THE LOG OF THE “SEABIRD” OSPREY.

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While spending two months’ leave fishing and shooting at Karwar, a coastal village of Southern India some three hundred miles south of Bombay, I was impressed by the excellent sailing that might be enjoyed with that port as headquarters, and I determined that, if ever the opportunity should arise, I would take a sailing boat there.

The following year I was granted six weeks leave in November and December. As my sailing partner was departing on a trip to East Africa our small ship was available, and I determined to set out.

At that time I was sailing “Osprey,” a Clyde designed centreboard boat of the Royal Bombay Yacht Club’s “Seabird” one design class. Her dimensions were as follows:

- Length overall 21 ft., length waterline 19.75 ft., beam 7.68 ft., centreboard 300 lbs., draft with centreboard 6 ft., displacement 23½ cwt.

She was gunter sloop rigged with a sail area of 270 sq. feet and large racing spinnaker which I later succeeded in setting as a balloon jib, thus considerably increasing my speed when reaching in a light breeze.

She was half-decked with a large sail and gear locker forward and a small locker aft, both watertight or nearly so. These provided accommodation for little more than ship’s gear and the tindal or deck hand who preferred to sleep below decks. There was, therefore, no dry accommodation for the comparatively large amount of gear necessary for a long cruise, nor was there room on the floorboards to lie stretched out for sleep. Some modification was therefore necessary. The fitting of hatches solved both difficulties. They were accurately fitted to lie with outer ends resting on the thwarts, inner ends on the centreboard casing, and could be removed in sections. They provided a sort of upper deck on which it was possible to stretch at ease and accommodation below for kit which was kept reasonably dry at all times except when water was shipped in quantity. The height from this upper deck to the coaming was less than one foot, which allowed the lightest breeze to play on one’s face and wake one up, a matter of some importance as it was desirable to take advantage of every breeze.

Although an excellent little seaboat, “Osprey” suffered from two serious disadvantages for ocean cruising which are common to all centreboard boats. She could not be hove to in a rough sea, nor would she hold a course with the tiller lashed. The former was overcome to some extent by running before the wind under a storm jib in foul weather. The latter could not be remedied, and since the tindal, though in other respects a
good fellow, was reduced to a state of abject panic in a stiff blow, long hours at the tiller were necessary. The preparation of hot meals while at sea was, for this reason, out of the question.

All preparations were complete and I went aboard, after a farewell pint of excellent beer in the Royal Bombay Yacht Club, before midnight on November 17 preparatory to getting away early on the 18th.

I decided not to attempt to tow a dinghy and to swim ashore when no other means of getting there was available.

"Osprey," Royal Bombay Yacht Club.

Nov. 18.—I dropped my moorings and got away on the morning breeze at 6 a.m. At 8 a.m. passed between Kennery Islands and the mainland. At 9.30 a.m. the s.s. "Padmavati" overtook us southward bound and showed us the way through the fishing stakes, of which there are large numbers south of Kennery extending a long way out to sea. Sea smooth with a nice breeze abeam or on the port quarter. The Bombay Steam Navigation Co.'s s.s. "Lilivati" bound north passed at 10.30.

Off Alibagh outer reef buoy at 10.45—a dead calm.

12.15 p.m.: A light breeze from N.E. came at 11.15 and lasted fifteen
minutes, when it fell dead calm again. The first of the sea breeze shortly afterwards came from the west and I set a course S. by E. towards Janjira.

At 4 p.m. a heavy thunderstorm came up over the Western Ghats and appeared to be making towards us.
9.30 p.m.: The storm came seawards, circled round “Osprey” and made me reef, and then passed out to sea. About 6 p.m. it fell dead calm but with the aid of light airs from NW. I eventually reached an anchorage off the Nawab’s palace in Janjira harbour, in 3½ fathoms mud bottom about 3 cables from the beach, at 7.15 p.m.

I had hoped to reach Kumbaru Bay but the storm and succeeding calms prevented my doing so.

To-day’s rations were eggs, bread and butter, marmalade, sausage rolls, curry puffs and a chicken, all of which had been prepared the night before embarking. Two thermos flasks full of crushed ice have been invaluable and are still going strong. If a flask is opened and water poured into it and out again at once it is sufficiently cooled and one flask makes many cool drinks.

I saw some surmai, large game fish of the mackerel family, leaping off Janjira but I have not yet got my fishing tackle ready.

To-day’s run was 38½ miles.

Nov. 19.—Wakened at 4.45 hrs. and had a swim and breakfast of tea, bacon and eggs cooked on the primus stove, bread, butter and marmalade. At 5.30 a light breeze came from SW. and I weighed anchor at 5.45 leaving Kansa Fort to port and passing close under Rajpuri Pt. and inside Whale Reef.

The wind has been well in the south and rather than beat down the coast I stood out to sea on the port tack all the morning. This was most refreshing after running all day yesterday. The breeze has now dropped, earlier than yesterday, and my watch has stopped. This is a nuisance as a clock I purchased for the cruise is losing 3 hours a day. I am trying to regulate it by sunset and until I do so times will be only approximate.

After about half an hour of calm the sea breeze is coming from due west.

The advantage of standing out close hauled on the port tack all morning is that, with the westerly wind, I can carry a spinnaker all afternoon; at least I hope so. I am aiming to reach Harnai this evening as the breeze is light.

Later.—Breeze freshening and I am carrying on to Port Dabhol.

10 p.m.: I held a good breeze all evening and reached my anchorage at 9.15 p.m. The only danger in making this port at night is a large sand bank on the north side of the entrance, and this can be avoided in approaching from the north by setting a course due south for Talkeshwar Point light until right under the cliffs.

In the absence of the usual instruments of navigation it is difficult to judge one’s position when approaching cliffs upon which surf is beating at night. This is particularly so when the cliffs are surmounted by a lighthouse.

The intensely bright light and the roar of the surf on the rocks seem overwhelmingly near when actually some miles away, and from that
distance until a close approach is made one feels constantly that one is in imminent danger of running on the rocks.

Provided there are no outlying submerged rocks there is no justification for this feeling of alarm. When a very near approach to the surf is made the light comes quite rapidly almost overhead and the turmoil changes in character in a manner quite unmistakable. Provided also that conditions are not unfavourable and a good lookout is kept, the warning should come in ample time to enable one to sheer off.

When about two cables from the cliffs course was altered and after a somewhat complicated passage up the Washisti River, good anchorage was found near Dabhol—too late to go ashore.

I spent some time to-day making a trolling rod of male bamboos, with sheet cork handle and porcelain rings, for use until my split cane rod meets me at Karwar.

To-morrow I hope to reach Ratnagiri where I shall spend the morning oiling blocks and adjusting running gear. "Osprey" had not been sailed prior to leaving as she was late ill fitting out and I was anxious to get away. To-day's run approx. 50\text{ 1/2} miles.

Nov. 20.—Left Dabhol at 6 a.m. after bacon and eggs, fried potatoes, etc. I make tea for breakfast in a large pot and fill a thermos for afternoon tea, as I do not care to light the primus unnecessarily while at sea. There was still some ice in the second flask last night and I think I shall get my last cold drink to-day unless I can refill somewhere.

Drifted out of harbour on the ebb tide and picked up a light breeze from SE. outside, which I have held all morning and now, about 9.30 a.m., Boria Pagoda bears 100° and Talkeshwar 10°. I cannot get a suitable third bearing and accurate position is unnecessary.

11.30 a.m.: Wind light and variable since last entry, mostly due south, and I have made little progress. Now dead calm.

12.30 p.m.: Light breeze from SW. and am sailing on port tack with sheets well off for what I take to be Mirya Donghur coming above the horizon. I have finished my rod and have put out a spoon.

The tindal has been much interested in my preparations for fishing, looking on in sympathy and silent amusement. Been a "muchi-wallah" himself he thinks a net much superior to rod and line. However, he is very tolerant of all my weaknesses.

I had several strikes to the spoon, evidently smallish fish, and after putting on a smaller spinner, hooked and landed a fish rather like a mullet which I do not know. It was only about 1\frac{1}{2} or 2 lb., and as we were sailing fast, put up no fight, though it showed above water two or three times.

9.30 p.m.: The breeze from SW. freshened and backed to NW. We went bowling down to Mirya Donghur in great style with spinnaker sheet outside forestay, dropping anchor in Ratnagiri Bay at 5.30 p.m. The Bay is on the south side of the hill and affords excellent anchorage in prevailing
winds. The rocks in the middle of the bay show up at low water and can be avoided by keeping within two cables of the east shore below the fort and steering a course NW. I dropped anchor in 3½ fathoms mud. After tidying up ship and bathing it was 6.30 p.m. and getting dark; being hungry I cooked dinner, pork and beans, boiled potatoes, tinned fruit, biscuits and cheese. My ice gave out this afternoon so I had a warm whisky and water. I made a mistake in not bringing soda. The warmth and the water are too much combined! Day's run 37½ miles.

Nov. 21.—Slept until 6 a.m., and went ashore at 8.30. My dinghy was a canoe, locally called a tony. It was the smallest I have ever seen and was propelled by an equally diminutive chokra. After risking capsize for some minutes I decided to sit as rigid as possible and leave balancing the abomination to the man (!) in control, which device succeeded in bringing us ashore in safety though I covered the seat of my choice white ducks with mud. I discovered this tragedy only when taking them off, so that my morning's happiness was undisturbed.

I ascertained from the customs "wallah" that there is a hospital, a Major I.M.S., and the ubiquitous Ford car. This was found in the village and most of the inhabitants helped to start it, but once going it went as a Ford will.

At the Hospital Major Kamat and his sub assistant were most kind and procured me two dozen eggs for 12 annas. As all the baker's bread had been sold Major Kamat gave me a loaf of excellent bread and also filled my petrol tins with filtered water.

At the principal corner in this village is a shop which keeps most necessary things, e.g. lamps, wicks, glasses, pots, tinned foods, biscuits, etc. The inhabitants were most obliging and the village is pretty interesting, with two historic forts built by the Mahratta kings. A good place to land and the first time I have been ashore since November 17.

Later.—Got up my anchor and put to sea on the first puff of breeze after the midday calm; course due south, close-hauled on the starboard tack, later easing sheets as the wind veered to the west.

4.15 p.m.: The breeze has been freshening all afternoon and I am approximately one mile NW. of Musargagi Point making for Vizadrug harbour. The cliffs of this Point are coal black and easily distinguishable from the sea.

Later.—Entering Vizadrug harbour B.S.N. Co.'s s.s. "Kamlavati" passed north bound. I steamed to Karwar in her last year. The entrance to Vizadrug has no difficulties and there is plenty of water right up to the landing stage in the river mouth SE. of the Fort. None of the fishing boats here showed riding lights. I anchored in 3 fathoms mud about ½ cable from the bunder.

I bought here ten bottles of soda at nine annas each. The Customs official was again most useful, but there is only a very small fishing village and practically no supplies are available. Soda can be obtained almost
anywhere and though its purity cannot be vouched for, on such a cruise one must be satisfied if one placates the Goddess of Hygiene instead of satisfying all her demands.

The anchorage here is in a river and the water is muddy and unfit for swimming but the place is worth visiting, if only to see the old Fort joined to the mainland by a low sandy isthmus fringed with palm trees standing out against the sunset. The walls of the Fort are high and black and tower above the graceful spars of the country boats anchored in the harbour.

Nov. 22.—Days run 28 miles on the afternoon breeze. Up at 4.40 a.m. Breakfast, 4 boiled eggs, bread, butter and marmalade, and got the anchor at 5.45. As the first light airs of the morning breeze came out of the east we drifted down harbour and found outside, at dawn, a nice breeze coming from south-east. I aim at reaching Malwan to-day, but if the evening breeze holds I shall carry on to Vengurla.

8.25 a.m.: About 7 1/2 miles in 1 hour 20 minutes. There has been a nice breeze all morning but it is falling away earlier than usual.

9.15 a.m.: Dead calm.

4.30 p.m.: Through Karli Reef Passage and running with spinnaker set before a light NW. breeze for Vengurla.

The Karli Passage is a narrow opening through a reef of that name. It was formerly navigated by coastal steamers, since it provides a shorter route to Vengurla, but is now forbidden to large vessels since several have gone on the rocks.

The reef is several miles in length and is, for the greater part, submerged, only isolated rocks showing above the water. The passage is therefore not devoid of excitement when made in a small boat.

I was unable to locate the red buoy shown on the chart SW. of Chaldea Rocks and this increased the difficulty of the passage.

(Note—On my return journey I picked up this buoy and my inability to do so on the outward voyage was due to the fact that it had become whitened by seagulls and was indistinguishable at a distance from the white-capped waves.)

When Nuti Pt. bore 93° I laid a course towards it until Vengurla Rocks light bore 183° in accordance with the West of India Pilot.

My tindal was much impressed by my instrumental methods of finding my whereabouts. Had he known the possibilities of error he would have been even more impressed and perhaps as relieved as I was when the passage was successfully accomplished.

9.30 p.m.: I have just dined. Entering Vengurla there is a black buoy to be left to starboard, but we could not pick it up in the darkness so I fell back on compass bearings. As I jibed and altered course to NE. my tindal spotted the buoy about fifty yards to starboard. There is a good anchorage at the head of the bay under the fort in 2 1/2 fathoms, and I dropped anchor at 7.45 p.m. Then trouble began. After fifteen hours at the tiller I was...
dog tired and while unshipping the rudder I let it slip. I hailed the tindal who was then hauling up the centre-board and in the excitement I let go, the purchase jumped the wheel and the gear jammed. I could just see what I took to be, either the end of the rudder or a cocoanut bobbing up occasionally in the dark and was about to go overboard after it when the tindal, with a paddle, swung "Osprey" round to it. With a sigh of relief I hauled it aboard. It is well to know that a Seabird rudder floats upside down with about two inches showing. Then began a shifting of gear, spare anchor, etc., to get up the floor boards and clear the centreboard purchase. Then dinner and now to bed. The run to-day was approximately 41\frac{1}{2} miles.

Nov. 23.—After a swim and breakfast the customs man came off to ask if he could do anything for me and kindly put me ashore.

Vengurla is a large clean and prosperous looking village where water and supplies can be obtained. After exchanging empty sodas for full ones I called on Dr. Goheen, in charge of the American Mission Hospital. He was very busy with a large out-patient clinic, but took me to his bungalow where I drank delicious coffee and cream and ate first-rate iced cake with his family. I was again out of bread (this is the only necessary supply difficult to obtain along the coast) and Mrs. Goheen very kindly gave me a loaf. Later the two little boys came down to see me off and we all went aboard the Indian Government vessel "Albatross" and called on Fletcher of the Salt and Excise. I got under way at 12.40 and hope to make Marmagoa harbour by 7.30 p.m.

3.20 p.m.: The breeze has freshened and we are reaching down the coast on the starboard tack.

4.45 p.m.: Aguada light bears 90°. 7 miles in 1 hour 25 minutes.

In Aguada Roads the breeze fell light and it was uncomfortable yawning about with a swell coming in from the SW. I eventually dropped anchor under Marmagoa Fort at 7.45 p.m. The sunset to-night was particularly beautiful, long high clouds lying over the western horizon, high cumulus towering above the hills to the east, all changing their colour in the light reflected from the sea. I dined at Spencer's Hotel, who put up an excellent dinner—the first meal for 6 days I have not cooked myself. There were more courses, but I cannot admit that the chef is superior to "Osprey's"! Moreover there was no ice and the verandah on which I dined was as hot as the inferno, without a breath of air and with a new petrol lamp making the place horrid with its noise and glare. This I caused to be replaced by a shaded oil lamp. Altogether I was glad to return to "Osprey" for a breath of fresh air and sleep at 10 p.m.

I had considerable difficulty in getting a very small and dirty tony to put me off and had to maintain a squatting position as there was nothing to sit on and I was wearing my going ashore clothes. To me the fascination of upsetting a tony is appalling. I have an almost uncontrollable desire to move suddenly and see whether the thing with the paddle will be quick
enough to counteract the upsetting influence. If not one imagines the horrible ending of going round and round for ever in a tony which, if it once started to revolve, would almost certainly continue to do so till the crack of doom.

To-day’s run was approximately 28½ miles on the afternoon breeze and, until it fell light in the evening, was the fastest we have made. From Vengurla to Aguada Pt., about 23 miles, took 4½ hrs. There is no difficulty in making Marmagoa harbour at night and most supplies, including good bread, can be obtained.

Nov. 24.—I was wakened at 4 a.m. by a breeze from SE. and a slight lop in the harbour so breakfasted and got away at 4.45. The breeze carried me out of the Roads and at 7 a.m. Saint George’s Islands were bearing 90°.

The breeze is now freshening, after falling calm for some time, and I am standing for Cape Ramas close hauled on the starboard tack.

10.15: A good breeze has held all morning, veering to south. I am now standing out to sea on port tack to get an offing for the sea breeze this afternoon and hope to run into Karwar under spinnaker if it comes well from the west.

3 p.m.: My reckoning shows me to be 15 miles off shore West of Canacona Peak. If the westerly breeze comes I should run into Karwar in 5 hours, but at present it is still coming steadily out of the south.

Nov. 25.—After sailing on the port tack for some time after the last entry, with a lumpy sea and a very wet boat, there was no sign of the southerly breeze dropping or shifting.

As there had been cloud and a peculiar haze all day, I decided that the weather had departed from the normal and went about for a beat to Karwar. Within a short time the breeze had headed me and was backing to SE. After two long boards with the breeze straight out of Karwar it backed due east for a short time and fell dead calm at about 5 p.m. At 5.30 a light breeze came again from SW. and I made a long board towards land but with sunset it fell dead calm again. It was a magnificent sunset with a dome of cloud over the west which seemed to shut in the light so that sea and sky became a glowing furnace.

A flat oily calm persisted until 11 p.m. and it was delightful lying in the moonlight with a light swell heaving us up and down, though unfortunately this prevented me from cooking any dinner.

Suddenly, during this calm, I heard heavy surf and leapt up with thoughts of currents setting me inshore but could see and hear nothing. There it was again, this time to seawards and again, in a few seconds, landwards. Then I saw a great dark shadow and realized the surf was caused by whales blowing, at least two and possibly more. I had visions of their resenting our intrusion on their element, or of their desiring to scratch themselves against “Osprey” and the disastrous consequences which might result. However, they gradually went in towards the bay south of Paidegal Point and though I heard them again at a distance they did not come unpleasantly near me again.
Shortly afterwards (I did not look at my clock which now keeps excellent time) a breeze came out of the east and I sailed for Karwar, standing well out past Lolien Head to avoid the rocks, then SE. for Ghoduli Peak and the red light on Karwar front.

As I know every rock in Sadashivgad Bay I dispensed with my compass and chart, almost to my undoing. I thought I was well eastward of Oyster Rocks when I suddenly saw what appeared to be another rock looming on my starboard bow and opening up from Karwar Head; then the shadow of two more to port. The moon had gone by now and in the dark it was impossible to reckon distance. I went about on the starboard tack and beat up the bay for some time. Then again stood south on the port tack but a sounding showed that I was getting into shoal water. I got out chart and compass and found I was north of Kurmagad Islands. The rock I had seen opening Karwar Head was the Island of Moger a Guda some 2 miles SE. of Oyster Rocks and not, as I had thought, one of them.

It had appeared to make these rocks and Shimis Guda and Kurmagad into one line although actually some miles apart. Had I not reverted to my chart I should have been on the sands which, at low water, almost connect Kurmagad with the mainland. This impressed upon me how very easy it is to go wrong at night without careful bearings, even in well known waters.

The breeze was strengthening and I had a nice reach across the Bay, dropping anchor at 4 a.m. where "Osprey" now lies about one cable in front of my bedroom window. I was very cold and wet having been at the tiller almost continuously for over 23 hours. Altogether it was a disappointing day. The morning breeze was the best I have had and I expected to reach Karwar by dinner time on the sea breeze. Its failure may be explained, possibly, by the cloud all day which prevented the land warming up. This would also account for the unusually long morning breeze.

To-day I hear that the Dagal or Five Finger Jack are in, and that my old friend Newlands, of Oyster Rock Lighthouse, has caught some big fellows. A good fighting fish is the Dagal.

I spent to-day sleeping and getting all gear ashore and had a swim in the evening.

Karwar is even more beautiful than my impression of it last year led me to believe and compares not unfavourably with Rio de Janiero, which I have always considered the most beautiful harbour I have ever seen, though Karwar lacks the handsome buildings which adds so much to the beauty of the latter city when seen from the sea. It stands on the south-eastern shore of Sadashivgad Bay, which is seven miles across from north to south. The anchorage is in Bhatkul cove, a small re-entrant on the southern shore of the bay shut in by wooded hills on either side, and bounded by a sandy isthmus fringed with palm trees on the south. Across this Isthmus lies Bhatkul Bay, where the open blue sea rolls in on a beach of golden sand, and where perfect surf bathing may be enjoyed.
To the south and east of Sadashivgad Bay rise numerous peaks from Karwar Head to Daughlish Peak, 1822 ft. in height, and wooded conical hills extend in a semicircle northwards to Lolien Point, a long low promontory which limits the Bay to the north.

Behind this semicircle of dark green hills rise the foothills of the Western Ghats, and further still the mighty Ghats themselves, shimmering blue and mysterious and beckoning always to the adventurous traveller.

Scattered about and beyond the harbour are many rocks and wooded islets, rising from the clear blue water to a height of 200 ft. or more, most prominent among them being Oyster Rocks and Kurmagad Island. The former is a wicked reef of scattered rocks running for over a mile east and

west, a short distance north-west of Karwar Head, and terminating seawards in a wooded hill on which stands the lighthouse, tended for some 20 years by my old friend, Mr. Newlands—a mighty slayer of the denizens of the deep. I pity the luckless dagal or raus who seizes his shining spoon and sets his seven inch silex reel a singing.

Kurmagad and Shimis Guda Islands raise their heads close to the eastern shore of the bay at the entrance to the Kalinada River. The former has been fortified all round its circumference and within the old walls is a large well.

A mighty river is the Kalinada, winding amongst the foothills through tropical forests into the very heart of the Ghats themselves, over a mile wide inside the bar and navigable to country craft for many miles.

On its waters ply many craft bringing down the produce of the country,
and large rafts of teakwood, like floating islands, guided by men with long bamboo poles, come drifting down from the forests to the timber depot at the entrance to the river.

Beautiful as Karwar is by day it is incomparably so at dawn or sunset. In the early morning a light veil of mist hangs over the surrounding hills and as the first light of dawn comes over the mountains the Bay lies like a quivering opal in a setting surely made in Fairyland. Then the first breaths of the morning breeze send the mists stretching out long fingers as though to seize this glittering jewel, but ere their purpose is accomplished the sun, rising above the towering Ghats, dissipates as if by magic these would-be despoilers of nature.

"Just as the day's first light comes pale and yet serene,
With strange unerring feet across the fields."

I sorrow for the unfortunate one who lies abed at such an hour and who does not know the loveliness and the beauty of the morning sea and sky.

Nov. '26.—The morning was spent in changing sails and rigging
"Osprey" for fishing. In the afternoon I tried an old mainsail, loose footed and with one reef down in order to bring the clew of the sail inboard.

This was done with a view to letting go the main sheet when a fish was hooked and having a clear boat as far forward as the main rigging from which to play the fish. As no fish was hooked the success or otherwise of this arrangement was not proved. The greatest disadvantage of a sailing boat lies in the fact that it cannot be taken close up to the rocks where very often the best fish lie.

I know of no more fascinating and soothing pursuit than sea fishing for the big game fish that swim on the surface and that take a spoon or natural bait trolled behind a boat. The fishing to be had on the West Coast of India may not be comparable to that off Florida and Santa Catalina so vividly described by the master pen of Zane Grey in "Tales of Fishes," or that to be had off the Bay of Islands in New Zealand, but to one who has not been fortunate enough to experience the capture of these monsters of the deep, the sport which can be had here, when the fish are in, is altogether satisfying.

My fishing last year at Karwar was done entirely from a small catamaran rowed by four lusty Kanara fishermen, this being the only craft available, and on a tropical sea in such a craft some discomfort is inevitable. This is to some extent mitigated by a cushion, a large pith topee and dark glasses and is completely forgotten when the fish are taking.

The capture of large fish on rod and line is the most intensely exciting sport I know. The sudden strike of the fish; the moment of uncertainty while he lies, presumably wondering what strange glittering thing he has
taken; the driving home of the hook and the sudden realization on the part of the fish that all is not well, are crowded into a few seconds of rapid action.

Then comes the music of the reel as he makes his first mad rush, steadied by careful application of the brake, while the coloured wool shows perhaps 150 yards of line has been taken off, followed by wild leaps in the air in strenuous endeavour to throw the hook or break the slender line by a powerful blow of his tail. This, to my mind, is incomparably more thrilling, the delicate handling of the fish on light tackle infinitely more artistic and satisfying, than the stalking of an animal and the killing of it by a single shot. And only now the real struggle begins. Line is recovered inch by inch, foot by foot, only to be taken again by the fish. If he has not shown himself, what size is he? Again and again he changes his tactics, now going off like a torpedo in a flurry of foam, the line hissing through the water, the reel screaming its song; now sounding in the depths with ponderous jerks or striking the trace heavy blows with his tail, always a dangerous move; now leaping in the air a silver streak, the spray flashing in the sunlight.

Gradually his rushes became shorter, his tugs and jolts less forceful until, fighting all the way, he is gently brought alongside the boat. Then a hand is put out with the gaff ready. He sees it, and bang! away he goes again, a last despairing rush almost as terrific as his first and one to be prepared for, or he is lost. At length, after an hour or more of tense excitement, he is again brought alongside exhausted, lying on his side an easy victim for the gaff. Carefully he is lifted into the boat a quivering shining thing of beauty built for power and speed, dark green and blue above with shining silver sides and snow-white belly, every scale glittering and opalescent in the sunlight.

With what a sigh of satisfaction do we sit down and gaze upon him, calculating his weight and lighting the much-needed fragrant weed before renewing the steel wire trace and putting out the spoon again. For even steel wire is not proof against such a battle, and the smallest kink may mean the next fish lost. A man must be hard, fit to continue long at such a game, hands hardened and muscles of back and arms in good condition.

Nov. 27.—This afternoon last year's method of fishing from a catamaran was tried in order to allow my tindal a day of rest. An excellent crew was secured and many favourite places which last year yielded good fish were tried with never a strike. The fishermen say that the strong off-shore breezes which are blowing almost continuously have driven the big fish out to sea, but there is much cloud, and some atmospheric disturbance is the more likely cause. It was strange how quickly one fell back into the old “tony” ways. The naked brown bodies of the crew, the heaving swish of the outrigger as it plunges through the waves and the cry of the helmsman urging the crew to greater efforts, came back to one as though from yesterday. Even the smell of the “tony” seemed still familiar!
This is not a method of fishing to be recommended when the fish are uncertain and the discomfort is not compensated for by good sport, unless the fishing ground is near and one can go out for two or three hours in the early morning or the evening, or unless there is some friendly shady island where one may land and rest when fish are off the feed and the sun grows hot. One must also train one's crew to keep the outrigger away from the line when a fish is being run.

How often one is asked, "But is not fishing very wearisome when the fish do not take?" Can a thing which is ever changing, which rarely presents the same face for an hour at a time, and which is always and above all things supremely beautiful, be wearisome?

There is not only the sea and the sky. There are the distant hills with their changing lights and shadows, the fresh air which, after a year of jaded city life, one breathes deep into one's lungs, the puffs of wind that come and go upon the surface of the water.

"A wind of night, shy as the young hare,
That steals e'en now out of the corn to play,
Stirs the pale river once and creeps away."

There are also the things that live on and in the sea and in the air. Country boats with their tall sloping spars and winglike high-peaked sails come up out of the horizon and slowly drift down again seawards, sailing upon the very edge of the world, or turn landwards to some hidden river port amongst the hills for new cargoes.

A steamer appears, a smudgy blot of smoke on one horizon, quickly becomes a live pulsating thing of energy and as quickly disappears again beyond where sky meets sea.

There are the gulls which circle the boat, continuously flirting with the waves and plunging ever into the water in their eternal search for food. How gracefully they twist and turn, and when one catches a fish with what chattering the others set upon him. See him drop his prize the more easily to dodge the others, catching it again like a flash when the rest have wheeled past him. Then two great white sea eagles appear from their eyrie in the distant hills, floating majestically, silently, with scarce a movement of their outstretched wings. Soon, near at hand, a shoal of small fish breaks the surface, hunted by their enemies below, and down an eagle comes with terrific speed, graceful and awe inspiring, to seize one in its talons and carry it away to be devoured at leisure in the heights above. Their method of seizing their prey is less certain than that of the gull, who, after a plunge, rarely emerges without a silvery prize in his beak, whereas the eagle sometimes strikes many times before capturing a victim. Possibly his greater size makes him less quick to follow the rapid movements of the fish.

I have seen a sea like an expanse of clear blue glass rippled here and there upon the surface by shoals of small fish each perhaps half an acre in
extent. Quite suddenly, with a sound of rushing water, a shoal will leap upwards only to fall back again, and immediately large fish can be seen cutting through them, leaping, slashing, killing. A pause when all is quiet—then back they come again. If the killers are a shoal of surmai, then indeed it is a sight worth seeing. These large fish throw themselves repeatedly several feet out of the water, leaping, rushing, splashing, until the whole sea becomes a seething turmoil. And so the battle is waged continuously between sea and sea, and sea and air, and air and air, never for one moment without expectancy, rarely without interest and always amidst the greatest beauty.

**Nov. 28.**—As there was a nice breeze from the north-east I went for a sail about midday, and later put out a spoon when the breeze fell lighter. In accordance with local advice I went about nine miles out to sea and had one small strike—then later hooked and lost a small surmai on a large spoon. I changed the spoon for a small silver spinner and hooked a bigger fish which gave me a good run and which, when alongside the boat, proved to be a raus of 10 or 12 lb. He was well hooked in the corner of the mouth and lying on his side. I admired him for a few moments and then showed him the gaff. Down he went in the usual manner of this game fish, taking 30 yards of line before the rod straightened and the line came slack. I had treated him gently, but found that my steel wire trace had broken, evidently a spot of rust or a kink. However I had the sport of running him and was contented, so sailed home to bath and dinner and an hour with Mr. Jorrocks, M.F.H.

To-day I employed a different and better method of handling the boat when running this fish. They usually take best when the sea is not too rough and with the reefed mainsail one does not get enough speed in light breezes. I used a full mainsail with the boom and instructed the tindal to luff, let go the sheets and top the boom right up when I hooked a fish; then to overhaul the main sheet and get it out of the way. This worked most satisfactorily but one drifts rapidly and must have a good offing. Moreover, with a heavy fish, the drifting would tell decidedly against the man and the rod and in favour of the fish.

In spite of possibly fewer fish it is so much more enjoyable fishing from the yacht than from a catamaran that one feels justified in sacrificing a little sport, particularly as few fish are in at present, and one has the interest of sailing to fall back upon.

*(To be continued.)*