the white flag.

So it was that on a Friday night early in July the small family piled off at Springwood Lake, the Mrs. to make the best of it and Mr. and Junior to catch everything in the lake that wore fins.

Saturday morning the latter two were at it before daybreak. They cast, trolled, skittered and swore in turn until evening, but the fish wouldn't even give them consideration. Every prize plug and spinner in the kit was sent to the bat for a pinch hit, but not a single strike was scored. It was a down-right freezeout; and to make matters worse the next day was Sunday, which by Ma's orders meant no fishing.

However, right after cornflakes Sunday morning Senior and Junior held a bait council which resulted in favor of night-crawlers. The ground was too dry to spade up any big fellows, but Junior had a remedy. By pouring a mixture of mustard and water into the largest earth-worm holes he produced an amazing result. In ten seconds those night-crawlers fairly jumped from their dug-outs shouting "Kamerad!" and begging to be made prisoner. This method of capture took Dad clean off his feet and he was sorely tempted to try a few crawlers on the bass forthwith.

Meanwhile, at the hotel, Ma had made the acquaintance of the local minister and learned from him that one of the main attractions of Springwood Lake was the Sunday afternoon services at Chapel Point where the congregation assembled in boats and canoes. Of course, she would come! Indeed, it would be a pleasure to have her son help the minister's little daughter Angelicia take up the collection in Angelicia's canoe.

Thus was Junior elected to be assistant coin-gatherer of the Springwood parish, and 4 P. M. found him on the job, deftly pad-

dling throughout the assembled boats while Angelicia rounded up a goodly sum in a long-handled basket built along the lines of a crab net.

The last few contributions were being corralled when the skiff containing Ma and Pa started with a mysteriously slow and jerky motion toward the centre of the lake without any visible means of persuasion. Pa seemed undecided as to what should be done, but it was too much for Ma. Her plaintive squeals for help diverted all attention from the sermon to the skiff's unusual conduct. With a few sweeps of his trust paddle, Junior swung his canoe to the rescue just as the unknown power appeared.

About ten yards from the skiff's bow a black bass all of three feet long broke water and shook vigorously to free itself from a drop-line which stretched taut from one of Pa's oar-locks. It was a prize winner and easily held the speed record for breaking up a church meeting.

Junior let loose a war-whoop, grabbed the collection from Angelicia and made such a desperate swipe at the equally desperate fish that the coins went tail-spinning all over the waterscape. But the bass was doomed, and a moment later it lay in the bottom of the canoe.

Angelicia bawled lustily for her lost money; Ma turned from white to purple but she saw red; Pa dug up a ten-spot which effectually quieted Angelicia, then Ma cut loose:

"Henry Mullet, you've discovered the proper bait for bass, but I've discovered that you're through with fishing; you will have that fish thrown overboard at once, take me back to the hotel and buy three tickets for the first train to Atlantic City!"

War Minnows

By FREDERICK L. COE

YOU'RE allowed to do pretty much as you like at a rest camp, so when my buddy and I asked for a pass to go fishing out of bounds there was no objection. We had already noted that the country—it was in the lower Vosges—closely resembled our own beloved New England. Moreover, the streams looked as though they would have trout, or should have. But first we had to get some fishing tackle.

Ever try to buy anything from a fat French shopkeeperess who can't understand a word of English—or American—while your knowledge of French is confined to the little forced upon you at high-school and as promptly forgotten? And if you believe that you could explain such a situation by sign talk or pantomime, why, just try it. But after a hard battle we did manage to get something remotely resembling an outfit.

The following morning two soldiers might have been observed headed for the country carrying poles at ease. There in the beautiful beech-covered hills where the little brook tumbled its way down a winding course, now foaming over ledges and now spreading out in ripples with an occasional deep, quiet pool, the grim war was forgotten—a nightmare of the past. Here everything was peaceful. Also the fish—such as they were—bit splendidly. I can't say they were large, not a one over a quarter pound, while many were kept only by grace of an elastic conscience. But beyond blaming that upon association—generally enforced—with Fritz, we continued on our happy way. After what we had been through, this was so peaceful that it fairly hurt. All good things must end, and only too soon we had to return.

We came in for considerable guying from the fellows on the way back regarding the size of our fish—and considerable doesn't at all express it. We knew what'd be coming later. Soldiers have a way of putting things that get under the hide.

Upon nearing the village we noticed an unusual stir and on arrival saw that a long line of Boche prisoners were passing through, on the way to some prison camp. They were a miserable lot, all of the latest classes; pale, anæmic-looking boys of not over seventeen and in about the worst physical condition possible. As we stood watching them a remark suddenly brought me to myself with a jump. I turned around with a quick retort ready. But

luckily I choked it back just in time. It was none other than our colonel—an enthusiastic fisherman in better times—who had spoken as he stood gazing disgustedly at the poor specimens of Huns.

“Hell—” he said, “why don’t they throw them back; they’re all under six inches.”

The Jugger Jugged

By EMERY ALTON PEFFLEY

LAST summer I spent a week fishing on the St. Francis River in northeastern Arkansas. After several days of fine luck with the game fish, I decided to try jugging for cat. Rowing over to Lake City, about a mile away, I secured some large hooks, strong line, a half-dozen large jugs and some beef liver for bait. I floated down the river aways as I rigged up the jugs, then strung them out about fifty feet apart, in the middle of the stream, which was wide at this point, and drifted along in the rear watching for a strike. There was not much current, so the jugs moved down slowly.

After floating along for a few hundred yards the jug at the head of the line began to jump around and then disappeared, popped up again and started out slowly toward the far bank. I hurried after the jug, soon came alongside and got a hold on the line. After quite a struggle I succeeded in getting a fine twenty-five-pound cat safely into the boat.

I had just placed the jug back into line again and dropped in behind the string when I heard some one yelling from the shore. I paid no attention but drifted on, watching the row of jugs for another strike, when I heard the sharp crack of a high-power rifle and a bullet splashed the water just ahead of the boat. Astounded, I looked up and on the bank ahead of me stood a man looking down the barrel of a perfectly good Winchester, saying: “Hand on to the oars, Pard, or I’ll perforate you; and head her in this way quick!” I turned the boat and cut for the bank at my best speed, without any discussion, as I imagined that I could see at least seventeen long bullets in that gun.

As I grounded the boat, I got the order, “Hands up,” and you bet they went up, and it was all that I could do to hold my feet down.

From
"THE TWILIGHT TROUT"
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“Michel * * * seized his paddle and started for the portage.”

"Now get up and come out," said my captor. I came out with my hands skyward and my knees bumping. As I came up the bank, he fell in behind and slipped a pair of hand-cuffs on me before I could realize what was going on, then taking a trace chain out of his pocket he locked me to a tree. After that he hurried down to the boat, saying: "Don't worry, I'll be back for you as soon as I gather up the jugs."

He rowed rapidly out and soon had all the jugs in the boat, after which he headed for the bank. As soon as he landed he picked up one of the jugs, uncorked it and took a smell, looked a little astonished and tried another and another, until he had smelled them all. After this he looked rather foolish, began to laugh and came up to the tree to which I was locked, saying: "I'm a bonehead and don't know how to apologize to you for this deal, but I thought I had a cinch. I'm a deputy sheriff of this county, and I've been laying around here for two days to catch a smooth whiskey peddler who floats down here where it's bone dry from the wet country in Missouri, jugging for cat with his jugs nearly full of whiskey, and when I saw you drifting along after that line of jugs, I'd a bet my head on a sure thing."

The Twilight Trout

By ROBERT B. PECK

THERE is a lake in the Laurentians that has its counterpart in every angler's memory. Black as polished ebony are its waters in the glow of sunset and the smouldering dawn. Rockbound shores rim it and from their crannies spring slender birchlings and twisted, gnomelike cedars. In the farther ranks dark hemlocks and spruce march steadily over the ridges to the blue ranges beyond. At the extremity of a boulder-strewn point a select company of pines whispers lofty secrets through the years.

Remote, aloof, almost forbidding in its dignity, the lake shelters in its deeps a tribe of worthy trout. Black-backed, olive-flanked with scarlet jewels set cunningly in gold and darker scrolls, their rush upon their prey is swift but cunningly checked at the moment of impact. Cleaving upward with the speed of light they barely dent the surface with their snapping jaws. There is no unseemly

splashing when the trout of the Lake of Memory go forth to feed—just a vanishing dimple here and there on the lake's placidity.

Such a miniature vortex twinkled for an instant just astern of the canoe that slid like a shadow through the gloom. The face of Michel as he brought the craft to an automatic quivering halt was expressionless. Only a dwindling band of orange above the western hills told where the sun had gone; the portage was blind by broad daylight and beset with treacherous witchhopper. But instinctively and heedless of delay and discomfort that might be involved, Michel steadied the canoe for the cast.

The white wings of a plump-bodied coachman hovered for an unforgettable instant above the spot while his team-mate, a Parmachene Belle, well-nigh invisible in the gathering shadows, straightened out the leader beyond. With the daintiest of splashes they took the water, hesitated and began their jerky progress canoeward. Michel's tense muscles relaxed almost imperceptibly as the coachman drew a blank and his eyes focussed on the satellite of scarlet and gold.

Not a splash broke the silence but suddenly the tail fly vanished; a fathom of line was whipped off the reel with a shrieking z-z-i-i-ip; the rod bowed to its task and the line etched rapid serpentine on the water.

"Un gross!" grunted Michel and spat interestedly, taut as the rod itself and oblivious to the deepening night.

Cautiously he edged the canoe this way and that, now baffling a sudden rush to double under the craft, now stealing up and retrieving a few feet of line. Every such manoeuvre, however, intensified and renewed the vigor of the fighter in the depths. This way and that he bolted only to be turned at last by the elastic but inexorable strain.

Finally he floated sullenly upward. Now one broad flank and now the other tilted to the remnant of the day so that the burnished orange beneath flashed and vanished alternately. Stealthily Michel dipped the net, gently he moved it forward, straightening its folds in its slow progress through the water. He bent forward on one knee, a hand upon the thwart and his entire being concentrated on that flashing, lazily approaching shape.

"Z-z-i-i-ip!" warned the reel again and again the line cut circles which left a tiny tracery of bubbles in their wake.

Michel spat without inflection but kept his net in the water and a hopeful eye on the vagaries of the line. A lunge which careened the canoe, a sudden recovery with a gleam of triumph in the deep-

set eyes of Michel and, amid a profane splashing in the silence and a sudden flopping, the struggle ended. With a swift motion Michel held out the fish at arm's length for admiration, ejaculated "Un Gros!" seized his paddle and started for the portage at a speed which imparted the motion of a rocking chair to the canoe.

To complete the perfection of the moment a white-throated sparrow grieved drowsily for Canada and as the canoe churned past the whispering pines on the point a star gleamed through the tufted branches and shone back riotously for an instant in the swirl behind Michel's paddle.

A Reward of Merit

By E. E. SHOEMAKER

THE last afternoon of a strenuous fortnight had arrived and we welcomed it. My chum and I, two unsophisticated schoolma'ms, had blindly consented to take care of twenty-five children from the metropolis in the first of the fresh-air camps at Oneida Lake, N. Y. And it was some job, believe me. I had always thought that teaching school was the most nerve-racking occupation, but it is hardly a circumstance compared with the distraction caused by having twenty-five youngsters of unmanageable age dumped upon your hands and told to go to it. They certainly did. But at last the two weeks had passed and, as the youngsters climbed upon the big hayracks for the trip to the station, we saw with pleasure that none were maimed, drowned, or killed, and but two hours remained before we, too, would be leaving for our homes in the neighboring city.

What a contrast from the noise and confusion of the restless youngsters to the peacefulness of the present. We hardly knew what to do with ourselves, so wandered down to the dock at the shore of the lake which had always seemed so near but which until now, we had had no chance of visiting. It seemed so restful, and quiet, and invigorating here, with the waves splashing and the wind blowing. Uninvited, we climbed into a trim little skiff to get nearer the water and presently my chum picked up the oars and started slowly rowing through the pads and rushes. At my feet lay a trolling spoon and line and almost unconsciously I unwound five or six feet of line and let the spoon trail in the water. Alice had

hardly taken a dozen strokes before the spoon got caught on a submerged log which gave my arm an awful jerk and I shouted for her to stop the boat. When she failed to do so I gave a tremendous yank to loosen the hook when it snapped up suddenly into the boat bringing with it a big greenish fish with huge jaws which threatened to throw us out and at the same time break the small boards of the boat as it rattled and thumped about upon the bottom.

In my eagerness to keep him I tried to cover him with my umbrella and in less than a minute it was a twisted mass of rags and wire. Seeing this, Alice shouted, "Throw the beast out," but the mere suggestion made me so angry that I threw my jacket over him so that he would not get away and then tried to sit upon and hold him with my hands and knees. Within a few minutes my coat was a mass of ribbons and my skirt was slit and torn; so were my stockings, while my hands and ankles were scratched and bleeding. But I was so determined to have that fish that I think I would have killed anyone who tried to take it away from me.

After an eternity, as it seemed to me, Alice came to sufficiently to pull for the shore and, as soon as the boat stranded, she jumped out into water nearly up to her knees. As soon as I could I followed suit, dragging the big fish with me and out upon the grass, for I couldn't lift him, and believe me, we must have been some sight. Alice, with her nice clean lawn all muddy and bedraggled, running for her very life to get away from the beast, and I with my skirt all tattered and torn, charging pell-mell after her, the huge fish dragging along behind with the trolling spoon still in his mouth. When we got back to the door of the camp, hardly fifteen minutes after starting, we were the center of an excited crowd, everyone wanting to know what we did, and how we did it, and all that we knew was that we did it.

The owner of the skiff offered us ten, then fifteen, and at last twenty-five dollars for our catch—a fine thirty-three pound muscaloungue, but it was not for sale. We did, however, postpone our return for one day so that all of the campers could have a share of our baked pike with us,—for Shakespere says:

Not what we have, but what we share,
The gift without the giver is bare.

The Desecration of the Pool

By T. McB. F.

DID you ever hear of the greenhorn who caught the big fish at the Upper Dam?" It was Uncle Bill, who had guided in the Rangeley Lake region for some twenty odd years and was famous for his stories, as well as his prowess, throughout a great part of the State of Maine.

We all moved our chairs a little closer and sat drawing on our pipes, looking from Bill to the fire and back again. We had been talking about the bull luck that some men sometimes have.

Bill went on. "It may have been luck or it may have been a fool fish that was obstinate enough to want what no one had in his tackle box. This happened at the Upper Dam of the Rangeleys while I was guiding. Men used to come there from all over, just to cast a fly over the fish they might never catch. Some had come regularly for years, whether they had luck or not. They were all sportsmen and loved and respected the speckled trout. They'd sit there casting all day long, with the best of rods and the finest flies that money could buy. The fish were there, too. You'd see them roll, big fellows as long as your arm.

"Well, gentlemen, one day along came a greenhorn. You should have seen him! There he was, going to try for a self-respecting, God-fearing square-tail with a dollar rod, a tin reel and a Parmachene Belle as long as your finger. One of the boys went up to him, but this man knew the game, or thought he did. He didn't need a guide. He stumbled into a boat and rowed out, and threw his anchor, with a splash, right into the middle of the pool. Then he started whipping his dollar rod and clicking his tin reel, while his Parmachene Belle began flying over our heads looking like a poll-parrot that didn't know where to go. Finally it lit in the water. Soon there was a great swirl, then a speckled side and a square-tail and we all knew that he had one of the gamiest fish that live in fresh water on his queer tackle. He began fighting back just as hard as the fish fought him. 'Give him line, give him line!' we all yelled at him. 'Not a d—d inch will I give him!' the greenhorn hollered back. 'Play him, play him!' we shouted again. 'Not on your life!'

"It was the queerest fight I ever saw. Here was this newcomer treating a trout as though it were a wild steer. And how it fought! Jumping, then sounding, then up again, making the

water fairly boil, trying its darnedest to shake out that enormous fly. Then before the fight was fairly started the fish was in his boat, about as lively as ever, flopping from one end to the other, and the greenhorn after him, with his big knife flashing. He jabbed and slashed and pounded 'till there wasn't a kick or flop left in that once beautiful trout.

"He then had the nerve to hold up his gory victim and say: 'Men, that's the way to catch fish.'

"The greenhorn carried his trout to the club house. There it tipped the scales at a little over five pounds.

" 'I want him stuffed,' he said to one of the men. 'You can't mount that fish after the way you've cut it up.' 'No matter. I'll catch a bigger one.' I don't need to tell you that as far as I know he never had such luck again.

"While all this was going on the old sportsmen were leaving the pool disgusted with the proceedings. It took all the life out of the man I was guiding. He just said: 'Bill, pull up the anchor and row me in. I've had enough for one day.' "

The Legend of the Ouananiche

By J. CRAWFORD MAXWELL

LONG years ago along the reaches of the Penobscot, dwelt the Indians of that name. Wah-tee-tah, a princess of the tribe, was one of the happy ornaments of that picturesque race.

She was named Wah-tee-tah, which means Wildflower, after the manner of all Indian babies, because the first thing her mother saw upon emerging from the maternal wigwam, was a gorgeous mass of wildflowers that had just opened to the morning.

As Wah-tee-tah grew up, her love of wildflowers developed to extremes, and one day, as usual, the morning sun found her roaming the banks of the Penobscot, gathering and adorning herself with her favorite flowers. Daisies, buttercups and violets, golden-rod and evergreen bedecked her in glorious profusion.

By Sourdnhunk Falls she sat down to rest and rearrange her virgin vesture. Just then her sensitive ears heard voices, and, glancing toward the river, she discovered a pale-face and an Indian in heated dispute. The alien was fishing and with him were

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“The courageous princess reached her lover but only to perish
with him in the treacherous falls.”

many hungry dogs. Inexperienced fisherman that he was, he could only catch inexperienced fishes—the small fry that an Indian disdained to destroy. These small fish the angler was feeding to his hungry dogs.

Wildflower's brave—for the Indian was her lover—was voicing his disgust at this proceeding, from his canoe in mid-stream.

“Heap nice meat to throw to dogs big enough to hunt their own food,” said the Indian.

“If I choose to feed fishes to my dogs, that is my business,” retorted the pale-face.

“Take away all the babies, bye-and-bye no mother fish to give us more,” returned the occupant of the canoe.

“When this stream is fished out there are other rivers beyond,” and the fisherman with a nod indicated the West.

“That's beyond the sunset, but Katahdin is our camping-ground and you are destroying our fish and food,” said the Indian.

“Then I'll leave you my dogs to make stew for your tribe,” was the retort of the white man.

This remark, uttered in sneering sarcasm, piqued the Indian and in an instant a whirling tomahawk pinned the fisherman's tunic to a tree. In return, the enraged angler discharged his pistol at his assailant and a leaden bullet ricocheted from the red man's bracelet, tearing a gash in his arm and a hole in the bottom of the canoe. The swiftly flowing stream soon carried the sinking craft and its disabled occupant rapidly toward the falls below, and, although the pale-face made efforts to save him, his ability was unequal to the task.

All this Wildflower had witnessed. As the canoe went spinning by, she ran to the river and plunged to the aid of her lover. Her efforts to save him would have been successful had not the cataract been so near. The courageous princess reached her lover but only to perish with him in the treacherous falls.

Now the white chief,—he was governor of all that district,—sorry for what he had done, sent this edict broadcast: That all men should observe to retain only those fish that had attained mature size, so that the species should be preserved and the Indians' fish supply be established.

At this time the ouananiche was colorless as a smelt, but when Wildflower and her brave were drowned, the flowers that enshrouded her were taken by the current, and, as if in sorrow at the loss of their princess, they gathered into a compact mass of color and sank like a stone at the bottom of the falls. No human

eye can see them there, but every little ouananiche when he gets big enough to travel, visits the palette of the Indian princess, and each little trout paints himself as with colors of the rainbow—the gold and green and rose and hidden hues of woodland flowers, and each silver spot is a princess' tear.

This is the legend of the ouananiche. His colors are to remind those who catch him of the memorial of wildflowers that lies beneath the waters of the Penobscot, bearing testimony to the Indian who died for clean sport, and the princess who roams with him the happy hunting-grounds among wildflowers and streams filled with ouananiche.

Fishing for Health's Sake

By PAUL FUGLER

HAVING suffered from a nervous breakdown I was advised to take a complete rest, and a fishing trip was suggested. I concluded that a right rip-snorting, exhilarating time was needed, so I decided to go where the hand of man never set foot. My intuition directed the way to a fine stream beautifully located amidst the forests of Central Australia.

To reach this secluded spot I purchased an airship, and within three weeks I reached the desired stream.

Immediately making observations I found only one kind of fish, the ravenous muskowog, which is exceedingly game.

In the breeding season all the young fish have to be taught the art of swimming. This is necessary because the water is so crystal-clear, that the young and inexperienced fish cannot distinguish whether their heads are above or below the surface of the water, consequently millions of young fish lose their lives by asphyxiation.

Although the muskowog lives by eating the smaller fish it is wonderful how exceedingly civilized it is. Parent fish never eat their offspring, but raid neighboring pools. This information was easily obtained by observation, for I discovered that the features of the little fellows resembled those of their parents.

In one deep pool I located a very large muskowog which had grown far away beyond the size of the rest, so large as to be immune from attack. The cause of his enormous size I will relate.

One day two muskowogs decided at the same moment to have

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"By a quick release of the tree the fish was yanked out."

their breakfast off a toothsome looking fish, one commencing at the head, and the other the tail. They touched noses at the middle of the morsel, when a somewhat larger muskowog gobbled up the three at one gulp. This extraordinary meal produced rapid growth.

Every fisherman can readily understand that my mind was made up to catch this wonderful specimen.

So netting a few fifty-pound shiners for bait, and placing one on the hook, I made a perfect cast. I was delighted to see the large muskowog strike immediately. You can imagine my chagrin when his nibs snipped the line in two as easily as a horse can a carrot.

Here my inventive brain came to my rescue. I flew to a sheep fence about a thousand miles away, and clipped off about fifty yards of stout wire which I used as a fishing line.

I now used the anchor of my airship as a hook. This was attached to the fence wire, and, with a fresh shiner, I had no difficulty in enticing him to again take the bait.

And what a terrific fight he put up! I found that my immense strength was of no avail in my efforts to land him. Again I called upon my wonderful intellect to help to solve the problem of landing the fish.

Quick as a flash I attached the head of my airship to the main top branch of a tall willow, and bent the boughs to the ground in spring-like fashion. Hitching the line to the strongest bough, by a quick release of the tree the fish was yanked out and landed in a sandy basin about a mile from the bank.

From exposure to the tropical sun the sand of this basin was of stove heat, so it acted just like a huge frying pan. All I had to do was to sprinkle pepper and salt, turn him over once, and he was cooked to a turn. His perfect condition furnished the fat for frying. Gathering some bread from a bread-fruit tree I thoroughly enjoyed the meal.

I nearly forgot to say that, in order to quench my thirst, I drank from the stream, and great was my surprise to find it to be white wine of rare vintage. This flowed from the vineyards which dotted the surrounding district. Coming from a prohibition district you can easily guess that I had my fill.

Thanks to this wonderful outing, I have regained my old vigor, and my nerves are again as steady as an oak.

Tarpon on Fly Tackle

By LIEUT. R. W. SWEARINGEN

IT was while sitting in the Strangers' Club, at Christobal, Canal Zone, and watching the native fishing schooners come in, that I heard some one at a nearby table say something about taking tarpon on fly tackle. To me the tale sounded "fishy." I would have wagered considerable that the teller held Ananias as his patron saint, instead of St. Zeno. However, many strange things happen in the tropics, and, calling the boy, I hastily paid my check and departed in search of further information.

Fortunately, I happened to meet a Mr. Nichols, a gentleman well informed upon local angling conditions, who told me of an English sportsman, bound for South America, who stopped for a few hours at Colon, Panama, and made a sight-seeing trip to Gatun Lake and Dam. When two of the flood gates are opened it raises the water in the river and spillway below the dam to a depth of about eight feet. The secret of the tarpon is this: Gatun Lake has been stocked with black bass, and the tarpon come up the river to feed on the minnows that are carried over the top of the dam. The Englishman saw the tarpon jumping. Returning to Colon, he wired for tackle, and instead of spending a few hours, he remained for six months. He tied his own flies, on a 5/0 hook, with a long shank, and to which he gave local names. At his suggestion, the Gatun Tarpon Club was founded, a club house erected, and angling restricted to use of rod and reel. Fly fishing was especially encouraged. Mr. Nichols further informed me that he was going up to the club on the following morning, and asked if I would care to accompany him.

Would I? Say, I had become possessed with only one desire, to wit, to take a tarpon on a fly.

Early the next morning a launch set me ashore; I met Mr. Nichols at the depot; and we caught the 7:15 train for Gatun. The trip was quickly and pleasantly made, and a short walk brought us to the club house. Others had come up the night before, and were gathered around the breakfast table, discussing the morning catch. Seven beautiful tarpon were laid out on the grass near the club. It was only a few minutes' work—the quickest shift of clothing I ever made—to get into fishing togs and rig my tackle.

The first attempt was made by casting a black bass minnow, hooking my first tarpon with the fourth cast, not a very large

one, but a vicious fighter. The water was a veritable maelstrom, and fairly alive with tarpon and snook. Later in the day a slight shower made its appearance, which seemed to stimulate them into jumping. In this small stretch of water, in no place over a hundred yards in width, I saw at least fifty tarpon in the air at one time.

Later, I changed to ordinary salmon rod, fifteen-thread linen line, and with a fly succeeded in taking two more, of about twenty and thirty-five pounds. In the evening, when the gates were closed, I took a thirty-pounder by casting an artificial minnow. Others took them by casting a small piece of white cloth merely impaled on the hook. It seemed that one could use any "bait," but that he must have the very best of tackle. I can't think of any sport more exciting, and even you, seasoned angler though you may be, if you want a real thrill, something new, and an event that will linger long in the confines of the memory, go fly fishing for tarpon at Gatun!

A Brief for Luminous Baits

By HUBERT C. NORTON

HE was a big bass. I knew that well enough the moment he struck my plug with that crashing, splashing sound that always sends a thrill along one's spine. After one short run along the shore, he went into the air and then came a rush which was not to be stopped as he lunged toward the shore, despite my energetic thumbing.

The storm was over. The sun was down in a haze of purple clouds, but a fair wind from the northeast still held and drifted my boat. In casting from a square-end boat alone, one has no opportunity to use much finesse in manouvering. My bass with uncanny prescience fought down-wind toward the shore. "Forty feet, sixty feet. I must stop him before he reaches the weeds." So, with fear in my heart, I put pressure and yet more pressure on the spool of the reel. My line was old. Soft-braided casting lines will not endure forever. This one snapped within a few feet of my quarry.

In sorrow and shame for such bungling, I reeled in slowly, the wind meanwhile blowing my boat to the edge of the weeds, whither the bass had driven. As the end of the line came to my fingers, a

loud splashing some twenty feet ahead of me drew my attention. I looked and saw a commotion going on in a dense patch of lily-pads. Then the rippling ceased. But as I looked, I could occasionally see one particular leaf vibrate in a manner not usual with lily-pads. The thought struck home: "He has my plug in his jaw and the other hooks are fouled in the weeds." More for confirmation of this theory than for anything else, I paddled to the patch of lily-pads and, parting them gently, looked into the black depths. The water was shallow here, not over six feet, and my wooden plug was luminous. Sure enough, there was my bait, and even as I peered over the side at it, it moved slightly. Still hooked!

From my tackle-box I took a treble hook and tied it firmly to the handle of my landing net. Then with infinite caution I lowered this grappling tackle. Down at the bottom it was dark and no amount of scrutiny enabled me to tell how the fish lay. So I just thrust for the bait, hoping to catch its hooks. As I touched it a water-spout rose in my face and when I "came to" I saw no light below, but was aware of a swirling in *another* patch of weeds. Being now determined I went there and this performance was again enacted. Once more he escaped, and as I located him I became convinced that my methods were wrong.

It was now almost dark and the breeze had fallen. With no thought but to get that bass, I fixed the boat carefully to the oars pushed into the mud bottom and, slipping off my clothes, went overboard on the side away from the bass. Working carefully around, I took a breath and went below. I am not an experienced diver, but in six feet of water it was not difficult to dive to bottom, and with a quick grab, try for the bait which looked underwater as large as a bag of meal. My aim was true. I grasped the bait firmly, and as the commotion began I became aware of what I had previously overlooked; that hooks will cut human as well as piscatorial flesh. That fish *was* big. He pulled me under several times. I decided that I would let him go, but the hooks were faithful. One must try this game to really appreciate my difficulties. This way and that way we plunged and after an eternity I caught the boat with my free hand.

After this it was only a matter of cutting out five hooks from the palm of my hand and going home to be greeted with cries of "Fish story!" But on the scales that night he weighed six and a quarter pounds—not bad for a large-mouth even. Oh, yes! I still have that bait—I have a new line—and I also have five cute little scars to remind me of it all.

At the Other End of the Line

By M. M. SCHEID

A TROUT is intelligent but surely it knows very little of the world outside the water, and no doubt you, like many others, have often wondered what must be its thought when it finds itself caught. The story, as told by this four-pound rainbow, may give you some idea of that terrible feeling.

“One morning I was hungry and my neighbors acted as though they hadn’t a meal for a week and I said to myself that the best looking breakfast that came down stream I was going to have. I got ready for a ‘grab’ when along came a nice big worm and before I could say ‘thank you,’ Specks above me had the whole thing. I became angry and I guess that I frightened all my neighbors because when, a minute later, another fat worm came dangling, no one but myself moved. I picked up my meal and started to say some sarcastic thing when bing! that worm left my mouth and liked to have ripped out a dozen teeth. I became frightened and crawled into my den and my appetite left me almost as quickly as that worm did and it wasn’t until evening, when I saw white flies flirting near the water, that my appetite came back. I sampled several of these insects and they were fine. It got a little dark and to see better and—I’m ashamed to admit it—to get ahead of my friends, I remained out in the stream and when a big white moth suddenly fell right over my nose I grabbed it. I can’t quite remember what happened during the next second. It seemed though, as though I had accidentally bitten into a barbed wire and my neck cracked. That moth was tough and had a horn that stuck through my upper lip and I couldn’t spit out the thing and it seemed to try to get away from me and couldn’t.

“That was ‘some strong’ bug. I simply had to pull it up stream and then down. I tried to get under the bank but it refused to go there and then I tried to rub it off on a root. That moth even drew me to the surface and believe me, I made the water fly and I made up my mind that if I got rid of the thing I’d have to stay where I could breathe. I had often seen men and knew that a few of my neighbors suddenly left the water when they were around and that night I thought I saw a man near shore and that helped frighten me. Have you any idea what capers a fellow will do when he has some disagreeable food in his mouth, that he can’t spit out and besides is both ‘mad’ and ‘scared’? Well, I did them all and when

I saw that it didn't do any good I 'kinda' gave in to the thing on my lip and I seemed to get sick. I had to rest and while doing so that fly again drew me to the surface and when I touched the air I suddenly made a dive and I heard something snap and though the moth still stuck, it seemed to have suddenly died. I 'beat' it for down stream and now eat in deeper water and every time I catch a moth I wonder what that terrible 'darn' was I heard from shore when I suddenly got relief from that cussed bug."

Golf Balls as Bass Bait

By E. F. LAPHAM

THE following is one of the most unique fishing incidents that has ever been my privilege to experience.

The summer of 1917 was passed by my family and myself at Medicine Lake, Three Lakes, Wisconsin. To my joy a telegram was received saying my friend, W. C. Whitney of Ohio, was on his way to the Pacific Coast and would drop in on us for a few days' fishing. We met him on schedule and found he had his golf clubs with him, as he expected to play with friends at the Coast. It was immediately decided to arrange a temporary golf ground. We laid out a sort of fairway up a trail through the woods and made a sand putting-green in front of the camp. As the camp was located on a point some forty feet above the water, we did our driving off into the lake with floaters, which my son would retrieve in the rowboat and toss them back on the bank. Now for the fish story.

One morning we started our driving match, driving the golf balls off into the lake, and one of the balls disappeared entirely after it struck the water with the usual splash. I suggested we had made a mistake and used a sinker, when suddenly a fish was seen floating, evidently "all in." My son rowed up and lifted it in his hands, and then to our surprise held up a good-sized black bass and said: "Here's your golf ball." This proved to be true, for using his knife he soon recovered the lost ball which the bass had struck at as it hit the water. The ball had stuck in its mouth or throat so it could not use its gills and consequently it had either suffocated or drowned.







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