

of the Parisian proletariat. One writer even states that if it had not been for the dense population of the New England States the American Revolution might never have taken place.

Writing on conditions of his own day, Ruskin saw society as a growing mechanism where man was a mere machine or part of a great machine. In his book, *Democracy's Second Chance*, Mr. George Boyle sees rural life as an organism incompatible with a mechanistic society. In rural life is found the principle of life. In it man finds use for all the faculties with which he has been endowed. The mechanism lacks a soul; the organism possesses life. This to many is merely a feeble abstraction. It is, nonetheless, a principle for the refounding of agrarian society. Abstract principles are lasting. The objection really is, and this is valid by reason of necessity, that to the majority abstractions do not present themselves in clear-cut examples. Leaders are the men who have the insight required to bring before the minds of our people the application in the work-a-day world around us of apparently useless abstractions.

From the several evil effects of the desertion of the soil for city life it is not surprising that in legislation for post-war days provision is made for a wide-scale return to rural life. Make country living attractive and watch the pendulum swing, for the trek of man has ever been in the direction in which his desires are most fully realized.

AUSTIN MacKENNA, '45

MY FISHING TRIP

It was entirely my own fault. I cannot blame anyone else for causing me to go through the most harrowing experience of my life. It lasted for only a day, but what a day that was! The reason it happened was that I forgot the old adage: "Even a fish wouldn't get into trouble if he kept his mouth shut." I talked.

My little cousin came to visit me while I was home on vacation one summer. During our conversation, I asked if he liked trout fishing. He said that he liked the sport, but

that he could never catch more than two or three fish each time he went fishing.

"Only two or three fish?" I cried, alarmed that any relative of mine could be such a poor angler. "Why, Jimmie, when I was your age, I used to go fishing with a bent pin for a hook and catch as many as forty fish, never less than twenty."

"Will you take me fishing tomorrow and show me how it's done?" he asked.

I grabbed the bait like a sucker. "We'll go early tomorrow morning," I promised.

It is very easy to promise to do something in the future, when you are settled in a comfortable chair enjoying your pipe, but to carry out that promise, especially when it involves getting up at half past six in the morning, is quite another matter. However, with Jimmie bouncing around my room at that unearthly hour, I had to get up. It seemed that my notion that "early" meant nine o'clock was not universally held.

The expedition did not look the least bit enticing in the cold light of early morning, but after I had eaten breakfast, I felt that I might have an interesting time that day after all. What an optimist I was. I actually thought in my silly mind that it would be possible for me to get some pleasure from the trip.

We started off in high spirits. I carried the lunch which my mother had thoughtfully provided for us, and Jimmie had two hooks and lines in his pocket. Of course, Jimmie's dog, which I foolishly thought to be an ordinary, everyday dog, came too. I was under the impression that I had on a comfortable pair of shoes and felt quite jaunty as we set out.

We reached the brook and went to break off small saplings for rods. Jimmie broke a long one off in no time, but I tugged and pulled until my hands were sore. It just would not break off. It didn't help my temper a bit to fail with Jimmie watching me, so in desperation I broke off a small switch about three feet long. I passed it off by saying I liked a short rod better.

I cached our lunch and put the lines on our rods while Jimmie dug worms out of the bank for our bait. Since my rod was too short I had to do quite a bit of manoeuvring to

get to a suitable place, and before I was situated he had caught two nice fish. I am thankful to this day that he forgot that I was to show him how to catch fish. He was on the opposite side of the stream and soon moved out of sight. Then the trouble started.

I had just got my hook in a place where I could see a school of fish, when that disciple of Satan that Jimmie loosely referred to as a dog decided to go swimming in that particular spot. He dived with such force that I doubt that Isaak Walton could have caught any of those fish for a week.

Muttering to myself, I struggled out of the place and went farther down the stream. I spied a promising place that I could just reach by standing on a log that projected into the stream. I had a bite in a short time, and landed a half pound trout. With one desperate flip he broke clear of the hook and fell into the water. There he wriggled his tail at me a few times and swam away.

Now my bait was gone. I looked in the soft clay of the bank for worms as Jimmie had done, but they all seemed to be allergic to me. After about five minutes of grubbing with my bare hands I found a small one. In spite of several broken finger nails I managed to bait my hook. I tiptoed out on the log again.

The fish that took my bait was one of those diabolical fellows that love to see an angler's hook caught in some object, especially if it is some object other than his own mouth. When he disappeared under the log, I tugged, but the line did not come. My hook was solidly caught in there. No amount of juggling would get it loose, and my rod was too short to reach down and free it. I did not dare lose the hook for it was the only one I had, and I did not want Jimmie to look upon me as the kind of angler that gets hooks caught and cannot get them free. As I was debating the proposition of wading in to free the hook with my hand, my decision was made for me. I slipped, and the first thing I knew I was sitting in three feet of water. With as much good grace as I could muster under the circumstances, I freed my hook, climbed out, and moved on.

The next good fishing hole I came to was a rather wide part of the stream. After I had found another worm, I tried to cast out to the deep part. My first cast was short and on

the second attempt I felt a tightening in the seat of my pants. My fears were realized. The hook was firmly embedded in the seat of my trousers. I tried to get it to slip out, but it would not come. I then tried to pull it out, but the cloth gave way in the wrong places, and the hook brought with it a large jagged piece of material that had formerly belonged to my trousers.

Too disgruntled to fish any more, I called to Jimmie and started back to get our lunch. He caught up to me and proudly showed me his gad of seventeen fairly large trout. I told him that I had caught eighteen and had left them back in the bushes.

It happened that the dog had decided to have lunch about half an hour before we did. All that was left for us was a few scraps of paper. I aimed a few kicks at him, but he kept annoyingly out of reach.

I took a firm stand against the idea of staying any longer, but Jimmie insisted on going back and looking for my mythical fish. While I waited for him, I tried to light my pipe, but my matches were wet. For that matter I was all wet, and was practically frothing at the mouth.

Jimmie decided to give up the ghost about fifteen minutes later, and then we started home. I shall never forget that walk. My erstwhile comfortable shoes suddenly sprouted sharp nails that cut into my feet mercilessly. I had to crawl into the bushes and hide when I saw anyone coming on the road because my clothes, particularly my pants, were not fit to wear in public.

The worst part of it all came when I got home. I thought my family would never stop laughing. The fact that

My brother applied the finishing touches. Two weeks later, when I was beginning to hope that they had finally forgotten all about my misfortune, I received the first copy of a five year subscription to *Rod and Reel*.

—FRANCIS CORCORAN, '46