

## TROUT FISHING AND TROUT STREAMS.

(BY THE WARRIGAL.)

ONE of the best fishing streams in the South Island is the Upper Selwin. To the lover of the gentle art, or to the holiday-maker who seeks a change from town life, there are not many places that offer more attractions. The stream is easily reached. A journey of thirty-eight miles takes one to Coalgate. At Coalgate the river enters on its course across the wide Canterbury Plains. The Bluff Hotel is only a few yards away from the railway-station and about a stone's throw from the river. Host Hickson knows how to cater for anglers, and his trap is always at their service if they wish to go far afield.

The river at Coalgate is admirable for fishing. Below the bridge it runs clear and swift over a bed of shingle through a wilderness of gorse and broom. There is only a mile or two of good fishing below the bridge, for in dry weather the stream has a weakness for disappearing under the stones, only to emerge here and there before it rushes out as a river again to empty itself into Lake Eileamere. Above the Coalgate Bridge the river hugs the foot of a huge basaltic bluff, tumbling over bars, foaming around big rocks, swirling in deep pools, good fishing ground easily accessible.

There is a lot of fishing water available about Coalgate and above Coalgate. A mile or so further up the valley there is Glentunnel and Clayton's Hotel, another place where anglers can find accommodation quite close to the stream. Beyond Glentunnel, at the terminus of the railway, is Whitecliffs, a good fishing centre, but possessing no hotel. Still Host Hickson, of Coalgate, or Clayton, of Glentunnel, will drive anglers far beyond Whitecliffs if necessary, and then pick them up when they are tired of fishing down stream, or if they fish up stream will meet them with the trap at certain times in a certain place to save them the walk back.

Beyond Whitecliffs the river winds through a series of picturesque gorges in the hills, holding big fish in its deep pools. A wild romantic country here, a solitude rarely broken, clear water coming from a hundred streams, clear air touched with the perfume of birch forests, cool air too, for the river bed is a thousand feet above sea level, and the hills on each hand rise to a height of three thousand feet or more. The angler who finds all his pleasure in the number of fish

he takes cannot appreciate this high part of the river as its full value. Coalgate or Glentunnel are his centres, for he can get on to the best fishing water from his hotel, and is generally sure of a decent basket. But angling has more pleasure than a big basket, though so many people know them not. To the townsman tired of stuffy office and dusty streets the peculiar wildness and freedom of the New Zealand river bed should have strong charms. The low flats with their thickets of broom or manuka, the stretches of tussock where the hares and rabbits lie so close, the minia-

clear pools and the swift cool rapids of those upland rivers.

It does not take such a strong experience as mine to make one appreciate such a river as the Upper Selwin. Angler or artist, or health-seeker, geologist or botanist have a fine field there. Make a party and get a carrier to cart tents and provisions to some broad flat where the birch forest slopes down to the water's edge, camp there, and to those who love nature or outdoor exercise there is abundance of pleasure. The sportsman to the river, the botanist to the forest or to the sheltered ravines that penetrate the



Coates, photo.

THE HEAD OF A POOL.

ture sand dunes swept up by fierce nor-wester or fiercer flood, the secluded swamp with its fringe of raupo and giant rushes—haunt of wild duck and pukaki.

To Australians especially trout-fishing in this country should be very attractive. I remember so well coming over from a hot, dry Australian summer, from 127 degrees in the shade away north of Milparauha, from stagnant water at 64 a bucket, from drought and glare, from that miserable diet of bread and tough mutton, out to that high plain to the south of Coalgate, and I shall never forget the deep

hills, the geologist to creek bed or rock strewn slopes. To fish and fish in such a place and only to catch one speckled trout in one long summer day is enough reward, for one is obtaining health with every hour in that high altitude. And the fishing—every throw gives expectation, every touch of the line a thrill! Such fishing water—rapids foaming over bars into deep pools where big fish lie. To throw the fly across the pool, to send a creeper down the rapid, to drop a live bully into the biggest swirl. What expectation! Realized sometimes by the quick tug at the line, the whirl of the reel, then the rush of the fish, the battle between pluck and skill, to say nothing of the luxury of broiled trout on a drift-wood fire and a camp appetite.

Some splendid baskets have been made in the Upper Selwin. Hunt took 37 lbs weight with the fly in one day this season. Others have taken baskets of from 5 lbs to 20 lbs, and the fish run from half a pound to three pounds—not such monsters as one gets in the lower waters of the same stream, or in the great snow rivers, but being caught on fine tackle and in swift water, they give perhaps more sport than the seven and ten pounders near the sea.

The illustrations accompanying this article show portions of the Selwin above the Whitecliffs Bridge, and water from which many a good basket of fish have been taken—real good trout-fishing water. Coates (who took the photographs) and I fished this part in the early season. Coates worked up the river and caught 19 fish, weighing 17½ lbs, in about six hours. I worked down the river over water that had been fished that day by seven rods, and caught eleven fish weighing about six pounds.



Coates, photo.

WHERE BIG TROUT LIE.

Watch your conscience; if it approves of everything you do it is an indication that you are becoming conceited.

To make a good match it is not necessary for either the man or the woman to have an extra supply of brimstone.