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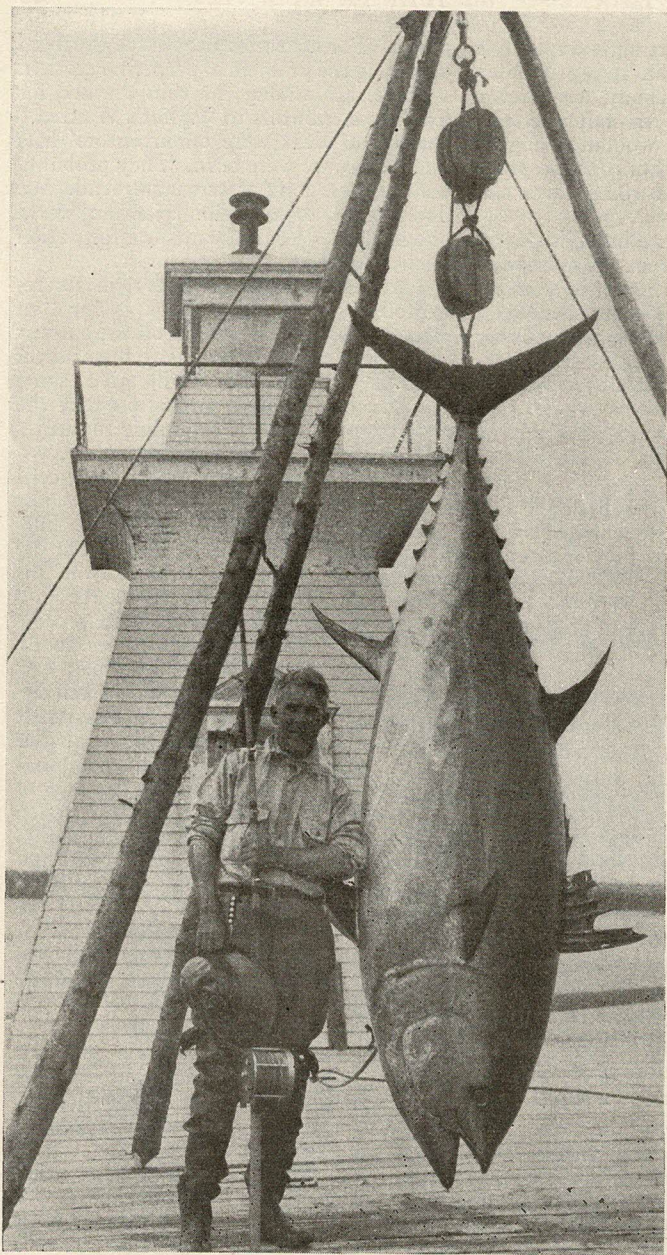
Bumps!

By Albert Payson

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My Adventures As A Fisherman

By Zane Grey



Zane Grey, famous author, whose books have sold far into the millions, standing by a 758-pound tuna fish, which he caught in Nova Scotia. This is the largest fish ever taken on a rod and line. In the accompanying article Mr. Grey tells the great story of his battle with this fish

My mother was taking me on a stage ride into the country to visit an aunt. I had the joy of sitting beside the stage driver. At the foot of a long hill he halted the horses. The July day was hot and the road furnished little shade.

A tiny stream of water came down the hillside, along the road, in some places making little pools. It so happened that from my high perch I could look down into a clear pool directly beneath me. What I saw transfixed me in strange rapture. Against the sunlit, amber depths of this little pool, shone a wondrous fish creature that came to the surface and snapped up a bug. It flashed silver and rose. It had a green back covered with black specks.

"Oh, what's that?" I gasped, clutching the driver, and pointing down with a quivering finger.

The good-natured man leaned over to look.

"That's a chub," he replied. "Boy, you've got sharp eyes."

"Chub!" I exclaimed, under my breath. "Could I catch him?"

"Reckon so, if we had time. All you'd need would be a stick, a piece of cord, a bent pin, an' a grasshopper."

I LEANED far out to hold the last glimpse of my first fish, and as the stage started I saw the chub dart into the shadow of the bank. My rapture faded to a sickening sense of loss. No bird, no animal, no toy had ever before roused the yearning so suddenly born in me for this shiny, speckled little fish. Before the stage got to the top of that hill I was a changed boy. Childish dreams expanded into wonderful enchantments. I peered into the woods along the road, through the beech and oak trees, and

on into the green obscurity with dreamy eyes haunted by a tiny brook.

Shortly after I left college, chance drew me to the beautiful Delaware River, and eventually I went to live on its Pennsylvania shore at Lackawaxen. It was a mountain river, fed by clear, cold brooks, characterized by winding bends, swift channels, deep eddies and rocky rifts. And it was full of fierce-fighting, bronze-backed black bass.

I fished the Delaware and the streams flowing into it for twelve years. There I came to know and love the lordly white pine trees, the trailing arbutus and mountain laurel and rhododendron, the fragrant arbor vitae and the rare fringed gentian. Goldenrod and purple asters lined the trails along the river. I haunted the lonely cliffs. Grouse and red squirrels, foxes and woodchucks, hermit thrushes and meadow larks—a great variety of animals and birds became known to me while I was fishing.

Then the brook trout, finny denizens of the rushing, babbling, singing amber-colored brooks, what measureless joy and content and knowledge came to me in pursuit of them! Loneliness! Solitude! The music of running water! The moan of the wind in the pines! The beauty of the sun-flecked forest! Violets hidden beside mossy stones! Who does not love the wild woods, the spreading, moving foliage overhead, the rustle of leaves, the sweet, plaintive notes of birds, the feeling of protection?

IN THOSE days I learned the peace and wisdom to be found on placid lakes, where the shores were shaded and beds of pond lilies reached out toward deep water. Here under the green lily pads lurked the wolf-jawed, ferocious muskellunge, a fish that fought like a tiger, that would snap at the oars of your boat, and bite you with his last gasp. His environment taught the lore of the lakes, the mystery of still waters, the splendor of the open cloud-navigated sky.

Not until recent years did I acquire any knowledge of the Atlantic salmon, except from many books. But I was prepared to appreciate this aristocrat of all fishes, this silver lord of the rivers of the North, even though I was not yet educated in the infinitely delicate and dexterous art needful to catch him. The salmon is a white gleam. He is beyond understanding. To make him rise to a dainty and colored tuft of feathers concealing a hook, to fasten that hook in his steel jaw, to see him burst out of the water, a curled rainbow magnificent to behold, to follow him on boat

IN THIS article I am replying to thousands of my readers who have written to ask me why I spend so much time fishing—why do I catch innumerable fish, little and big?

Now, I know that it will not be possible for me to do justice to the lure and beauty and wholesomeness of fishing; to the thrill and excitement and danger it engenders; to the incredible patience, the endless endurance necessary; the simplicity and eternal boyishness, the peace, the serenity, the fight, the fun and the tragedy, the glory and the dream fishing keeps alive in me.

Beyond and above all other outdoor recreations, pleasures, sports, I place fishing. It is physical, intellectual, spiritual. It is as primitive as hunting, but without the brutality; it has a religion all its own. It has a literature and a history far more elevating than most hunters and sportsmen know.

When I was five years old I saw my first fish. That sight was an epoch in my life:

or foot, breathless, thrilling, prayerfully letting him leap, to outwit him, whip him, catch him—this for a fisherman is the supremest essence of that strange elation and prowess I am so vainly attempting to describe.

THEN there is the bonefish—that lightning-swift, elusive fish of the coral reefs. What does it not take to learn to catch him? First of all, it takes years! No book I ever wrote contained words forceful or numerous enough, even if they were all transposed into fishing technique, to describe fully the trick of catching bonefish. It could not be done.

The bonefish is silver-sided and green-backed, a perfect example of protective coloration. He lives in deep water, but swims up on the coral flats with the rising tide. He feeds on crabs and crustaceans, which he crushes in the bony plates of his jaws. Wary, elusive, cunning, finicky, now bold, and again exceedingly timid, so delicate a biter that only the expert can feel him, hard to hook, and swift as a steel projectile in his incomparable rush for deep water, the bonefish is the most difficult fish in the world to catch.

Long bright days, with the dark green mangrove bank close at hand, and, outside, the pale green water leading to the blue, are the setting for bonefishing. All day sometimes—waiting for the exquisitely delicate bite that you cannot always feel! Sometimes, as you sit in the boat, still as the lonely watching heron there on the bank, you will see a bonefish come up close. He will turn so that the light changes. Then his pale shape grows indistinct; but you can see the bold, black, suspicious eye. Then he is gone. Vanished! As if by magic. And all you have left is a little swirl of roily water.

Hours and days are nothing in the pursuit of this extraordinary fish. Time and incredible patience! The bonefish experts, men who have spent their lives,

all their fishing years, in pursuit of this hunter of the amber reefs, stalk them, hunt them, but no one else can hope to succeed with that intricate method.

Any fisherman, however, will absorb what comes with bonefishing. He will feel the sun and the wind. Time will cease to mean anything. The sweet, salt scent that breathes from off the sea, the warm, dank odors from the mangrove swamp, the sailing man-of-war birds and the diving terns, the haunting mourn of the surf out on the reef—these will become an unforgettable memory, while the lesson of patience and perseverance and unquenchable spirit is learned, while the beauty of the trade-wind clouds and all that pertains to the languorous tropics will become part of his being.

And after watching the little hermit crab, that trails along the white beach in his stolen shell, loving his life so well, the fisherman will have added to his experience something more of the mystery of nature, some intimation of a great and inscrutable Presence, omniscient and everlasting.

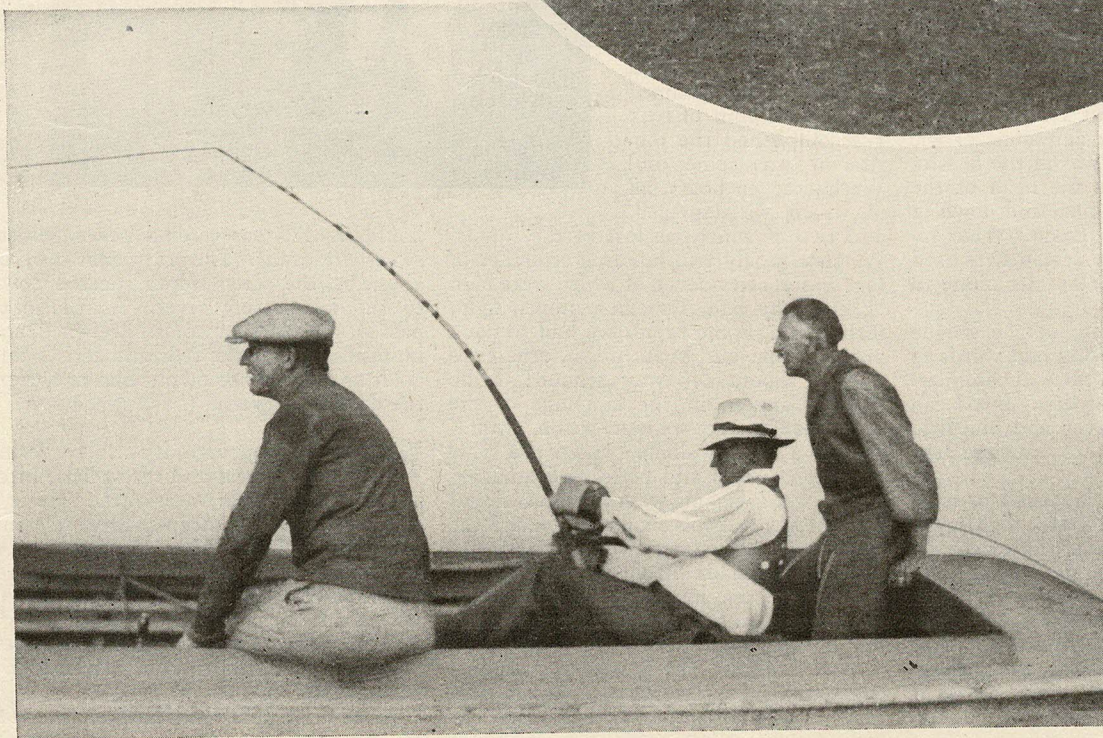
Tarpon, the *savalo* or silver king, was

among the first salt-water fish that came under my experience. I fished first for him in the Panuco River, at Tampico, and later at Long Key, Florida, and in the Everglades. He attains a length of seven and eight feet. He is a giant herring, with great silver scales, a hooked jaw, huge black eyes, and a long streamer on his dorsal fin. At times, according to tides possibly, he is a pig to eat; at others he will not bite anything. When hooked, he leaps prodigiously, cracking the water, splashing spray everywhere, endangering the life of the fisherman, and very often throwing the hook. To make his acquaintance a fisherman goes into the mouths of rivers, estuaries and lagoons, into the mangrove swamps, where life for man or bird or beast is hard, bitter, forbidding, salty, like the sea.

TO CATCH sailfish, on the other hand, it is necessary to venture out to the Gulf Stream, that mysterious river within the sea, blue and deep, ever turbulent under the trades, mostly white-capped, and always balmy with its tidings from far-off



(In the oval) A photograph which gives a good idea of how much the tuna can weigh. It took four men to drag this big fish to the scales, and three to lift it from the ground, although the scales were provided with large pulleys like those shown on the opposite page. (Left) Zane Grey feeding out a little line to a strong-pulling fish he has hooked. Mr. Grey is one of the most widely read living authors, and he is also one of the most skillful of living fishermen!





(Above) Zane Grey catching his first glimpse of Galápagos. He often goes to remote places to pursue his favorite sport, which is fishing. (Right) Mr. Grey standing by the world's record sailfish, which weighed 135 pounds, and was ten feet one inch long. The landing of this fish was one of his remarkable exploits as an angler



tropic shores. How different sailfishing is from bonefishing! Yet both require much the same technique, except the former demands stamina to stand the heaving, restless ocean.

To one not born with salt in his blood—and I surely was not—becoming inured to the pitch and toss of a boat is a matter of long suffering. For years I was seasick, yet so strong was the lure of the Gulf Stream, so wonderful the game of sailfishing that I endured. That is the splendid, perhaps the best, reward of the earnest fisherman—the developing of the power to stick to a task, and to finish.

TO EVERY fisherman, patience is a prime virtue. It took me three years to learn to catch the steelhead trout of Oregon. Constant thought, and practice at flycasting at home, and six weeks each autumn of action and strenuous labor on the Rogue River finally brought the knowledge and experience necessary to take these most gamy and wonderful of all trout.

Rainbow trout, cut-throats, Dolly Varden and California trout I had taken in several Western states; and some of the best fishing I ever had was in the brushy little desert streams at the head of the Little Colorado, in Arizona, and down in the wild, ragged Tonto Basin. What labors of Hercules! Desert streams are hard enough to reach and follow, let alone to fish.

What steelhead fishing in the Rogue means to me I can scarcely find words to make clear. It would take a volume—which I shall write some day. But I can at least describe the river and the fish, and leave my readers to imagine the rest.

The Rogue River is supposed to have its source under Crater Lake, high up in the mountains of Oregon. This lake occupies a vast, deep crater of a volcano. It is a violet blue in color and as cold as ice water. The river bursts out in a marvelous spring, and goes rushing, tumbling, singing down the steps of the magnificent forests, a hundred miles or so before it reaches any valley to speak of. But it

never slows up. Confined to its deep, narrow, rocky channel, spreading and brawling at intervals over bars and rapids, it flows on, green and beautiful, at last to enter the deep, rugged gorge below Grants Pass. Then indeed it becomes a rogue. With mountain brooks adding volume, and with a steeper descent toward the sea, it becomes a river to fear and to love.

It fell to me to be the first and only fisherman to carry to a successful finish the plan of shooting the Rogue River from below Grants Pass, through the canyons of the Siskiyou and Coast Ranges to the Pacific. For three years I planned it. The autumn of 1925 I accomplished the job. And it was some job! We had seven boats, all of which we damaged, and two of which we lost in the rapids. We shot nearly two hundred stretches of fast water, sixty-seven of which were bad. When I say bad, I mean perilous, ugly, forbidding. Some rapids we had to pack around, rope our boats down, others we had to shoot. No way around! Mule Creek Canyon, in the language of the half-breed natives we met, was a "wolf." It was a narrow defile, where the river grew constricted and performed amazing tricks. Back-lashing waves, bulging ridges in center, whirlpools six feet deep, and the Narrows, a place only twelve feet wide—these have made Mule Creek Canyon famous to the lumberjacks and those fishermen who go down the Rogue to the sea.

We "bridged" the Narrows, and that colloquialism of the natives meant jamming a boat tight between the cliffs. It

took us a whole day of heart-breaking toil to pack our outfit and lower our boats down Blossom Bar. That is a rapid which would do justice to those of the green-white, thundering Athabasca of the North.

But there were many long-gliding stretches of river which were a joy to traverse. Here in all their glory we beheld the magnificent firs of Oregon, the white cascades leaping down the mountains, the amber-colored cliffs, and the moss- and fern-covered

boulders. All was verdant, green, golden, sweetly fragrant. The gray peaks towered above us, the steep slopes sheered down to the murmuring river. As the days passed, the autumn colors deepened and intensified, until the reds and cherises and golds and purples stood out blazingly from the dark, rich green.

HERE I had opportunity to observe one of the strangest and rarest little birds in the world—the water-ouzel. He is a haunter of lonely, deep-shaded streams, where the water rushes over rocks. At dawn, his wild, plaintive, sweet notes thrilled me. He builds his nest like a swallow, of mud or clay, and pastes it under a shelf of rock, above the water. How few people in the world have seen the nest of a water-ouzel!

All this risk and (Continued on page 168)

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My Adventures as a Fisherman

(Continued from page 28)

work and treasure in the pursuit of steel-head! Yet catching these opal-hued fresh-run fish from the sea was only a part of the splendid achievement of such a trip.

The steelhead runs up the river from the sea to spawn. He loves the swift water. He lingers behind rocks and below rapids. A favorite place for him to tarry is just above a swift green incline of water that shoots down into a maelstrom. When it suits his lordly taste he will rise to a fly. And that rise is comparable to the rise of the Atlantic salmon. He hooks himself. Then! There is no telling what he will do, but mostly he leaps and runs for the rapid. To follow him and hold him! That is impossible if he is big and heavy. But in the end, if you do subdue him, and slide him out on sand or moss, you see a fish creature as delicately and exquisitely lovely as nature has ever formed and painted. Every line is grace, strength, speed. He is silver, opal, green, covered with tiny dots that glow like colored lights. He has a fierce jaw, and a black eye with the look of an eagle.

It is a far cry from such dainty, deft angling to the pursuit of the great tigers of the ocean, the swordfish and tuna. These are wanderers of the open seas. There are several varieties of these fish: the Marlin, the purple and striped leaper that furnishes the most spectacular performance; the blue fin, the yellow fin, and the Allison or long-fin tuna, and, lastly, old *Ziphius Gladius*, the broad-sworded gladiator of the Seven Seas.

The broadbill swordfish is indeed the king of ocean fishes. He grows to the weight of a thousand pounds. He has tremendous power and speed. Pugnacious by nature, he fears neither ship, shark, whale, nor man. Many a boat has been pierced by that long, deadly rapier. He has killed many boatmen. He is intelligent, crafty, indifferent. He knows the use of his long sword, and that is why he is so hard to catch.

THE broadbill-swordfishermen, and they are few in number, must have special equipment, unlimited time, and the most incredible patience and endurance.

You roam the sea in a high-power boat, searching for the sickle-shaped fins of a swordfish. They are hard to find. Sometimes you go days without sighting one. I spent nineteen days once, all day, and every day, on the glaring sea, without finding a broadbill. You never wet your line until you find your fish.

Then to get him to bite is a problem. Only about one fish out of fifteen will take a bait. If he does strike it, a further problem is to hook him. Lastly, if you do hook him, it is almost impossible to whip him. I have nine-hour, eight-hour, and many shorter battles to my credit, all without catching the swordfish. My brother, R. C., has the record fight of eleven and one-half hours. This monster was hooked at noon one day, and at almost midnight that night he began to feed on flying-fish. We had to cut him off.

Broadbill swordfishing is, to my mind, the greatest game that the outdoors af-

fords. It is superior to tiger or elephant hunting. The skill, patience, endurance, and strength required make it a test. To start out, day after day, roaming often a hundred miles in nine hours, to stand the action and glare of the sea, to stick at it through weariness and the tremendous defeats and disappointments so common to the game, to try for a second fish after one has whipped you—in a word, to finish with a swordfish to your credit, that is the supreme and last test to which an angler can be put.

But, much as these things mean to me, I owe a still greater debt to broadbill fishing. I have found that while roaming the sea my creative mind works for me. Many of my stories are dreamed, lived, mastered, out on the lonely, heaving sea. The long, slow swell, the waste of green, the strange fowl peculiar to salt water, the schools of fish, the sounding whales with their immense flukes high in the air, the cloud-shadows sailing the gleaming expanse, the gradually developed sense of the infinity of the deep, its grandeur, its appalling beauty, its remorseless cruelty, its inscrutable relation of motherhood to all living creatures—these sensations and impressions, with their thought-provoking power, are what come to the fisherman.

IT FELL to my lot to catch the largest fish ever taken on a rod and line, a blue-fin tuna, 758 pounds in weight, which I landed in Nova Scotia, August 22d, 1924.

At dawn we had run down the bay to be on hand when the fishermen pulled their herring nets. We proceeded, then, toward the end of the net zone, where our other boat had halted. Suddenly I saw R. C. and Captain Mitchell waving to us.

"Hook her up, Cap," I shouted to my boatman.

"Shore, there's somethin' doin'," he remarked.

It did not take many moments for us to reach the boat. R. C. yelled and pointed. I turned to see two net boats near at hand; a fisherman in one of them waved to us, at the same time throwing herring overboard. Instantly, a boiling swirl appeared on the water, just where the herring had alighted.

"Say, did you see that?" queried Bob, turning his sharp blue glance on me.

We sped over to this boat, and Bob lifted the net-buoy out of the water, and up on our bow.

"Big tuna here," said the fisherman. "He's taken two herring. I saw his head and his eye."

"Thanks for waving us," I replied. The fisherman was a tall, lean chap, dark and weatherbeaten, and as he stood there in his old boat, holding the net in his hands, with fish scales shining all over his rubber clothes, I paid him a silent tribute. There is something great about fishermen who live by the sea.

I threw my bait overboard, and let it drift away and sink until I could not see the end of the leader. Sid had stopped the engines. Bob was already grinding chum. I coiled fifteen feet of line on the stern and held it in my hand, while I straddled my

rod, and gazed into the beautiful green depths with fascinated eyes. I was watching to see the tuna show again. Something would happen soon, but I hardly thought I should have a bite. We all expected to see the fish come up to take one of the herring the fisherman threw out.

R. C. and Captain Mitchell, and son Romer stood on the deck of the other boat, just outside the zone of nets, and they were observing us. The morning, the place, our situation seemed perfect for some extraordinary adventure. I felt it. Three of the fishermen's boats were near us, one just a few yards away. The men had stopped work to watch us, very curious, jovial, and with good-natured unconcealed doubt. They thought I was in for a bite—and broken tackle.

Suddenly, I felt a slow, strong tug. The line slipped through my hand.

"He's got it!" I yelled. I flashed a quick glance at R. C. He waved. His sharp eyes had seen the line pay out. All the coiled line slipped overboard. I sat down, and stripped off several yards more. It was a slow, sweeping movement.

WHEN the line straightened out I jerked with all my weight and strength. The response was a tremendous downward pull on my rod. My arms cracked. My body, braced as it was by my feet against the boat, lurched over hard. Sid had the engines roaring and the launch moving. The fishermen cheered us. My line slipped off the big reel. But it did not fly off, as in former runs.

This tuna showed no lightning-swift movements at the onset. What was worse, however, he ran straight in-shore toward a net. He took about two hundred feet of line before we got going satisfactorily after him. We were not saying anything. If I had spoken I could have voiced only fears. The excitement of the strike had not left me. Besides that I had a horrible expectancy of some sure and quick calamity.

The tuna sheered just short of the net. Probably he ran to it and turned. Then he headed toward another. In fact, we were hemmed in on three sides by nets. They were all within two hundred yards. "He'll go out to sea. Don't worry," yelled Bob.

As my tuna had headed straight for another net, I could not accept Bob's optimistic assertion. The action of the fish was not slow, but I gained a little line. When I was about to give way to despair the tuna sheered abruptly to the right. This brought our launch toward another net—the third. We had headed back almost toward the boats, and the spot where I had hooked him. Hope revived in me. He might be looking for a place to get out to sea.

As good fortune would have it, the tuna made another swerve away from a net, and found the lane that led out to open water. I had to whoop.

"What'd I tell you?" shouted Bob. "He didn't want to run in them nets any more than we wanted him too."

Sid bent a beaming red face upon me. "What's your legs wobbling for?" he queried. Indeed my legs were shaking, especially the right one. My knees seemed to have no bones or muscles in them. No feeling! I had not observed this proof of unusual agitation, until Sid called my attention to it. But it was an old affection,

not experienced for a long time, and it returned with a vigor and familiarity calculated to make up for absence.

The tuna got up speed; still, he did not compel us to race after him. He took a couple of hundred yards of line before we regulated our pace to his. And instead of heading out to sea he took a straight course across the mouth of the bay, which was three or four miles wide. The nets to our left were close to Gull Rock, and we soon passed them. All seemed clear sailing now. My feelings underwent a change. A great strength seemed to flow into me. I worked so hard that the boys expressed some little fear that I might break off the fish.

"No danger!" I declared. "It's the lightning-swift runs that scare me. This fellow acts differently. He swims deep and doesn't change his pace. But, oh, he's heavy!"

"Reckon he's a buster," observed Bob. "Suppose you try to lead him out to sea."

Whereupon, we got the tuna on our port side and while Sid edged the launch quarteringly out to sea I hauled strenuously on the rod. I lost line. Then we changed our course until I had recovered it, and tried over again. For all I could tell I did not budge him an inch from the bee-line he had taken toward Blue Island. When we had covered three miles or more, and were slowly approaching the ragged black reefs reaching out from this island I began to grow alarmed. Captain Mitchell yelled for us to turn the fish out to sea.

"Turn this fish!" I yelled. "Ha! Ha!"

When we arrived within a half mile of the point of Blue Island we abandoned any hope of heading the tuna out to sea. He was well under the reef now, and he might be turned up the bay.

"Boys, we'll take a chance," I decided. "If he means to go for the rocks we'll have it out with him."

Bob shook his head dubiously. He was plainly worried. Sid also showed signs of perturbation.

"Run up on him," I ordered.

WE CLOSED in on the fish, and I hauled and reeled in line until we were perhaps less than two hundred feet from him. Then I shut down on the drag and set determinedly to the task ahead.

The south side of Blue Island showed its naked black teeth wreathed in white. Already we were lifted on the ground swells that heaved us slowly and gracefully. We were riding hills of green water. Even the fear that had begun to grip me could not wholly kill my mounting exhilaration.

Bob stood in the bow, like a mariner searching ahead for reefs. He made a strong figure standing there, his sharp-cut profile expressing courage and intelligence.

"Shore, we'll stay with him," he said. "I'm not worryin' about hittin' a reef. It's the line that bothers me. If it touches a rock—snap!"

"I'll go so far and no farther," replied Sid stubbornly.

"But, man, you've got two engines heah, an' a boat followin'!" expostulated Bob.

Then they argued, while I toiled on that irresistible tuna. I had begun to sweat, perhaps from fright as much as exertion. For it was cold sweat! But the time and place lent me more strength than I had



I had an old lather brush. It was worn and weary. Its bristles were down to less than an inch. It was an antique, and had that kind of odor. But I could work it. That's because I use the product I sell—Mennen Shaving Cream.

A new brush seemed indicated. I bought one. I bought some more. Home-make and import. From \$2.50 up—way up. My ambition was not to make a collection, but I succeeded, yes sir, as if with grim determination. None of 'em would do.

Then we developed the Mennen Lather Brush. Oh, man! It's the real thing. Soft and silky. Won't prick the skin. Works up the lather quickly, richly and plenty. I never knew there was so much lather in the world. Spreads smoothly over the cheek area and snuggles into the corners, too. Easily the equal of any \$4-priced brush—if not better. I buried the old brush, with tears in my eyes, and buried it deep.

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ever possessed before. I bent the big Murphy hickory double. I put arms, shoulders, back, and weight, with all the bracing power in my legs, into united effort to work slowly up to my limit. No sudden violence would have changed that fish. It would only have broken the tackle. My plan was to keep at him slowly and hard, all the time.

When we were a quarter of a mile off the end of the island, with my tuna heading straight in, the situation narrowed down to the climax. I had no thought then of the dramatic side of it. But I was filled with emotions freed by this struggle, and the hazard, and the physical things impossible not to see and hear and feel.

BLUE ISLAND seemed a mountain, green on top, black at the sea line, a bleak, jagged, precipitous shore against which the great swells burst ponderously. The white spray shot high. I saw the green waves rise out of the calm sea, and move in with majestic regularity, to crash and boom into white, seething ruin. Then the water falling and running back off the rocks sounded like the rapids of a river. The feel of the sea under me was something at that moment to take heed of. If I had not been hooked to what must be a gigantic tuna, too large to be swift, I would have grown panic-stricken.

"So far and no farther!" called out Sid. "You'll do as I tell you," I replied sharply.

"All right. If we smash it won't be my fault. I can swim," he retorted.

"Swim! It'd shore do you a lot of good heah," retorted Bob. "But I'm tellin' you, we're safe. The big boat is just behind. Captain Mitchell is out in the skiff. Let's stay with this son-of-a-gun. He must be some fish!"

"Boys, I feel him slowing up!" I called out eagerly. "He's bumped into the bottom."

"Work all the harder, then," advised Bob.

I gazed behind me to see Captain Mitchell perhaps a hundred feet from us, and beyond him the big launch rode the swells. R. C. stood in the bow. Romer waved from the deck. I could hear his shrill, wild cry above the roar of the surf. Whatever else the moment held it surely was full of stinging excitement.

We reached a point perhaps a hundred yards from the shore. It seemed closer because of the thunder of water and the looming rocks. The reef on the point stood out to our right, beyond us. Far to our left another reef extended. Low, sharp, ugly rocks showed at times, cutting the white water.

"It's now or never!" I yelled to the boys. "This is no fun. But we're in it. Now, let's do the right thing, and still hang. . . . Sid, edge her off a little. We'll head him out of here, or break him off."

Still, I did not mean to break the tuna off. I could trust that line, so long as it did not touch a rock. Putting on the small drag, something that I had never done before, and screwing the larger one tighter, I increased my exertions. I determined to turn that fish. Somehow, I had not shared the opinion of the boys that the tuna had gone inshore to cut off on the rocks. I pulled until at the end of every sweep I saw red.

Gradually, the line slipped off the reel.

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Gradually, the launch worked her bow out from the shore. Gradually, the tuna responded to the great strain put upon him. Of course the elastic rod and the perfect reel saved the line from parting. It slipped off the drags just short of the breaking point.

All I had ever learned in swordfishing about the limit of tackle, strength, and the conserving of muscular force, came into play here. Had I not had such long experience the task would have been hopeless. It was a terrific fight. We dared not go any closer to where the swells smashed in green-white mounds on the rocks.

I did not seem to be conscious of weakness. But I was of strain. Never had I subjected my body to such concerted and sustained effort. When I heard Bob yelling, I knew we were turning the fish, though I could not hear what he said. The roar was almost deafening. Our launch glided and rose, glided on and fell, with easy motion. The violence of the seas was all inshore.

Across my taut line, that sang like a telephone wire in cold wind, I saw the notched noses of the black rocks, the white, seething rise and fall of foamy waves, the angry curl and break, the short spurts of water. Beyond the reef tumbled the breakers along the inside of the island. Never had a given point in my angling experiences seemed so unattainable!

ONLY a few hundred yards! How slowly we moved! Could I last it out? I had begun the climax of this part of the fight within two hundred feet of my fish. As I worked I had lost line until over seven hundred feet were off the reel. The more feet out, the more pressure on the line! It looked like a wet fiddlestring, and it twanged off my thumb and flipped a fine spray into my face.

But hopeful indications were not wanting: The launch was not outside the danger zone, beyond the end of the reef, even if we ran straight, but the tuna had been turned broadside to the shore. That sustained me. What I had gained I would not surrender. I held to that slow, ponderous, terrific regularity of heave and wind. My sight grew dim. My heart seemed about to crack. My breast labored. My back had no sensation. I could no longer feel the bind of the leather harness.

There seems no limit to human endurance. Always I could hang on a moment longer. And I held on until my tuna rounded the end of the reef. Bob whooped the glorious news. Then I released the drags and lowered my rod to rest on the barrel of bait in front of me. Bob had stacked cushions on it. What unutterable relief! I seemed numb all over. I heard the line running off the reel, and also the accelerated working of the engines.

"Careful—slow—till—I—get my—breath," I panted.

"Shore. Let him have line. He's runnin' to his funeral now," shouted Bob.

The din of the surf subsided. Where dark rocks and white waves had obstructed my vision, I now saw with clearing sight the wide shining waters of the bay and the beautiful forested shore line. My tuna took four hundred yards of line, with our launch going fairly fast, while I was recovering myself. Then I approached further work gradually. In half an hour I had all the line I wanted back on the reel,

and we were four miles farther up the bay.

Here the large boat, with R. C. and Romer and Captain Mitchell, gayly industrious with cameras of all kinds, cruised round us, and up alongside.

"Must be a whopper!" yelled Romer. "Don't work too hard, Dad. Don't let him get away. Don't give him any rest!"

Impossible as it was to follow so much varied advice, it struck me as being sound. I recovered surprisingly, considering the effort I had made, and soon got down to hard work again. This tuna had somehow inspired me with a conviction that he was bigger than any I had hooked before. I must not spare anything. How strange it was to feel him at the end of my line, to know he was monstrous, almost unconquerable, to realize that he was indeed a tuna, though I had not had one glimpse of him. He swam deep. He never made a wave on the surface. While I fought him to the best of my reduced strength he towed the launch. Oftener and oftener Sid threw out the clutch. Then he shut off the engine entirely.

"Shore, that'll take the sap out of him," declared Bob.

We seemed to be a ruthless combination of skill, cunning, experience, and strength, equipped with especial instruments, all for the destruction of that poor luckless tuna.

The incongruity, the unfairness of it, struck me keenly. Why did I do this sort of thing? I could not answer then any more than at other times when the vexatious problem had presented itself—always at the extreme moments of the struggle. Afterward, when I asked myself the same questions, I could answer them to my satisfaction. But just then the sport seemed inhuman and unjustifiable. The psychological changes an angler goes through while fighting a fish adversary vastly his physical superior, the capture of which seems a vital, thrilling need, are varied and extreme, some swift as flashes of emotion and others long-drawn-out and compelling.

"THAT'S a big fish," observed Bob, for the twentieth time. He said it meditatively and seriously, as if talking only to himself. Bob was always thinking fish.

I was intensely curious to have a look at my fish, and bewailed his deep-fighting temper. He crossed the bay with us, rather close to the Two Sisters, the only reefs in the upper waters of this harbor, and if he had turned in their direction we would have had more serious work cut out for us. But he passed by them and turned again toward the sea. This was eminently satisfactory.

He took us back down the bay straight for Gull Rock. Three more miles of stubborn flight! When we got within a mile of the nets off the rock we all agreed that it was high time for us to contest this flight back toward the open sea. The brunt of such contest fell upon me. So we fought it out right there in that wide space of deep water, and I was the vanquished one. In the end I had to give in to him and let him tow us, while I confined my efforts to turning him from a straight course.

The bay here was as smooth as a mill-pond, waved only by gentle swells. My tuna came up. What a wave he pushed ahead of him! Then he roared on the surface, showing first his sickle dorsal fin, then his black wide tail, then the blue

bulge of his back, round as a huge tree trunk, and at last his magnificent head, out of the water to his eyes.

"Oh! Oh!" bawled Sid, wildly.

"Some socker!" ejaculated Bob. "I said he was a big fish!"

To me he seemed enormous, supremely beautiful and unattainable. He flashed purple, bronze, silver-gold. When he went under he left a surging abyss in the water, a gurgling whirlpool. This sight again revived me. I was a new man—at least for a little while. I turned that tuna 'round. I pulled the launch toward him. I held him so that he towed us stern first. In short, I performed, for the time being, miraculous and hitherto unknown feats of rod endurance. I would cheerfully have walked overboard into the sea for that fish. All the same, he took us gradually toward the nets.

"They don't worry me none," said Bob, seeing my growing anxiety and dismay. "We'll go under or cut through. I was afraid of nets at first. But one end of them is free. It drifts with the tides. We can go through a dozen nets. Just you hand it to that tuna and never worry about nets."

Nevertheless, I did worry, and I worked to the extent of all I had left in me. If I had not been able to slow him up, turn him from side to side, I could not have found the heart to keep it up. Many times he swerved to the surface, raising a wave that thrilled me every time I saw it. It was not a wave, but a swell.

Next to that, the boils that rose to the surface never ceased to fascinate me. These were new in my experience. They came when he was swimming along deep, and they would rise to the surface as far as a hundred feet behind him. They were swirls, eddies, powerful circles beginning with a small radius, and spreading until they were whirlpools six feet in diameter. More than any other single detail these breaks on the surface impressed me with the extraordinary tail power of these tunas.

I got the double line over the reel—lost it—got it back again—watched it slip away once more—heaved and wound it in—again, again, again, until my thumbs stung through gloves and stalls, and my wrists and arms were pierced by excruciating pains. Still I heaved on. The ring in the wire leader came out of the water and spun round. How the leader vibrated! Bob leaped on the bow and reached for it.

ONE last supreme effort. It took all I had left. Bent and tense, with bursting heart and failing sight, I got that leader to Bob's eager hand. When the strain was released I fell back, spent and shaking, hot and wet, absolutely all in, and most assuredly conscious of the worst beating ever given to me by a fish. I was thoroughly whipped, and so exhausted that my nerve wavered.

But seeing Bob hang to the leader reinspired me, and so roused my thrilling wonder and speculation that I forgot my pangs. Bob would not let go. The great fish rolled and soused on the surface, thumping the water heavily. He too was tired. He could just wag his tail. . . . But the effect of that wag pulled the launch 'round and 'round. Sid was helping to make it spin by running the engines full reverse and working the wheel. The tuna had his head toward us, and he was

almost within reach of a gaff. We had to back and go 'round with him to keep him from going under us. Bob would haul in six or eight feet of the leader, then lose it, a little at a time. I stood up, the better to see.

The tuna rolled on his side. And then I had my most electrifying shock: He looked as wide as a door and as long as the boat. His color was a changing blaze of silver, gold, amber, purple, and green. He seemed at once frightful and beautiful, fierce and pitiful, a wild creature in the last act of precious life.

Then he changed these tactics. Righting himself, he sheered ahead and with fin out of the water he began to tow the launch. I could not see plainly. But it was evident that he could not swim otherwise than in a circle. The launch was dragged 'round at a fairly rapid rate, as if it were at the mercy of a strong eddy. Finally, the tuna pulled the leader through Bob's hands, so that he was holding by the double line.

"Let go, Bob!" I shouted. "I'll work the leader back."

"But we'll shore have that all to do over again," objected Bob.

"No matter. Let go. I know it's tough, when you had him so near."

Bob did as he was bidden, and again the issue lay between the tuna and me. If I was weaker, so was he. I held him on the double line, so that only a few inches slipped off the reel. And he towed the launch around precisely the same as when Bob had held the leader. He came up about forty feet away, a little to the right of our bow, and turned on his side. Pale green, wonderful shield-like shape! He was fast weakening, and that recalled my vanished strength. I thumbed the reel-drag, tight as I dared; and with left gloved hand I held to the line. It cut through the glove and burned my palm. But I held him. Strangely, we were all quiet now. We had seen him close. I could not look up to ascertain where our other boat was, but I heard the beat of its engine and the yells of the others. I could see only the stunning oval fish-shape, sailing, gliding, like a specter, under the smooth surface. The bow of the boat and Bob's crouched form showed in the tail of my eye.

"THAT fish's a lost fawn-skin," yelled Bob. His quaint mode of speech and Southern twang had never struck me more forcibly. And I shared his conviction about the tuna. I felt that he was beaten.

Letting go of the line, I set to heaving on the rod and whirling the reel. I could hold him, move him, drag him.

"Grab the leader, Bob!" I shouted. "Sid, get ready to jump for the gaff."

A few more powerful pulls brought the leader to Bob. He held it. The magnificent fish rolled and gaped on the surface. Bob drew on the leader, inch by inch at first, then, when he got the tuna coming, foot by foot, until he was close to the bow, head toward us, swimming on his side while Sid backed the boat. When I gave the word Sid threw out the clutch, leaped over the engine box, and grasping the gaff he leaned far over—and lunged back. The detachable gaff pole came loose, leaving the rope in Sid's hands, but the pole hit him hard over the head. He yelled lustily, as furious as if one of us had done it with intent. I could not see the tuna now, but

I heard him begin to splash and pound, harder, faster, until the water flew above us and I could scarcely see Bob.

"Did he make a good job of it?" I yelled fearfully.

"Shore. We got him! An' I'll have a rope 'round his tail in a jiffy," replied Bob.

That gave me license to sit down and let go of the rod, so suddenly a burden. The other boat came up, and we were hailed and cheered.

Captain Pence waved the British flag. Presently, Bob had the tuna safely lassoed, and tied to our stern, where the ponderous thumps from a mighty tail splashed water over me.

"Three hours an' ten minutes!" exclaimed Bob, consulting his watch.

"Seemed a year to me," I replied; but I did not tell them then how that tuna had punished me.

"Well, let's go home," spoke up Sid brightly. "The little launch and the big tackle sure are the dope."

"W-al, where do we all come in?" drawled Bob.

IT TOOK us nearly two hours to tow our catch back up the bay to the breakwater. Every time I looked at him I was sure he grew larger in my sight. When we reached the wharf our eager comrades almost fell overboard to see that fish.

We rigged up three poles with block and tackle, and prepared to haul the tuna up on the wharf. I told Captain Mitchell that I had beaten his world record of 710 pounds. I had no way of knowing, yet somehow I felt absolutely sure of it.

"I hope you have," replied Mitchell, studying the blue and silver monster lying in the water.

The men had a hard time hauling the fish up; and as he came more and more into sight his enormous size grew manifest. Moreover, for me there was something appallingly beautiful about him. At last they had him high enough to lower on the wharf. Then! I was mute. I could not believe my own sight.

"What a grand tuna!" ejaculated Captain Mitchell, in heartfelt admiration and wonder. "Indeed, you have beaten my record! Old man, I congratulate you. I am honestly glad."

They all had something fine to say to me, but I could not reply. I seemed struck dumb by the bulk and beauty of that tuna. My eyes were glued to his noble proportions and his transforming colors. He was dying, and the hues of a tuna change most and are most beautiful at that time. He was shield-shaped, very full and round, and high and long. His back glowed a deep, dark purple; his sides gleamed like mother-of-pearl in a lustrous light; his belly shone a silver white. The little yellow rudders in his tail moved from side to side, pathetic and reproachful reminders to me of the life and spirit that were passing. If it were possible for a man to fall in love with a fish, that was what happened to me. I hung over him, spellbound and incredulous.

"Well, I always said it was coming to you," averred R. C. and I gauged his appreciation by his tone and the significance of his words.

When I exhibited my tackle to the native fishermen who lived near the breakwater, their interest and amaze knew no

bounds. They could hardly believe that so huge and powerful a fish, the kind that had often smashed their boats, gone through net and weir, could have been held and subdued on that little line. In truth, the thirty-nine-thread line did look small; but its strength was mighty.

My tuna was 8 feet 8 inches long, 6 feet 4 inches in girth. His head measured 2 feet and 5 inches in length. Yet Sears had called his head small. He weighed 758 pounds.

Perhaps my son's remark pleased me most of all:

"Sure is some fish!" ejaculated Romer. "Biggest ever caught on a rod, by anybody, any kind of a game fish. . . . And I was here to see you lick him, Dad."

"THE Most Interesting Place in the World" is described next month by Alexander Powell, world traveler and writer, who for twenty-five years has been exploring the earth. In this article he explains the lure of many places he has visited and, after a careful sifting of his experiences, selects the one place that is more interesting to him than any other. This place is— Well, read the article next month and you will find out.

The Sporting Chance

(Continued from page 68)

"I'd rather *not* do that," she said gently; "but I will, if you make it necessary."

He knew that she would, too. Her stability had been proved.

"My own flesh and blood," he mumbled. "You must be crazy!"

"If either of us is unbalanced, it's you," she returned, quietly using another suggestion supplied by her shrewd coach. "Perhaps that's the kindest thing for us to think, Celia and me. We'd have liked to be friends with you—we'd like to still, if you—if you'd let us. Will you?"

"Friends! I'm your father!"

"Yes, you're our father; but we'd both like you to be our friend, too. Will you?"

Friendliness was not in Scott at that moment. He motioned to her to leave him, but she lingered, asking:

"When will you dismiss the detectives, so we can go to New York without being arrested?"

"Right away. I'm done."

"Then we'd better tell the same story. Celia ran away to see me. Everybody knows now that you and I have not been on good terms, which will explain that well enough. We've been staying at a remote little place in the country, and didn't see any newspapers until this morning. Then I came straight to see you. That's perfectly true."

"It doesn't explain the fire."

"People will forget about the fire, when they find she wasn't kidnapped. They may think somebody did try to burn the barn, and Celia took advantage of the confusion to run away. But Cliff ought not to suffer for what he did his very best to prevent."

"I'll see to that."