

OUTING'S MONTHLY REVIEW

OF

AMATEUR SPORTS AND PASTIMES.



WARE THE BROWN TROUT FOR STOCK.

THE fact that three of the great railway trunk lines, with general offices in the City of New York, have systematically planted fish in the waters along their routes, is the best assurance to anglers that the fishing will improve with each season. With more practical experience and knowledge as to the best fish to be planted and the most suitable waters for them, the passenger departments of these three roads will accomplish more for the benefit of the angling fraternity and in economic results to the people at large than arises from the not altogether commendable and promiscuous methods of the State Fish Commissions. The efforts of these roads have been mainly in the line of planting the different species of trout—the native brook trout (red spotted), the rainbow, and the German or brown trout, also having red spots, but of greater size and less number than those on our native trout.

The planting of the German trout has been found greatly injurious to trout waters. They grow to a large size and feed upon the native trout; in fact, after a few years, in every water where the big "Dutchman" is placed the brook beauty is annihilated. Private angling clubs all over the country are ridding their waters of the brown trout by every means available and greatly regret the planting of this large species, which may aptly be called the hog of trout waters. Unfortunately the passenger departments of the railroads alluded to were at first attracted by the speedy growth and great size of the brown trout as an advertising specialty, but the angler soon discriminated between the "six-pound trout" caught

in a near-by water and the pound trout not advertised, although gifted with more lordly game and delicate table qualities than his big brother, with huge red spots and overcoat of scales.

FREE FISH FOR STOCK.

The State Fish Commissions furnish free fish under apparently stringent printed regulations as to the condition of the waters to be stocked, which must be adapted to the welfare of the fish and be free to the public, an excellent protection against misuse of the State property; but it is seldom more than a paper regulation, which is frequently violated with each returning season for distribution of fish from the State hatcheries. A written application to the Commissions is alone required, when a sworn statement should be insisted upon, particularly as to the sources, flow, tributaries, temperature of the waters and the natural supply of food for the intended plant of fishes. This error of omission on the part of the Commissions leads to violation of the law, which explicitly states that fish are not to be furnished for stocking private waters. For instance, an angling club or individual owns the riparian rights and strictly enforces them for a few miles on both sides of a tributary, say that of the Hackensack River; that tributary is one of the sources of the river, but along its entire route it is posted against trespass and guarded by wardens paid by the riparian owners. It is not open to the rods of the public, although the fish have free range to the lower and free waters, but every observant angler knows that, as soon as the snow water runs off in the early spring, the trout, impelled by spawning instinct, leave the lower streams and slowly, but surely, make their way to their spawning beds. Again, a riparian owner can, by building dams or placing obstructions in the stream, so that a depth here and there of five to ten feet is obtained, corral his trout on his own property all the year round, for these fish fall back only to get deep water in which to find warmth during the winter months and to escape the danger of ice formations during their semi or complete hibernating period. If caught in or compelled to pass the winters in comparatively shallow

waters, trout and black bass have been found hibernating in hollow logs along the shores and in crevices formed by large rocks in the deeper portion of the stream.

WINTER FISHING THROUGH THE ICE.

Now is the time for the angler of a correct turn of mind to live over again the exploits of the past season, and his meditations usually result in a forceful determination to repeat, and possibly enlarge, the delightful experience of his last summer outing. If he is built on what is considered by many the proper angling lines—"it is not all of fishing to fish"—he is not apt to enthuse over catching fish when the ice-days come in and the captured quarry is frozen of fins and body at the moment it is lifted from the water. Such an angler delights in his pastime only when a balmy spring opens up and beautifies the environment of the sport. But there are others, who are like a fishing enthusiast known to us, that hurls a stone twenty feet from the shore on the newly formed ice, and fishes through the hole the stone has made, by standing on the bank, frostbitten and shivering, but complacently handling his twenty-foot rod with a tiny tom-cod dangling at the hook end of the line. Anglers so tempered may now be found on every lake within easy reaching distance of their homes. They seldom travel far, these winter rosters, to indulge in sport, for it is found almost at their doorsteps.

Every milldam, pond or lake, if of any depth, will yield more plentifully than in the summer season, at which period fish wander and forage for food to the outer limits of range. In winter, where a depth of fifteen or more feet of water exists, the fish gather in the deepest boles and are hunger-stricken, taking anything with an edible smell about it that may be offered them. The most enjoyable and health-giving method in favor with fishers through the ice consists of a score or more of "tilt-ups" (overhanging lure-holders placed at each hole) stuck in the ice about one hundred or more feet apart, and the fisherman scurries on skates from hole to hole as he sees the "tilt-ups" tilt to the bite of the fish. This vigorous exercise modifies the icy blasts of the wind, and the wide range from tilt-up to tilt-up insures a greater catch of fish, necessitating a keen eye and a corresponding agility of movement. Another and less enjoyable but far more comfortable method is to build a board shanty, or use a tent, where, housed from the wind and cold, the fisherman cuts a hole in the ice and waits, tiger-like, with the deadly spear uplifted for the approach of the quarry. Anglers living in the city of New York or in its vicinity will find great results from ice-fishing in Greenwood Lake, distant forty-two miles. The barded pickerel (unlike the pike with no spots upon them) are caught in numbers and of greater size than in the spring months, and occasionally a black bass may be lured of more than ordinary weight. But more anon and in detail of fishing through the ice in OUTING of February.

THE PROFIT OF GAME PRESERVATION.

The heart of the sportsman rejoices as he hears the good news of mighty sport from districts in which it appeared, not long ago, that fin, fur and feather would be exterminated. It is true, there are yet whole districts, once re-

plete with opportunities for full enjoyment of life afield, which nature lavishly provides, still given over to barrenness. Where once the spring was welcomed as the harbinger of merry days with the shotgun, and the autumn was welcomed by hunters with rifle on the trail, there is, in many parts, now silence and desolation. Yet the good work is ever moving on.

What the sporting instinct, unaided, failed to secure, self-interest has helped to achieve. The railroad, the hotel-keeper and the farmer have found it very much to their material interest to protect the game and thus insure the attendance each year of the devotees of rod and gun.

The State of Maine, so much patronized these years by big-game hunters and fishermen, is a pertinent one to illustrate our point, for when the summer guests have thinned out, there comes on yet another crop of hardy and generous sportsmen, who fill the inns of the remote districts and yield a golden harvest in once desolate places where deer (and guides) abound.

It is reported, for instance, that in the past short season for deer ending December 15th 15,000 head of game have fallen to the Nimrods, drawn from all parts of the United States. It is scarcely necessary to begin to calculate how many hundreds of thousands of dollars this fine harvest has set running—the railroads, the manufacturer of arms and ammunition, the bootmaker, the tailor, the teamster, the packer, and the guide—in fact, "the tinker, the tailor and the candle-stick maker," to quote an old nursery rhyme, have all been made busy, merry and joyous, by the judicious application of the laws of nature, which have been rigidly enforced for the preservation of game. OUTING's pages have ever been open to preach these doctrines, alike beneficial to localities and individuals, whether they be participants in the sport or participants in the dollars its followers freely spend.

MARKET HUNTERS.

The market hunter, that demon of destruction who has cleared off whole States, has received a setback in California, the authorities of Sacramento having prohibited the exportation of game out of the county. The restaurateurs of San Francisco may languish, but the true sportsman will rejoice, and the district will enjoy its own again. Depredators from far away, whose only object is destruction, for their own profit, of that which should enrich and be enjoyed by the whole community, have no rights which with justice they can claim.

LOCAL RIGHT.

The question of the right of a locality to protect its game against incursions of irresponsible and miscellaneous shooters has often been tested, but ever maintained. In a recent case in Illinois, Judge Kohlsaat laid down some principles that might well be more widely known. The appellant did not, indeed, in this case deny the State's right to compel a non-resident to take out a license. His contention was that, being a member of a sporting club owning land in the State, he was a resident, but the decision covered a wider field. Judge Kohlsaat held that to hunt or kill game was a privilege granted by the sovereign authority, that property in game lies in the State, and that the State has the right to say when, how, and by whom it may be killed.