



# Fishing a la Tourilli.

BY N. B. WINSTON

ONE morning in August last a merry party of keen anglers sped, per express, northward from storied old Quebec city to the quaint little village of St. Raymond. Our lines had fallen in pleasant places; several weeks of glorious freedom were to come, during which we intended to thoroughly test the waters of the broad and beautiful territory leased by the Tourilli Club.

Naturally anticipation was lively; the prospect of life in the woods and whipping the St. Anne was simply intoxicating, and in our minds rose visions of killing tremendous trout and of having adventures of the wildest nature.

Monsieur Panet, vice-president of the Tourilli Club, met us at the station, and though, to him, most of us were strangers, old friends could not have received a more gracious and kindly welcome. After many inquiries concerning the state of the water, and some advice regarding the guides engaged in our service, we were stored by pairs, with our small luggage, in unique vehicles, which the Canadians dub "buckboards," but which would scarcely pass current at Newport or Lenox.

We had fallen into the hands of one Ferdinand Plamondon, a somewhat silent person, who showed himself equal to the occasion; for with serene composure he bore us through the streets of the scattered little village of St. Raymond, never once looking behind to observe the condition of his passengers. His wisdom was evident; had he once looked back he would have called down upon himself a storm of reproach. A

Canadian buckboard is a thing not to be treated lightly; the driver realizes that "he who hesitates is lost," and so dashes on as impervious to the groans of his victims as Juggernaut would be. However, this drive from the station to the house of our entertainment was not a fair sample; we then had neither driven up nor *driven down* the mountain in a buckboard, and so were too inexperienced to judge of its merits.

With pleasure we alighted before a broad, two-story house, from which swung a sign bearing the legend "Maison de Pension. Ferd. Plamondon." Having been "on the go" since an early hour, and the atmosphere being crisp and bracing, we were disposed to dwell upon the delights of food, and so congratulated ourselves as the aroma of coffee greeted us on our entrance.

This pension, in its appointments, was most primitive and foreign. The low-pitched rooms, the quaint beds, covered with the old-fashioned colored homespun quilt; the neat, short curtain of figured calico or muslin; the breakfast heavily seasoned with onion, the generous dish of eggs, the egg-cup and spoon, the robust young woman of the Tyrolean peasant type to serve us, and a glimpse into the broad, square kitchen at the rear, made one recall the pensions of northern Italy, where very much the same effect would be seen in a mountain village.

Having refreshed ourselves, we took a short turn in sight-seeing through the town, which is scattered and modern, but most beautifully located; after which we were prepared for our drive of eighteen miles up the mountain. It was a merry cavalcade which wended its way out of St. Raymond that August morning. Two ladies from Quebec had joined our party, and their French and knowledge of the country made us feel



a means of mutual support, and thus, excepting an occasional climb on foot up the steep and long ascents, the journey was made. The day did not prove so dear and bright as it had promised; soon the sun was obscured, a cold, damp wind commenced to blow, and we were glad to draw our blankets more closely about us. However, no discomfort



KEEN ANGLERS ALL.

much more secure in our position. We were thoroughly uneducated regarding the buckboard, but, as the journey had to be made in this vehicle, we braced ourselves according to its demands. The driver, who had my special life in charge, gloried in the possession of but one arm but, as it was neither time nor place to demur, my traveling companion and myself embraced each other as



ST. ANNE RIVER.

could make us indifferent to the beauties of the country through which we passed. We were in the heart of the Laurentian Hills, clad with their somber forests, the spire-like spruces overtopping all, like so many minarets, and the St. Anne, growing more turbulent and tortuous, to our left, within a stone's throw of the roadway. At first the Canadian farmhouse, so simple, yet so neat and compact, was very frequent, and always a bunch of timid children about, verifying the official statement of the prolificacy of the *habitant*. As we advanced the farmhouses were seen at rarer intervals, until, at the entrance to the club-house grounds, stood the home of the Godins, and then an end of houses and roadways, only the great virgin forest beyond, and the water-courses and the trail of the Indian and the caribou.

The club-house, or, properly, the Tourilli Lodge, is situated well back from the St. Anne, upon an elevation which admits of a good survey of the surrounding land, and of picturesque glimpses of the river below, effective vistas having been created by the removal of many trees along the slope from the lodge to the river's edge. The lodge itself is constructed of the log *au naturel*, with a twelve-foot piazza across the front—a charming place for hammocks and easy chairs, and promenades on rainy days, and astronomical observations on clear nights. One enters a front door of hospitable dimensions and finds himself in a large, square living-room, where tables and chairs, and sofas and rugs, and a most generous fireplace, in which blaze five-foot logs, give every sign of comfort. On either side of the living-room bedrooms open up; in the rear are the dining-room, the store-room and the kitchen. A stairway leads to an upper story, where several bedrooms are located. The accommodations are simple and unpretentious; the cots are neat, and after a day's tramp as conducive to sleep as a bed of cider-down. One has all the comfort desirable for a life in the woods, and complete freedom to enjoy himself out of doors and indoors.

The beauty of the country, the trout of the waters of the upper and lower St. Anne and of the Tourilli rivers, and of the basin of the many broad and beautiful lakes held within the bosom of the Laurentian Range; the game,

large and small, which is found all over the Tourilli limits, are but little known, except by trappers, including Indians and half-breeds. In September, 1890, Mr. George van Fellson, of Quebec, commanded an expedition which did some bold and substantial work in exploring the wonderful resources and natural beauties within the limits of the Tourilli Club. In his official report he gives a list of the fur-bearing animals to be found in this region; it includes bear, fox, beaver, otter, fisher, mink, lynx, muskrat, caribou in great abundance, moose, porcupine, weasel, hare and squirrel. His list of the feathered tribe "of the palatable kind" includes duck, ruffed grouse and spruce partridge in abundance, and these, with the large catch of trout always possible, give some idea of what a "land of promise" this is to the true sportsman. When to this is added the statement that the limits cover an area of over "1,100 square miles, containing some 125 lakes and 250 miles of rivers and streams," it will be readily seen that not only are the opportunities for sport plentiful, but they cannot be easily exhausted.

Immediately upon our arrival we were met by our guides, French Canadians, born and bred in these mountains, where they lead simple trappers' lives, and, as a class, remain untouched by the advance of civilization. In all things we found them most primitive, but more faithful and devoted and untiring than any guides we had ever seen, and withal so picturesque, speaking their patois, singing their Canadian boat-songs and charming us with alluring tales of trout and caribou, that to forget them would be to blot the Tourilli out of existence for us.

It would be simply delightful to recall in detail those weeks; when the days were spent upon the rivers and lakes, enticing the trout by the most beautifully deceptive flies ever invented, or in following some well-defined trail, along which we bagged partridge or grouse, and kept a keen lookout for caribou. Our evenings were cheered by blazing fires, by cards, by tales of adventure, as well as by friendly discussions, always with the "Noble hot Scotch," or some elixir of equal fascination, as a night-cap and inspirer of pleasant dreams.

We had our first view of one of the

mountain lakes, so wonderful in their beauty, on a radiant morning after two days of cloud and rain. Three of us, accompanied by the guides, Vézina and Duplin, undertook the ascent of the mountain immediately in the rear of the lodge. The trail was steep and rocky, but we were repaid for the hard climb of an hour and thirty minutes by the beauty of the silent forest, and, after the descent on the other side, by the sight of the lake which spread out before us. A few deserted rafts lay about a rotten, worn landing, a large fish-hawk uttered its shrill cry as it flew over our heads and alighted upon the limb of a dead maple, and the water sparkled and flashed like jewels in the sunlight. The spot was so remote and lonely that our failure to catch any trout, though our flies were carefully selected with an eye to the brilliant sunshine, seemed but a suitable ensemble. On the way back Vézina told us a thrilling story of his meeting once on this trail a bear with two cubs, showed us the tree under which he first caught a glimpse of the she-bear, and explained at some length his escape, which required an old trapper's cleverness and skill.

Some days after this we planned a trip to the Tourilli Falls, and in order to reach them before midday we were upon the river at an early hour. The falls are some distance from the lodge, and, after passing Carrier's Pool in the St. Anne, it was nearly a steady pull up the rapids. When work of this kind was to be done, the men, suitably attired, with heavy woolen stockings pulled up high over their trousers, plunged boldly into the water, took strong hold of the canoes, and forced them safely through the rocks and rushing current. Sometimes they stumbled, but scarcely ever fell; still, with all their hardy, robust muscle to back them, it was an awkward, fatiguing piece of work, and the sportsman cannot be too considerate in loading his canoe. Arrived within a mile of the falls, we left the canoes to be brought on by the guides, and took the trail for the rest of the way. This trail was the only one we attempted, which came near being impossible. It was boggy to a dangerous degree, and several precipices were scanned only by the most careful step from the ledge by one overhanging rock to that of another. As some of the guides went on ahead clearing the

path, while directing my steps cautiously, my mind reverted to an afternoon a few days previous, when, on the trail to Carrier's Pool, Beauprès took the lead, cutting away the fallen and overhanging boughs. We tried to carry on a conversation with him in the best French we could command; unlike the other guides, he could not be induced to reply in his own language, but persisted in answers given in the most infernal English it had ever been permitted me to hear. At last, in desperation, my comrade said, "Beauprès, oh avez-vous étudié l'anglais?" Without a change of expression, with the blandest innocence upon his mild countenance, he replied, "At Boston, monsieur." After that Beauprès was a subject of much interest.

Our day at the Tourilli Falls was one long to be remembered. The guides cleared a spot on the mountain-side and built a royal fire, over which John Godin, cook, prepared a great dinner, in which trout and bacon, and a stew known only to Canadians, figured principally.

At this spot the mountains were so precipitous on either side, and the falls came tumbling down with so great a rush and dash, that our movements were confined to the big rocks lying off the mountain, overhanging the water. We spread generous spruce beds, covered them with our blankets and lay upon them, lulled by the roar of the waters; or we climbed from rock to rock, found some quiet pool, cast a fly, and enticed unsuspecting fish into our net.

The largest fish caught was captured by John Godin, and the lithe young fellow made a picture standing on the rocks, playing the great fish, which proved to be a good four-pounder, while Genesee was bearing him the landing-net through many difficulties. When the day was over we came down the river with great speed, shooting the rapids with triumph, dropping the line into the pools as we sped over them, and indulging in several unsuccessful shots at ducks flying beyond our range. We could just distinguish the silver maples and the birch trees along the water's edge as we ran the last rapid, and the delight and beauty of the life in the lone land were so strong upon us that we could not repress a sigh because man had allowed himself to become civilized.

Our last afternoon was spent upon the river. My friend and myself went

down-stream in the canoes, with Duplin, Leon Picard and the old and favorite guide, Joseph Juncau.

As we drifted along, casting a fly wherever it seemed likely a trout might be caught, Duplin pointed out to us his home, on the opposite bank of the river. He asked us to stop and see his wife, and of course we could not refuse. He paddled us ashore, and introduced us into a pleasant home, complete in its neatness and content. The wife was a sad, sweet-faced woman, who seemed somewhat older than her husband, her hard life, no doubt, being responsible for this appearance. The house con-

tained but two rooms, clean and comfortable. Little girls, with eyes of Madonna blue, were playing about; the mother held the baby boy in her arms, and Duplin's honest face fairly shone with pride, while from the wall a faded print of the Virgin looked down upon it all. We went back to the lodge with very tender domestic feelings welling up in our hearts, and later, at sunset, when the guides built a great fire in front of the piazza, and stood there, forming a picturesque group, each man received his pay and a box of meat for services which had been well and truly rendered.



OVER A PORTAGE.