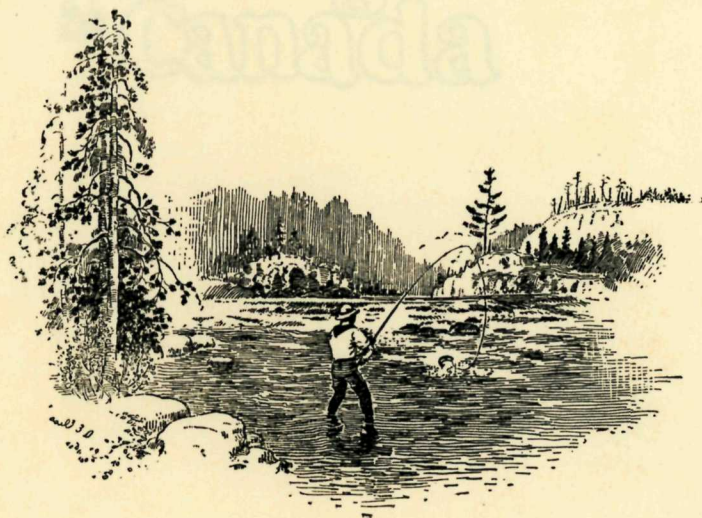


# Fishing in Canada



## FISHING IN CANADA

From the deep lakes to the shallow streams,  
the fishing is good in every part of the country.

# Fishing in Canada

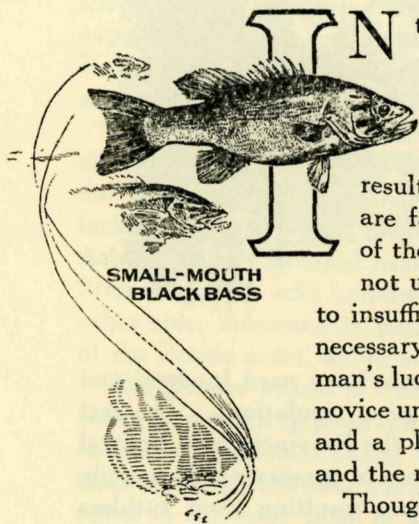
Canada is a great fishing country. The fishing is good in every part of the country. From the deep lakes to the shallow streams, the fishing is good in every part of the country. The fishing is good in every part of the country. From the deep lakes to the shallow streams, the fishing is good in every part of the country.

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## FISHING IN CANADA

Should you lure  
From his dark haunt beneath the tangled roots  
Of pendant trees, the monarch of the brook,  
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.

—Thompson



**I**N the waters of Canadian territory the sportsman who desires to gratify his taste for angling will find his hopes realized. He is not invited to venture upon a trip wholly uncertain of result, for the lakes and streams of Canada are famous for the varieties and abundance of their fish. The disappointed fisherman is not unknown but his failure is generally due to insufficient knowledge of the art and of the necessary conditions for a good catch. "Fisherman's luck" in Canada may mean failure for the novice unprepared, but as a rule it means success and a pleasant outing for the scientific angler and the real sportsman.

Though the true fisherman is said to be born, not made, yet angling is not an art acquired without effort or apprenticeship. Inborn, indeed, must be those qualities for which the fisherman is noted: patience supreme, optimism undaunted, faith without limit. In default of this endowment, perseverance and love of the sport may, in a measure, supply the deficiency.

The successful fisherman is the philosophic sportsman in whom the sight of blue waters, of forest-clad shores and islands, and even of grey skies and lowering clouds, will awaken responsive harmonious thoughts. He who can attune himself in harmony with

surrounding nature, whatever be her mood, is the best type of fisherman, for the spirit of the busy office has no place in the peace of nature.

In such a man there is an inherent instinct for fishing; in a measure the art comes naturally to him. He is not cruel nor wasteful, and does not fish for the mere pleasure of killing. His object is not to capture the greatest possible number of fish within a



specified time, but such a quantity as he may need for food and within the limits allowed by Government regulations. The real fisherman thus becomes a colleague of the Provincial and Federal Governments of Canada for the purpose of preserving the supply of fish and to prevent their extinction resulting from ruthless slaughter. He is one who appreciates the virtues of fairness and generosity and is not unmindful of the man who comes after, and he is never guilty of wanton destruction.

By experience the novice acquires knowledge of the necessary technique to enable him to qualify for an expert. He discovers the merits of certain bait and tackle and the worthlessness of others. He is weatherwise and, like the sailor, watches the sky, learning through failure to appreciate the wisdom of the old Waltonian maxim,

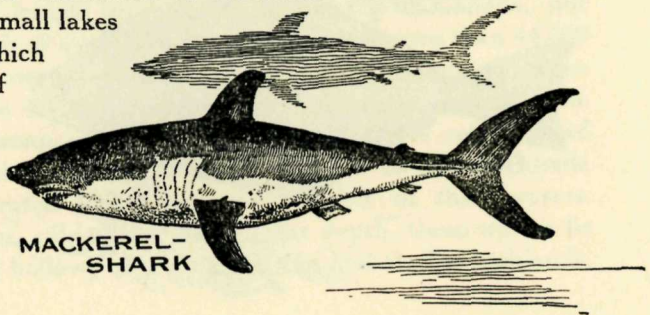
When the wind is from the north,  
Then, fisher, go not forth;  
When the wind is from the east,  
'Tis good for neither man nor beast;  
When the wind is from the west,  
Then the fishing is the best;  
When the wind is from the south,  
Blows the bait into the fish's mouth.

He will observe the rule of proper seasons, will recognize the value of the early and the late hours of day, and he will study the phases of the moon for, they say, the moon has an influence over fish. He must also have knowledge of the waters in which he may be fishing, their depth and the nature of the bottom, for some fish prefer a weedy muddy bottom, others a pebbly; some lurk in the deep holes, others race past the shoals in pursuit of prey. All these specific items of information, and many others, are known to the experienced guide and upon his knowledge rests his reputation. Under the best of conditions of weather, water, bait and boat, some men will not land a fish while others seem to charm them.

When the extent and diversity of Canadian waters are considered it is not surprising that so many species of fish exist within our borders and that so many thousand tourists come to try their luck. On the one side, deeply indented bays and estuaries of the Atlantic coast, situated near the intermingling of the warm Gulf Stream and the cold Labrador current from the north, and on the other side, innumerable passages between islands and deep bays of the Pacific coast, afford ample feeding grounds for sea fish.

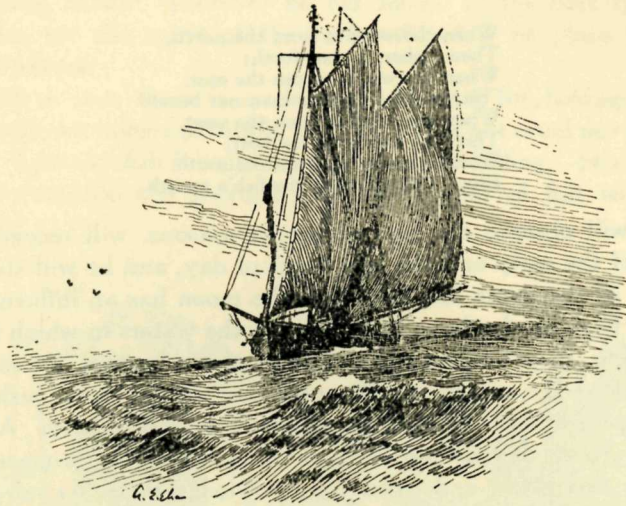
The interior waters of Canada, its lakes and rivers, are perhaps the most surprising geographical feature of the country. Exclusive entirely of the Great Lakes, the combined surface area of the principal lakes in Canada is about 86,000 square miles which is almost equal to the total areas of lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron and Ontario. Nor does this extent of Canadian lake surface include the innumerable small lakes replete with fish which are the haunts of the sportsman.

It is in such lakes, often hidden deep within the forest and aside from the



MACKEREL-  
SHARK

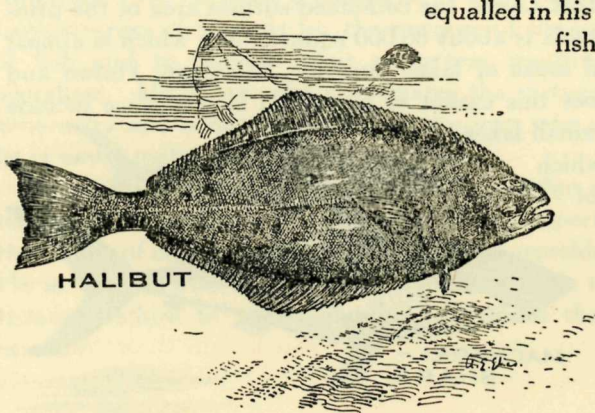
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main routes of travel, that the angler may expect to obtain a remarkable catch of trout or bass, pickerel or pike. Often a supposedly unimportant stream bordered by over-hanging trees and alder-bushes will prove to be the home of the finest trout.

Such gems of lakes are not widely known, frequently not even shown upon the map, but, learning of their location from local report or from a ranger, haply met upon one's route, the eager sportsman follows the forest trail and emerges upon the shore of the hidden lake. Perhaps there is a leaky dug-out or an ancient raft obtainable, if he has not carried his own canoe, but, once embarked, he is in a fair way to enjoy an afternoon's sport unequalled in his experience. The

fish are hungry and numerous and demand no attraction of singular bait. Original exploration, even on a small scale, has enabled many a canoeist to discover such lakes,



and he is likely to guard well the secret of their location.

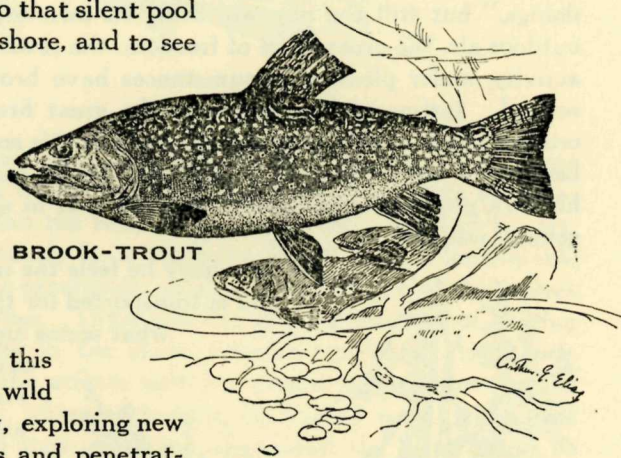
The larger lakes, often of great depth, are the abode of the famed namaycush, the salmon trout of the lakes, which loves the icy waters of deep holes in the rocky bottom. Here also along the shallow shores and in weedy bays, where the beaver, mink and muskrat lurk, will be found the pike family, and if there are reefs and pebbly shoals quite free from weeds one is sure to encounter that gallant fighter, the small-mouth black bass.

And there are the rivers of Canada flowing everywhere through picturesque country with innumerable branches leading to smaller tributaries, outlets of lakes, dashing along in rapids and falls to join the larger stream. In these places, sometimes difficult of access, the angler knows that trout are waiting for the gaudy fly, the venturesome grasshopper, or the weary butterfly. What joy it is to stand upon some precarious footing in the midst of dashing waters, to cast into that silent pool

near the opposite shore, and to see the lightning flash of a trout as he seizes the fly! To reach these secret nooks one must often traverse the smaller rivers to their source, and this canoeing in the wild unsettled country, exploring new streams and rivers and penetrating

the forest depths, is an experience of great and lasting charm.

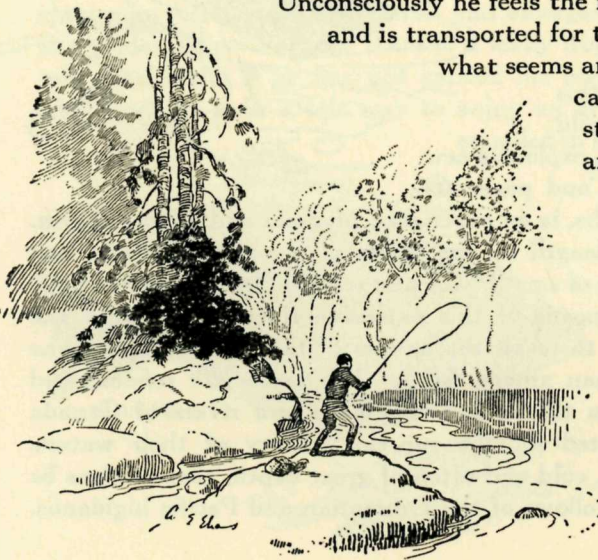
The combined length of the principal rivers of Canada, not including hundreds of small rivers and streams, is more than 44,000 miles. It is by means of this extensive river system that the sportsman is able to reach the haunts of the choicest fish. The trout is a gentleman among fishes. His tastes are refined, and hence we find him throughout the lakes and rivers of Canada which are celebrated for the superior quality of their waters. Clear, transparent, cold and often of great depth, these waters lie in the ice-carved hollows of the Laurentian and Pacific highlands.



BROOK-TROUT

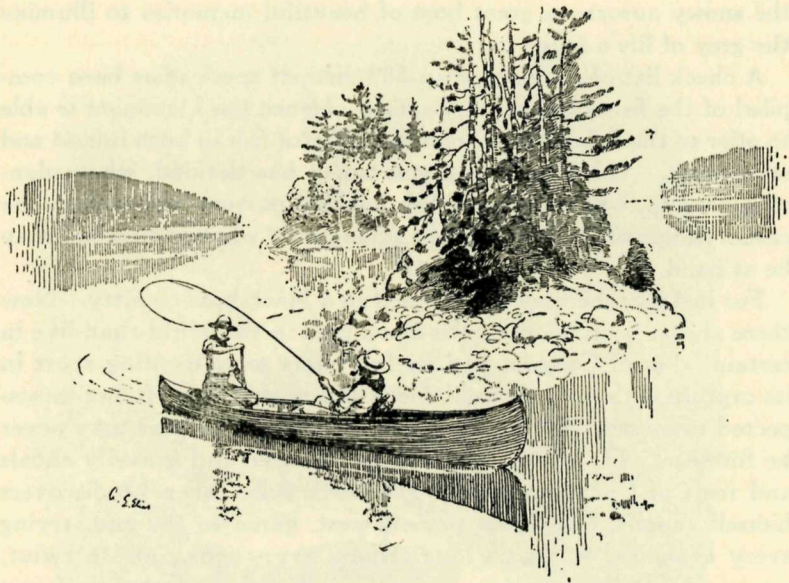
Very little sedimentary deposit is found in these regions, the glacial grindings having been transported to the sea in large measure, and the waters resting upon clean rock surface are uncoloured and remarkably cold and invigorating. Lake trout caught on a 200 foot line when brought into the boat are as cold almost as ice. The superior quality of flesh so characteristic of the Canadian bass and trout is undoubtedly due to the nature of the Canadian lake waters. It is quite possible also that the exhilarating atmosphere of the Laurentian peneplain, a thousand feet and more above sea level, beneficially affects the waters by aeration.

The attractions which fishing has for some are not to be measured solely by the successful catch of the biggest fish, for there are other features of the sport that appeal quite as strongly. Indeed the fish will not always bite; there are times when they seem to sulk and to spurn your daintiest allurements, for fish are "wise in strange doings," but still the day will bring its own compensation. The outdoor air, the great sense of freedom, the satisfaction of physical activity under pleasant circumstances have brought their happy reward. Intimacy with nature is the great first essential to increased physical and mental strength. In this sense the fisherman becomes a contributor to civilization, for in the development of his own physique and mental poise he aids to such extent in the general welfare.



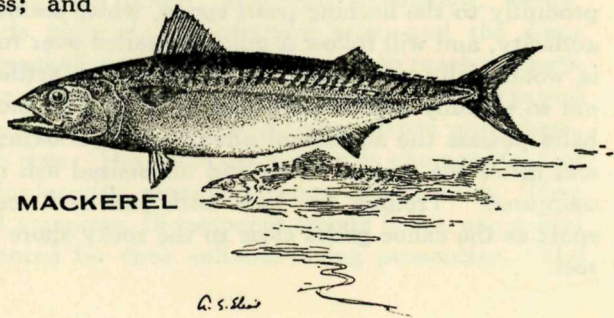
Unconsciously he feels the influence of nature and is transported for the time being into what seems another world. The cares and ceaseless strain of city life are forgotten and the sight of beautiful wooded shores, of the sparkling blue waters of a Canadian lake, together with the privilege of breathing such an exhilarating atmosphere,





carry the fisherman deep into the heart of nature. No better opportunity exists for contemplation, for the enjoyment of philosophic thought, than the fisherman finds in the pursuit of his art. And ever unconsciously he is receiving impressions of inestimable value in each day's experience, which afterwards reveal themselves in lingering memories. There was the exciting incident of landing the twenty-pounder in the canoe without upsetting; there was that mysterious little stream with its opaque pools, reflecting the pines and hemlock, where we caught the mighty trout; there was the ancient Indian trail which led us through the dense forest to that magic lake of solitude and silence where we made the wonderful catch of bass; and

there was the glorious sunset, seen as not between the rows of city houses, the resplendent nights and



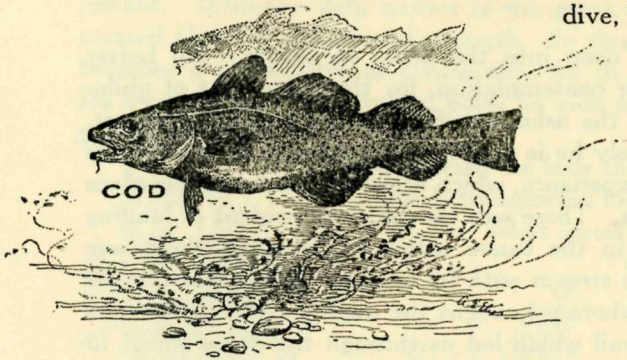
**MACKEREL**

the snowy aurora—a great host of beautiful memories to illumine the grey of life's toils.

A check list of no fewer than 569 distinct species has been compiled of the fishes caught in Canada. Hence the Dominion is able to offer to the fisherman a great diversity of fish in both inland and sea waters. The experienced sportsman has decided, when planning his trip, what species of fish he shall pursue; the novice, the casual fisherman, will be content to angle for whatever species may be at hand.

For instance, he may find himself in a black bass country. Now there are no finer small-mouth black bass in the world than live in certain lakes of Canada, and no fish offers more exciting sport in its capture with rod and reel. He is strong and wary, full of unsuspected resources, an acrobat whose strange contortions may never be foreseen. He loves the clean, pure water and gravelly shoals and reefs of Canadian lakes. He never sulks when he discovers himself caught, but fights without rest, game to the end, trying every expedient to regain his freedom, every imaginable twist,

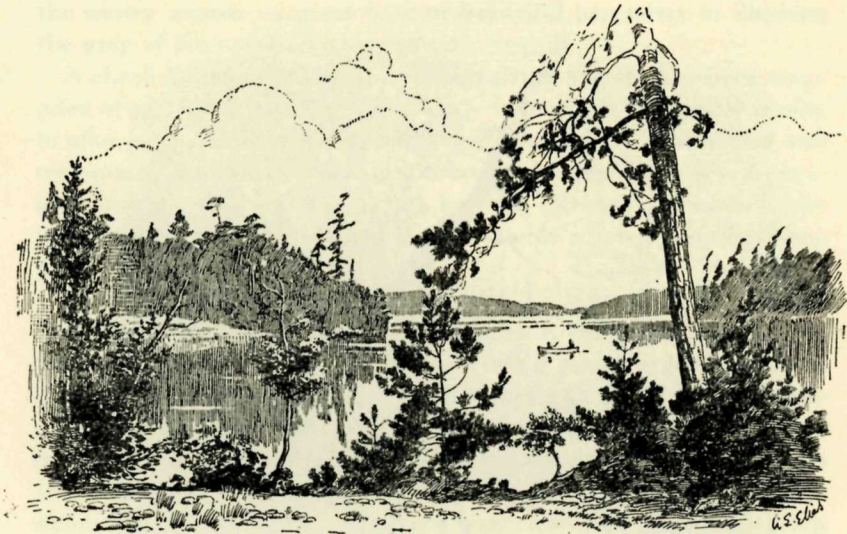
dive, leap, and run, always quick as a flash. He is a gallant pirate among the fish. For food he prefers the dainty crawfish, the silver minnow, and especially the little green frog just embarking



on his career, but he is content with simpler fare. He will respond promptly to the flashing pearl spoon, which seems to arouse all his audacity, and will follow a minnow trailed over rocky shoals. He is wonderfully responsive to the ingenious artificial baits which are so skilfully made today and so natural in movement. These baits possess the additional advantage of hooking the fish in lips and hence the surplus catch and undersized fish may be returned uninjured. Trolling for bass with rod and reel is fascinating sport as the canoe glides close to the rocky shore or passes over a reef.

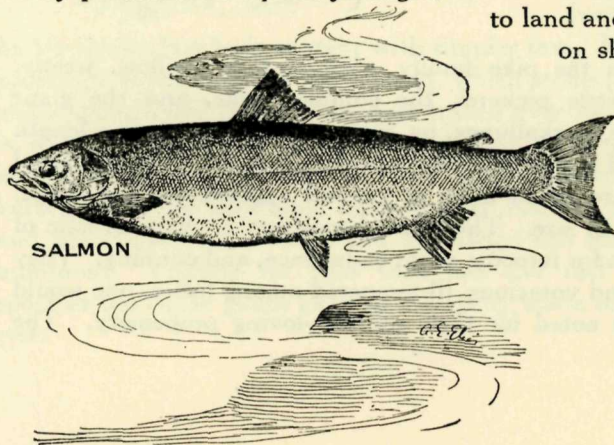


Then there is the pike family, abundant in shallow, weedy, bottoms; the little pickerel, the common pike, and the giant maskinonge (the maskallunge, or 'lunge) known to reach a length of eight feet and a weight of one hundred pounds. To the casual observer they are much alike in general appearance and shape, differing chiefly in size. The same disposition is characteristic of all; a reputation for ferocity, great endurance, and cunning. They are all vicious and voracious, ill-tempered among fishes, one would say, and all are noted for their solitude-loving propensity. The



'lunge is called a shark, wolf, tiger, and, indeed, the common pike is not unworthy of the title. It is because of their natural ferocity and viciousness that the big fellows are not found together. Secreted in a bed of weeds they lie in wait for the passing prey, and with lightning speed dart out upon their victim. Hence one trolls along the edge of such a bed, and, for 'lunge, with a hundred feet of line and wire gimp to hold the spoon. Their teeth are singularly sharp and wolf-like, as many have discovered in extricating the hooks. Maskinonge weighing from twenty-five to forty pounds are frequently caught, and it is sometimes advisable

to land and secure the fish on shore rather than risk disaster afloat.

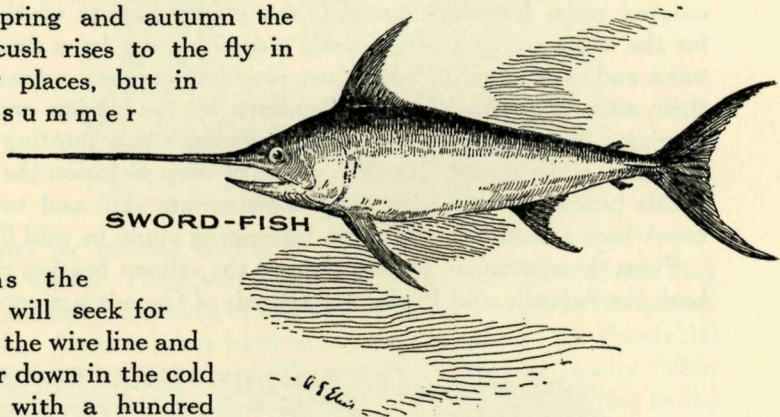


SALMON

Of trout there are about a dozen varieties in Canada, from the large Salmon Trout or

Great Lake Trout (the Namaycush), sometimes weighing thirty pounds and more, to the delicate speckled Brook Trout. There are the beautiful Rainbow, Dolly-Varden, Red-spotted, Cut-throat, Steelhead, and other varieties of trout found in great abundance in nearly all the streams and lakes of British Columbia, and all famous for their game qualities. The Steelhead, found in the streams and lakes of the Pacific slope as far north as Alaska, attains a size of twenty pounds, and is considered by many anglers the gamiest fish taken in fresh waters. No apologist is needed for the trout family. One and all they are of superior intelligence and of refined taste among fishes, displaying individual and original characteristics. Full of spirit they are hard fighters, resisting to the last, resorting to every device before surrender, leaping high above the water, rushing beneath submerged trees to entangle the line, now coming towards the rod with frightful speed for loose line, now tearing away suddenly to snap the line.

In spring and autumn the namaycush rises to the fly in shallow places, but in the summer



months the angler will seek for him by the wire line and troll far down in the cold depths with a hundred

feet of line or more, for this gamy fish is not fond of the summer's warmth. It is not easy sport, this steady rowing or paddling by the hour, but when once the namaycush has seen the flashing spoon so temptingly swimming by, he does not stop to question, and then comes the fisherman's reward—he feels the thrill of a twenty-pounder tugging desperately at the end of the hundred foot line. Sometimes it may even seem that his line has caught the bottom. Or if a deep part of the lake is known by trial, one may anchor there and fish with hand line or with rod and reel using minnow bait. This method is not so interesting but it is dependable for food, and requires considerable skill in the manipulation of a minnow bait near the bottom.

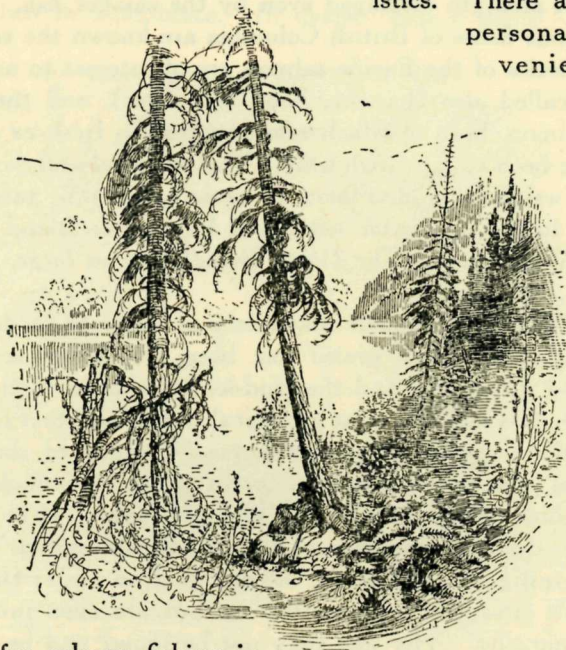
Fly fishing for the lively Brook Trout in a forest stream is artistic sport. Not only does it require skill and the practised hand and a degree of technical knowledge in the choice of a suitable fly, the most likely pool, the best angle of cast with regard to light and time of day, but also supremely necessary is the exercise of those mental qualities which mark the true fisherman. With the aid of a wriggling worm and an improvised rod cut from a neighbouring cedar or alder, the fisherman "to the manner born" will often meet with greater success than the over-confident sportsman burdened with costly paraphernalia too dainty for the bush.

It is artistic sport, again, because it brings one close to the hidden beauties of nature. Following up the stream towards its source one comes upon attractive sights far within the forest, the unexpected rapids and snowy waterfalls, the dark pools reflecting as in a mirror overhanging banks clad with cedar, here and there a brilliant flower growing at the water's edge. One seems to have entered upon forbidden ground, the sacred haunts of the wild, for the snapping of a twig reveals a deer coming for a drink, and mink and muskrat with heads just emerging are seen swimming to their retreats, warned of your approach by the clarion cry of the bluejay. Sometimes one may even encounter a bear hunting for fish stranded in the rapids. In such places of deep seclusion the beaver builds himself a dam with most consummate skill and turns the brook into a diminutive lake, an interesting study in wild life.

From the sportsman's point of view the salmon bearing rivers of both the Atlantic and Pacific watersheds of Canada are considered



among the finest salmon rivers in the world. Salmon fishing is an art that calls for experience, enthusiasm, and proper equipment. One is dealing with a fish of intelligence and individual characteristics. There are many personal inconveniences to



be borne for salmon fishing is not easy sport. Those who like it will have no substitute, and they travel annually hundreds of miles to spend a few days at the salmon preserve. Certain rivers have been leased in part by the Provincial Governments as preserves for salmon clubs, but many other streams equally well-stocked and visited by the fish are free to the public under the game regulations. So anxious are these clubs to conserve the supply of fish running in these rivers that a list has been kept for years of the number of salmon caught in each season within the bounds of the club's preserve and the individual weights. Under the protective system practised by these clubs, which regulates the number of salmon to be caught by any one member, the run of salmon in certain rivers has been greatly increased.

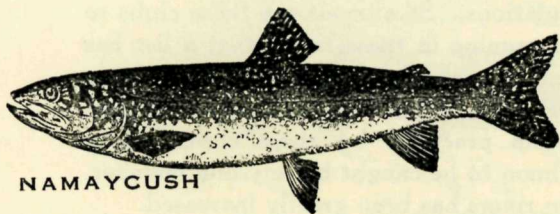
One must experience the satisfaction of landing a twenty-pound salmon to appreciate the pleasure and excitement involved in its capture—a pleasure preceded by many anxious moments of uncertainty and much hard effort, for one never can foresee the

actions of a salmon. It is a hard struggle from beginning to end lasting sometimes an hour, and many are the risks of broken rod and line. One is amazed at the versatility, ingenuity, perseverance and great strength displayed even by the smaller fish.

The game fishes of British Columbia are known the world over. Two varieties of the Pacific salmon are of interest to anglers, the Spring (called also Quinnat, King and Tyee), and the Coho or Silver salmon, both of which take the troll in fresh or salt water and have been caught with a fly. The powerful and gamy Spring salmon, weighing from fifteen to seventy pounds, readily takes the troll in the salt water reaches of Vancouver Island and along the mainland coast. The Coho, though not so large, is equally gamy.

Then there is the famous ouananiche of the Lake St. John region and Labrador, whose praise has been frequently sounded by celebrated sportsmen, and the land-locked salmon of New Brunswick. No one can tell what geological convulsion first severed the ouananiche from his kind and forebade return to the sea. In process of time he seems to have forgotten the sea, which no longer attracts him though the way of return is open. It is a singular fact that the characteristics of the sea salmon, which display so much intelligence and spirit, did not decline under the changed conditions of separation from the sea but are even intensified in the ouananiche. His like may not be found and he who with an Indian guide has captured one from a canoe will long remember the experience. He may be taken throughout the season from early spring to winter ice, and, though frequently caught with artificial fly, he prefers the humble worm, a piece of pork, or fish.

Since the beginning of the sixteenth century men have fished



on the Banks near the coasts of Nova Scotia, and long before the days of Cartier the hardy mariners of France, England and Portugal established their bases in the gulf and river of St. Lawrence for



drying cargoes of cod. The same waters, with their bays and in-flowing rivers, still continue to supply the sportsman with endless opportunities for deep-sea and near-shore fishing.

Within the estuaries of the rivers sea trout and other small fish may be taken in abundance. In deeper waters many varieties



of large game fish provide great sport for the accomplished angler, and the combination of sailing with fishing brings a double share of pleasure.

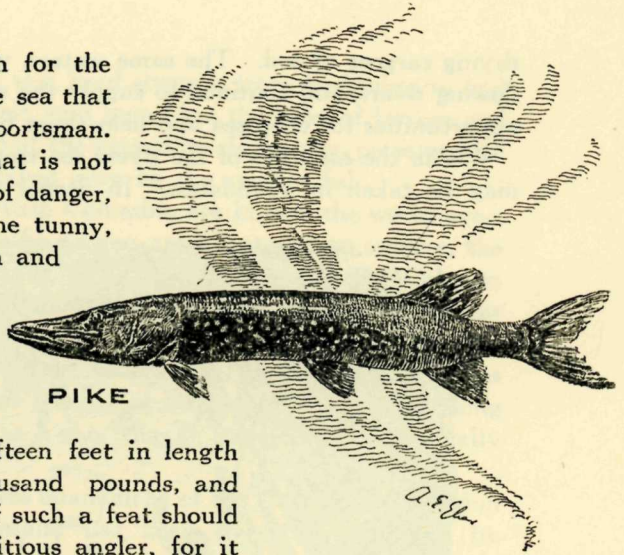
Among other sea fish are the blue fish, the weakfish, cod, halibut, haddock, flounders, mackerel, and many others. For the capture of some of these the fisherman will resort to sea trolling; for others, he will adopt bait-fishing from anchor. In every case the sport includes a delightful sail in open waters which may often extend far out to sea for cod and halibut. And, then, there is the famous sea bass, which may be caught in the very breakers as one stands at the water's edge—a noble fish of great beauty and size.

But it is the search for the larger game fish of the sea that attracts the scientific sportsman. He desires a sport that is not free from the element of danger, and so sets sail for the tunny, that enemy of all fish and the fisherman's nets. There is great éclat in landing by rod and reel one of these enormous fish, which

sometimes measure fifteen feet in length and may weigh a thousand pounds, and the accomplishment of such a feat should satisfy the most ambitious angler, for it often means hours of the severest strain. More commonly, however, the tunny is caught by harpooning.

Greater risk is encountered in the capture of sword-fish, for which either harpoon or rod and reel are used. This pugnacious fish, weighing from one hundred to six hundred pounds and measuring six to eight feet in length, provides a veritable battle for the sportsman. When wounded it does not hesitate to attack

its pursuer and can easily pierce the sides of a small craft. Harpooning the sword-fish and that swiftest, strongest, and most voracious shark, the mackerel-shark, is a favourite sport at many places on the Atlantic coast of Canada. Both fish are easily detected by the projecting of their dorsal fins above the surface, the vessel being able to approach them without difficulty. The harpoon is thrown from the end of the bowsprit of a sailing vessel where the fisherman stands protected from falling. The pursuit of these enormous fish offers the very acme



of excitement for the sportsman and resembles the hunting of large animals on land more than scientific angling.

Without hesitation it may be said that, whether the sportsman desires sea or inland fishing, Canada provides such a variety of sea-, river-, brook- and lake-fishing as will satisfy the tastes and ambition of the most exacting and ambitious angler.

ERNEST VOORHIS.



Enquiries regarding the natural resources and attractions of Canada, both in summer and winter, will receive attention if directed to the Natural Resources Intelligence Service, Department of the Interior, Ottawa.