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# Three in Norway by Two of Them

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Thesis submitted for the degree of  
Master in Network and system administration  
30 credits

Department of Informatics  
Faculty of mathematics and natural sciences

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

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# **Three in Norway by Two of Them**

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by Two of Them

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Three in Norway  
by Two of Them

James Arthur Lees and Walter J. Clutterbuck

1882



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# Preface

This demonstration document contains extracts from the book *Three in Norway by Two of Them*[6, 11], a humorous travel story about three Englishmen visiting Norway about 150 years ago; you can find a link to an electronic version in the bibliography on page 31.

The original text has been slightly modified by *Knut Hegna* and *Dag Langmyhr* to meet the requirements of presenting a thesis-like document; for example, only two of the references in the bibliography appear in the original text.



# Introduction

## History

*Canadian canoes are the only boats that will do*[5] was our conclusion after a thorough inspection of every existing species of boat, and long consultation with *Sambo* of Eton about a totally new variety, invented but fortunately not patented by one of our number.

Our party consisted of three men, who shall be briefly described here. First, *the Skipper*, so called from his varied experience by land and sea in all parts of the world, but especially in Norway, whither we were now intending to go in search of trout, reindeer, and the picturesque. The Skipper is lank and thin, looking as though he had outgrown his strength in boyhood, and never summoned up pluck enough to recover it again. His high cheek-bones and troubled expression give one the idea of a man who cannot convince himself that life is a success, which is perhaps pretty nearly the view he actually takes of existence.

Secondly, *Esau*, who received this name in consequence of the many points in which his character and history resemble that of the patriarch who first rejoiced in it: for our Esau, like his prototype, is *a cunning hunter and man of the field*; and we are sure that if he ever had such a thing as a birthright, he would willingly have sold it for a mess of pottage. Esau is short and joyous, and is one of those people who never indigest anything, but always look and always are in perfect health and spirits. It is annoying to see a man eat things that his fellow-creatures can not without suffering for it afterwards, but Esau invariably does this at dinner, and comes down to breakfast next morning with a provoking colour on his cheek and a hearty appetite. His office in this expedition was that of Paymaster; not because he possessed any qualifications for the post, but because the Skipper had conclusively proved that such employment was too gross and mundane for his ethereal soul, by constantly leaving the purse which contained our united worldly wealth on any spot where he chanced to rest himself, when he and Esau went to spy out the land two years before this.

Lastly, *John*, so called for no better reason than the fact that he had been christened Charles: he had never yet visited the wilds of Scandinavia. John is an Irishman, whose motto in life is *dum vivimus vivamus*: he is tall and straight, with a colossal light moustache. He generally wears his hat slightly tilted forward over his forehead when engaged in conversation; and the set of his clothes and whole deportment convey an idea that he is longing to tell you the most amusing story in the world in confidence. He is no gossip, and the anecdotes of his countrymen, of which he has an inexhaustible supply always ready, are merely imparted to his listeners from philanthropic motives, and because he longs for others to share in the enjoyment which he gleans from their mental dissection.

The general idea of the campaign was that the Skipper and Esau should leave England in the early part of July; fish their way up a string of lakes into the Jotunfjeld, getting there in time for the commencement of the reindeer season; establish a camp somewhere; and then that John, starting a month later, should join, and the three of us

sojourn in that land until we were tired thereof. How we accomplished this meritorious design we have tried to relate in the following pages.

## Geography

The map of Norway, apart from Sweden, presents an outline something like a tadpole with a crooked irregular tail. The Jotunfjeld is an extensive range of the highest mountains which are to be found in Northern Europe: before 1820 A.D. they were totally unexplored, and at the present time they are still perfectly wild and desolate, their summits covered with eternal ice and snow, and even their valleys uninhabited. That part of the Jotunfjeld which we intended to make our goal and headquarters is situated about the middle of the tadpole's body, and nearly equidistant from Throndhjem and Christiania.

## Languages

It is customary when writing a book on any foreign country to scatter broadcast in your descriptions words and phrases in the language of that country, in order to show that you really have been there. We propose to depart from this usage in the course of this work; but if at any time the exigencies of narrative seem to demand the use of the foreign tongue, we have little doubt that the English language will provide an equivalent, which shall be inserted for the benefit of the uninitiated.

## Mathematics

Foreigners have a curious prejudice which leads them to adopt different systems of coinage and measurement from those in favour in England. But shall a Briton pander to this prejudice by making any use of their ridiculous figures? Decidedly not. What matters it to us that a Norwegian land-mile contains seven of our miles, and a sea-mile four? we speak only of the British mile. What care we that the Norwegian kröne is worth about  $13\frac{1}{2}$ d.? Shall that prevent us from always calling it a shilling? Never! And shall the fact that it is divided into ten 10-öre pieces (which are little nickel coins worth about five farthings each) restrain us from alluding to them as the *threepenny bits* which they so much resemble? Not while life remains.

## Extra subjects

Some of the statements that will be found in these pages may strike the reader as being, to say the least of it, improbable. We therefore wish to explain that all the incidents of sport and travel are simple facts, but that here and there is introduced some slight fiction which is too obviously exaggerated to require any comment.

# Chapter 1

## The voyage

### 1.1 July 8.—

At ten P.M. on the platform of the Hull station might have been seen the disconsolate form of Esau, who had arrived there a few minutes before. To him entered suddenly an express train, with that haste which seems to be inseparable from the movements of express trains, adorned as to the roof of one of its carriages by a Canadian canoe. From that carriage emerged the lanky body of the Skipper, and general joy ensued.

Then in the hotel the Skipper related his perilous adventures; how he had crossed London in a four-wheeler with the canoe on the quarter-deck, and himself surrounded by rods, guns, rugs, tents, and ground-sheets in the hold, amid the shouts of *boat ahoy!* from the volatile populace, and jeers from all the cabs that they met (there are many cabs in London); how the station-master at King's Cross—may his shadow never be less!—had personally superintended the packing of the canoe on a low carriage which he put on to the train specially; and how the G.W. charged four times as much as the G.N. He had seen John the day before, and on being asked to *wander about, and get some things with him*, the Skipper had replied that it was quite impossible, as his time was occupied for the whole day: but when John said, *I wanted your advice chiefly about flies, and a new rod that I am thinking of buying*, he replied, *Sir, I have nothing of the slightest importance to do; my time is yours; name the moment, and place of meeting, and I will be there*. Then they twain had spent a happy day; for decidedly the next best thing to using your own rod is buying one for another man—at his expense.

Poor Esau had no charming experiences to relate: he was a little depressed because an intelligent tyke at Doncaster had looked into the horse-box in which his canoe was travelling, hoping no doubt to see some high-mettled racer, and had asked if *yon thing were some new mak o' a coffin*.

### 1.2 July 9.—

We walked about Hull and made a few last purchases. In the course of our wanderings we chanced to come to a shop, in the window of which many strawberries, large and luscious, were exposed for sale. We immediately entered that shop without exchanging a word, and the Skipper said to the proprietress, *This gentleman wants to buy a quantity of strawberries for a school feast*; while Esau remarked, as he fastened on to the nearest and largest basket, 'My friend has been ordered to eat strawberries by his doctor.' After this a scene ensued over which it were best to draw a veil.

At six o'clock we were safely aboard the good ship *Angelo*, and saw our baggage stowed. It consisted of three huge boxes of provisions, weighing more than 100 lbs. each, two portmanteaus, two smaller bags, a tent, a large waggon-sheet intended to

form another tent, a bundle of rugs and blankets, a large can containing all cooking utensils, four gun-cases, seven rods, a bundle of axes, a spade and other necessary tools, and the canoes with small wheels for road transport. Those wheels were the only things in the whole outfit that turned out to be not absolutely necessary. We did use them, but only once, and might have managed without them.

When the aforesaid was all on board, there did not appear to be much room for anything else in the steamship *Angelo*; registering 1,300 tons; yet this vast pile was destined to travel many miles over a desperately rough country in the two little canoes.

We were warped out of dock about eight o'clock, and steamed down the Humber with a west wind and a smooth sea. It was showery up to the moment of our departure, but as Hull faded from our sight it became fine, and with the shores of England we seemed to leave the cloud and rain behind.

### 1.3 *July 10.—*

The day passed as days at sea do when the weather is all that can be wished, and the treacherous ocean calmly sleeps. The passengers were as sociable as any collection of English people ever are, and we spent the time very pleasantly chatting, smoking, eating enormously, and playing the ordinary sea games of quoits and horse-billiards.

The Skipper was much exercised in spirit because Esau had told him that he believed a certain passenger to be an acquaintance of a former voyage, named, let us say, Jones, and that he was a capital fellow. So the Skipper went and fraternised with Jones, and presently, trusting to the *information received*, remarked, *I believe your name is Jones?* and was a little annoyed when Jones replied, *No, it's not Jones; it's Blueit, and I never heard the name of Jones as a surname before.* Then the Skipper arose and remonstrated with his perfidious friend, who with great good temper said, to make it all right, *You see that man by the funnel? That is a Yankee going to see the midnight sun; go and talk to him.* Now the Skipper has been in America a good deal, and likes to talk to the natives of those regions, so he sailed over to the funnel and tackled the Yankee. Presently, with that admirable tact which is his most enviable characteristic, he observed, *I understand that you have come all the way from America to see the midnight sun: it is a very extraordinary phenomenon. Imagine a glorious wealth of colour glowing over an eternal sunlit sea, and endowing with a fairy glamour a scene which Sappho might have burned to sing; where night is not, nor sleep, but Odin's eye looks calmly down, nor ever sinks in rest.* As he paused for breath the Yankee saw his opportunity, and said, *No, I was never in America in my life. I am a Lincolnshire man, and am going over to Arendahl to buy timber. I have seen the midnight sun some dozen times, and I call it an infernal nuisance.* Here the Skipper hastily left, and came over and abused Esau until he made an enemy of him for life.

## Chapter 2

# Christiania

### 2.1 *Sunday, July 11.—*

We reached Christiansand about six, and set sail again at eight. There was what the mariners called a nice breeze with us. Esau declared it to be a storm, and was prostrate at lunch, owing as he said to attending church service, which was conducted under considerable difficulties, members of the congregation occasionally shooting out of the saloon like Zazel out of her cannon, or assuming recumbent postures when the rubric said, *Here all standing up*. However, we came along at a great pace, and arrived at Christiania about nine at night, after a first-rate passage.

The Fjord was not looking as beautiful as usual, as there had been a great deal of rain, and the storm clouds and mist were still hovering about the low hills, so that no glories of the northern sunset were visible.

We arranged that the Skipper should go straight to the Victoria Hotel for rooms, as we heard that the town was very full, and Esau was to follow with the luggage. Now there was a young Englishman on board, very talkative, extremely sociable, remarkably kind-hearted, and overflowing with the best advice. He had gone round the whole ship entreating every one to go to the *Grand*, as he intended to do, because it was by far the best hotel.

Just as the Skipper had engaged our rooms at the *Victoria*, in rushed this guileless child of nature, panting from the speed at which he had come from the quay, and the Skipper had the gratification of witnessing his discomfiture and listening to his apologies for having lied unto us, which of course he had done in order to get rooms for his own party at the *Victoria*.

We say nothing against the *Grand* because we know it not, but any one who has once tried the 'Victoria' will go there again: the man who is not at home and happy there must be a very young traveller.

This hotel possesses a spacious courtyard, surrounded by galleries from which bedrooms and passages open, very much like that historical hostelry in the Borough at which Mr. Pickwick first encountered Sam Weller.

These galleries, and indeed most portions of the hotel, are made of wood, and the building is not of recent date, for now no houses in Christiania are allowed to be constructed of timber only.

In the centre of the court is a fountain which keeps up a gentle plashing, very pleasant to listen to on a day when the thermometer is at 90 in the shade, as it generally is about this time of year in Christiania. All round the fountain are small tables and chairs, ready for the little groups who will assemble at them after dinner for the cup of coffee and glass of cognac which form an indispensable part of a Norwegian dinner. The dinner itself is, during the summer months, always served in a large oblong tent in the

same courtyard at 2.30, and a very pleasant meal it is, if you are not too much wedded to English habits to be able to secure an appetite at that hour. At short intervals down the table large blocks of ice are placed, which perform excellent service in helping to keep the tent cool.

Then there is another delightful resort, the smoking-room, which is upstairs on an extension of the gallery overlooking the courtyard. It also is covered by a sort of tent, in the roof of which divers strange and gruesome birds and beasts disport themselves, or seem to do so: we have reason to believe that they are stuffed, as we notice that the flying capercaillie never seems to *get any forrader*; the fox stealing with cautious tread upon the timid hare, unaccountably delays his final spring, but perhaps he is right not to hurry, for the hare does not appear to be taking any measures for her safety, but sits calmly nibbling the deeply dyed moss which it were vain to inform her is not good to eat. But there are other birds which we know are stuffed, for we helped to stuff them, and these are the sparrows, which come gaily flying in at the open side of the smoking balcony; hopping on the chairs and tables, pecking at the crumbs on your plate, and behaving generally in that peculiarly insolent manner which can only be acquired, even by a sparrow, after years of study, and the most complete familiarity with the subject. These birds are a source of endless delight to Esau, who certainly gives them more than can be good for them; they eat twice as much as the capercaillies, though the latter are considerably larger. And if the sparrows are not enough entertainment, there are tanks of gold-fish and trees of unknown species in pots; but neither of these perform very interesting feats.

In this room it is the custom of the ordinary traveller to have his breakfast and supper. Breakfast is very much like a good English one, except the coffee, which is not at all like English coffee, being perfectly delicious; but the supper is a meal peculiar to Norway, and is generally constructed more or less on the following principles:

### **Starters**

- Caviare, with a fresh lemon cut up on it.
- Norwegian sardines, garnished with parsley and bay leaves.
- Cray-fish boiled in salt water.
- Prawns of appalling magnitude.

### **Main courses**

1. Bologna sausage in slices.
2. Chickens.
3. Slices of beef, tongue, and corned beef.
4. Reindeer tongue.
5. Brod Lax (spelling not guaranteed), meaning raw salmon smoked and cut in thin slices.

**Extras** see table 2.1

This supper does not come in in courses, but the whole of it is placed on the table at once; not spread out all over the surface of the board as at home, but arranged in small oval dishes all round the consumer, and radiating within easy reach from his plate, making his watch-chain the centre of a semicircle, and thus entirely dispensing with that creaking-booted fidget, the waiter. Such an arrangement cannot fail to coax the most delicate appetite. There is no coarse *pièce de résistance*; no vast joint to disgust

| Name                     | Comment                                                                 |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Baked potatoes           |                                                                         |
| Good butter and rolls    | which no man can resist,<br>so fresh are they,<br>and light, and crisp. |
| Drink: <i>salon öl</i> , | which is the best Norwegian beer.                                       |

Table 2.1: Elements of a Norwegian supper



Figure 2.1: Norwegian Arrangement of Dishes at Table

you; but like the bee, you flit from dish to dish, toying, now with a prawn, now with a merry-thought, till you suddenly discover that you are unconsciously replete, and you rise from the table feeling that it was a good supper, and that existence is not such a struggle after all.

Altogether the *Victoria* is a most charming inn, either to the wave-worn mariner wearied by the cruel buffetings of the North Sea, or to the weather-beaten sportsman returning straight from the bleak snow-fields of the interior of Norway. We never stayed there for more than two days, but for that time it is an uninterrupted dream of delight.

## 2.2 *July 12.*—

We had a very hard day, buying all sorts of things to make our stores complete: jam, butter, whisky, soap, and matches, Tauchnitz books, and several other necessities. The butter is most important, as the best variety that can be got up country is extremely nasty; the worst is unutterably vile, though it is quite possible to acquire almost a liking for the peculiarities of the better kind after starvation has stared you in the face. We were much put out at not being able to get a small keg of whisky, as we fear that the bottles will fare badly in the rough travelling we shall have.

Accounts of Christiania may be found in many excellent guide-books, with which this simple story cannot hope to compete, so we will not attempt to describe the town, since, though our knowledge of all the grocers' shops is voluminous and exhaustive, we are totally ignorant of the interior arrangements of either the churches or police

stations.

The Skipper was very anxious to get some violet ink, because he is firmly convinced that it is the only sort fit for a gentleman to use. *A man*, he said, *is known by his ink*; so we went into many shops and asked for that concoction, always in the English tongue. Then we arrived at a shop where they did not speak our language; and here suddenly, to the intense surprise of Esau, the Skipper broke forth into a long harangue in Norse, concluding with an extremely neat peroration. The shopkeeper listened with respectful admiration, and then said, *No, this is a stationer's shop, we do not keep it*. Then Esau gave way to irreverent laughter, and the shopkeeper concluded that we were attempting a practical joke, and we had to fly. The Skipper was not angry, but very much hurt. It afterwards transpired that he had got up the whole of that magnificent burst of eloquence out of *Bennett's Phrase Book*, and then it had failed for want of two or three right words; truly very hard.

We took our canoes to the railway station, and despatched them to Lillehammer this afternoon; they had been a source of great interest to all beholders since our arrival, especially to the Norwegians, who have all a sort of natural affinity with any kind of boat, and seem very much pleased with the combined lightness and strength of their build. As far as we can learn they are the first of the kind that have yet been brought to this country.

At the station they were surrounded by a crowd of inquiring Norsemen, all of them wondering much what the name of *Nettie* on the bows of the Skipper's craft could mean, and spelling it over very slowly and carefully aloud. When we came away, one of them, evidently a linguist, had just translated it into his own language, and was proceeding to conjugate it as an irregular verb.

## Chapter 3

# By rail and lake

### 3.1 July 13.—

We were engaged till late at night putting the finishing touches to our packing. The last thing we did was to put our most gorgeous apparel, and any articles not likely to be needed during our camp life, into two portmanteaus, with strict orders to the Boots to keep the same until our return. This morning, after an early breakfast, on descending to the courtyard we found these portmanteaus roped down on the roof of the omnibus which was to take all the luggage to the station en route for Lillehammer. This we rectified, and then set off to walk to the station ourselves.

Now Esau is possessed by an insensate craving for anchovy paste, which he considers a necessity for camping; he said, *It imparts a certain tone to the stomach, and aids digestion*; and added that *no well-appointed dinner-table should ever be without it*, which sounds a little like an advertisement, but which he asserted was a quotation from the rules laid down for his diet by Dr. Andrew Clark. In Christiania these rules are not strictly adhered to either by 15 Esau or the inhabitants of the place, for anchovy paste is not to be obtained there: this we know, because we went into every shop in the town, and asked for it without success. And in this supreme moment, when we were walking to the station with only a few minutes before the train should start, he insisted on diving into a wretched pokey little shop, which had escaped our notice yesterday, and demanding *anchovy paste* in a loud English voice. The Skipper devoutly thanked Providence it could not be bought, as he declared the smell of it alone was enough to put a man off his breakfast, and that he had such a morbid longing for hair grease, that he could not have prevented himself from putting it on his head.

We got our baggage safely booked, and ourselves also, after a scene of riot that was nothing like a football match, but something like Donnybrook fair, and at last found ourselves in a compartment with five other passengers, all of whom had a most inconsiderate amount of luggage with them in the carriage, while we contented ourselves with four guns, seven fishing-rods, two axes, one spade, four hundred and fifty cartridges, two fishing-bags, and a pair of glasses. We calculated that we saved at least one and fourpence by taking these things with us; and although our fellow-passengers were rather profane at first they soon settled down, and we had time to digest the fact that we were one and fourpence to the good. It 16 was very warm in there; outside the thermometer was 92 degrees in the shade; but we survived it, and after that no mere heat has any terrors for us.

Two of our fellow-passengers were an Englishman and his wife, who had a maid travelling with them through to Thronhjelm; and when getting the tickets the booking clerk informed them that there were no second-class through tickets issued, *but*, he added, *this will do as well*, and handed them one first and one third through ticket,

which we thought an extremely ingenious way out of the difficulty.

A railway journey is not interesting anywhere, and less so in Norway than other countries, as there is not even the sensation of speed to divert your mind, and keep you excited in momentary expectation of a smash. Uphill the pace is slow because it cannot be fast; downhill it is slow for fear of the train running away.

There are only two trains a day, one very early, one rather late, but timed to arrive at its destination before dark, for there is no travelling by night. Directly darkness comes on the train is stopped, and the passengers turned out into an hotel, where they remain to rest till dawn. From Christiania to Eidsvold[8] is about a three-hour journey, and during that time the guard came to look at our tickets 425 times. He wanted to incite us to commit a breach of the peace, or to catch us offending against some of his by-laws, and was always appearing at a new place; first at 17 one door, then the other, anon peeping at us through the hole for the lamp, and again blinking from the next carriage, through the ice-water vessel. But we were aware of his intention, and did nothing to annoy him, and always showed the same tickets till they were worn out, and then we produced strawberry jam labels, which seemed to be quite satisfactory.

We reached Eidsvold at twelve, and went aboard the steamer *Skiblädner*,[3] where we found the canoes already nicely placed, lashed on the paddle-boxes.

We had a delightful voyage up the Mjösen,[10] on the most beautiful of Norwegian summer days, in the best of Norwegian steamers. The Mjösen is the largest Norwegian lake, about fifty-five miles long, and the guide-books say it is 1,440 feet deep, but we had not time to measure it, as we were busy admiring the scenery on the saloon table most of the way. This steaming up the Mjösen is a very pleasant way of spending a fine day: the shores are nowhere strikingly beautiful, but always pretty and charming; the steamer goes fast, so that there is a sensation of getting on and not losing time. There are intervals of mild excitement whenever we come to a village, and take up or disembark passengers; generally speaking they come out in boats, but occasionally we come to a larger and more important place where there is a pier, or even a railway, and at these the excitement is greater and the crowd quite worthy of 18 the name. The folks all take off their hats directly we get within sight, and continue to do so till they fade away or sink below the horizon; and we in the steamer all do the same. But the great attraction is undoubtedly dinner, which is uncommonly well served in the saloon, every luxury that can be obtained being placed before us, concluding with wild strawberries and cream of the frothiest and most captivating appearance.

Both on this boat and her sister the '*Kong Oscar*' they take great pride in doing things well, very much as the old mail-coaches which occupied a parallel position in England used to do. The *Kong Oscar* is rather the faster boat, but we consider the captain of the *Skiblädner* to be lengths ahead of his rival, being a first-rate old fellow; on the other hand, the *Skiblädner* handmaidens are not comely, whereas they of the *Kong Oscar* are renowned for their beauty, not only in Norway, but in certain stately homes of England that we wot of. Esau lost his heart to one of them two years ago, and still raves about her, though the only way in which he endeavoured to win her affection was by sitting on a paddle-box with his slouch hat tilted over his eyes, gazing at her with mute admiration from a respectful distance, while she, alas! was totally unconscious of his passion. He never told his love, because he could not speak Norse.

We arrived at Lillehammer about eight o'clock, and went to the Victoria Hotel, from the flat roof of which, after an excellent dinner, we enjoyed a pipe and one of the prettiest views, in a quiet homely style of prettiness, that any one could wish to see: just at our feet the wooden village, with its many-coloured houses and their red roofs; then some green slopes, and 100 feet below the vast extent of the Mjösen lying calm and still and looking very green and deep, with the landing-stage and deserted steamers

apparently quite close below us. On the opposite side of the lake highish hills covered with fir trees, and to the right the river Laagen with its green waters hurrying down from the mountains in a broad and rapid stream as far as the eye could reach. Just across the road in front of the hotel there is a nice little stream which turns a saw, and rejoices in a cool splashing waterfall, the soothing sound of which refreshes us by day and night. The same torrent can be seen higher up the mountain in a place where it makes some rather fine falls, which only look like a long white rag fluttering amongst the trees at this distance. This was the view we had at midnight, when it was, apparently, no darker than immediately after sunset, and a good deal lighter than it generally is in London at midday; the while the sky was covered with the rich glow of colouring which can only be seen in the Northern summer.

There were two Englishmen with us on the roof, with whom, aided by coffee, we roamed over the greater part of the civilised and uncivilised world—Australia, Canada, Japan, Turkey, and Ceylon, and we all agreed that none of them can ‘go one better’ than a summer night in Norway.



## Chapter 4

# By road

### 4.1 *July 14.—*

We arose pretty early, wishing to get over thirty-eight miles of ground before evening, which with the canoes would be a long day's work; as we had the natives to contend with, who by reason of their dreadfully lazy habits are most difficult to *bring to the scratch*.

We have decided, after long experience, that nothing that you can do has any effect in hurrying them; but that it is quite possible to make them slower by losing your temper, or taking any vigorous measures of acceleration. They seem to get more deliberate and aggravatingly slow as they grow older.

Norwegian boys are distractingly restless and full of energy, and look as if they have had nothing to eat, which is generally the actual fact, judging by an English standard of what constitutes food. At the age of fifteen they become better fed, and their energy departs altogether, and after entirely disappearing it keeps getting less every year. A full-grown man does not seem to need much food, certainly not as much as an Englishman, and prefers that of the worst kind, conveyed to the mouth at the end of a knife-blade. We have never noticed any description of food which he does not make sour, rather than eat it when sweet. Bread, milk, cream, and cheese, jam and cabbages, for instance, are articles which he prefers fermented or sour. He reminds one of the cockney who complained that the country eggs had no flavour, or of the Scotchman who, replying to the apologies of a friend in whose house he happened to get a bad egg, said, *Ma dear freend, ah prefair 'em rotten*.

But his laziness and love of nasty food are almost the only bad qualities that we have discovered in him. He is ridiculously honest,<sup>1</sup> and his kindness and hospitality are beyond praise. This morning, however, the laziness was the quality chiefly conspicuous, and though we ordered our conveyances last night and got up early (for us), we did not succeed in starting till twelve o'clock.

We first despatched the canoes and baggage packed on a kind of low waggon, and then got into a double cariole (which is something like a gig) ourselves, and drove gaily off along the Thronthjem road. We did not, however, follow it far, but turning to the left down a steep hill, we crossed the Laagen by a long and rather handsome bridge, and then up a winding road on the further side, all looking very pretty on such a glorious day. The road became more picturesque the further we got from Lillehammer, every turn bringing us to some fresh combination of mountain, pine-trees, rock, and waterfall—especially rock. There are so many tracts of country in Norway entirely composed of rock, that, as Esau remarked, 'probably no one will ever find a use for

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<sup>1</sup>Save, perhaps, on three points—fishing tackle, strong drinks, and straps or pieces of cord, which may be committed to memory as *a fly, a flask, and a fastener*.

it all.'

We lunched at a nice little station called *Neisteen*; a delicious meal off trout, strawberries and cream, and fladbrod, for which they charged us a shilling each.

*Fladbrod*[9] is the staple food of the country folk in Norway; they make it of barley-meal, rye-meal, or pea-meal, but the best and commonest is that composed of barley-meal. It is simply meal and water baked on a large, flat, circular iron, and is about the thickness of cardboard, of a brownish colour, and very crisp. The taste for it is easily acquired in the absence of other food, and with butter it becomes quite delicious—to a very hungry man.

At Neisteen there was a little shop where the Skipper at last obtained his violet ink, but Esau was foiled in his dastardly attempt at retaliation with anchovy paste.

After this our road lay along a lovely river for fishing, and we were much tempted to stop and try a cast in it, especially as we saw natives luring fish from their rocky haunts by the time-honoured Norwegian method. They first settle how far they want to cast—say thirty feet. Then cut down a thirty-foot pine tree; take the bark off it; tie a string to the thin end and a hook to the string; stick a worm on the hook[1, 12], and go forth to the strife. When the fish bites, they strike with great rapidity and violence, and something is bound to go; generally it is the fish, which leaves its native element at a speed which must astonish it; describes half of a sixty-foot circle at the same rate, and lands either in a tree or on a rock with sufficient force to break itself.

But we had no time to spare, especially as for this stage we had a bad, shying, jibbing horse, and a perfect fool of a driver.

Near the last station we passed three English people on the road, who our driver informed us lived near there. He told us their name was Wunkle, but the man at the next station said it was Punkum, and we could not decide which of these two common English names it was most likely to be.

Kvisberg, the last station on this road, was reached at 9 P.M., but before this the road, which had gradually got worse all the way from Lillehammer, had faded away and disappeared: and as the road got worse, so did the hired conveyances; so that we were gradually reduced from the gorgeous double cariole with red cushions with which we started, and a horse that could hardly be held in, to a springless, jolting stolkjær (country cart), and a pony that required much persuasion to induce him to boil up a trot.

Kvisberg is situated, with peculiar disregard for appropriateness of position, on the side of an almost unclimbable hill, about a quarter of a mile from the place where the road departs into the Hereafter. No English horse would take a cart up such a hill, but Norwegian ponies are like the Duke's army, and *will go anywhere and do anything*, only you must give them plenty of time. We mounted to the station, a wretched little place, and being hungry ordered coffee and eggs, for which repast we paid twopence-halfpenny each, and then at ten o'clock got a man to carry our few small things the last six miles to Dalbakken, where we intended to sleep the night. The walk was delightful, through a precipitous thickly wooded gorge, at the bottom of which the river which we had followed all day went leaping and foaming along, though it was now reduced to a mere mountain torrent.

About a mile from our journey's end we were overtaken by a Norwegian student on a walking tour, who spoke a little English and walked with us the rest of the way, as he too was bound for Dalbakken.

We reached it at midnight, and were not much gratified to find that it was a very small poor building, and that our luggage had not arrived. We had been hoping against hope that it might have done so, as we had not seen it anywhere on the road. The next pleasant discovery was that four other travellers had arrived before us and taken all

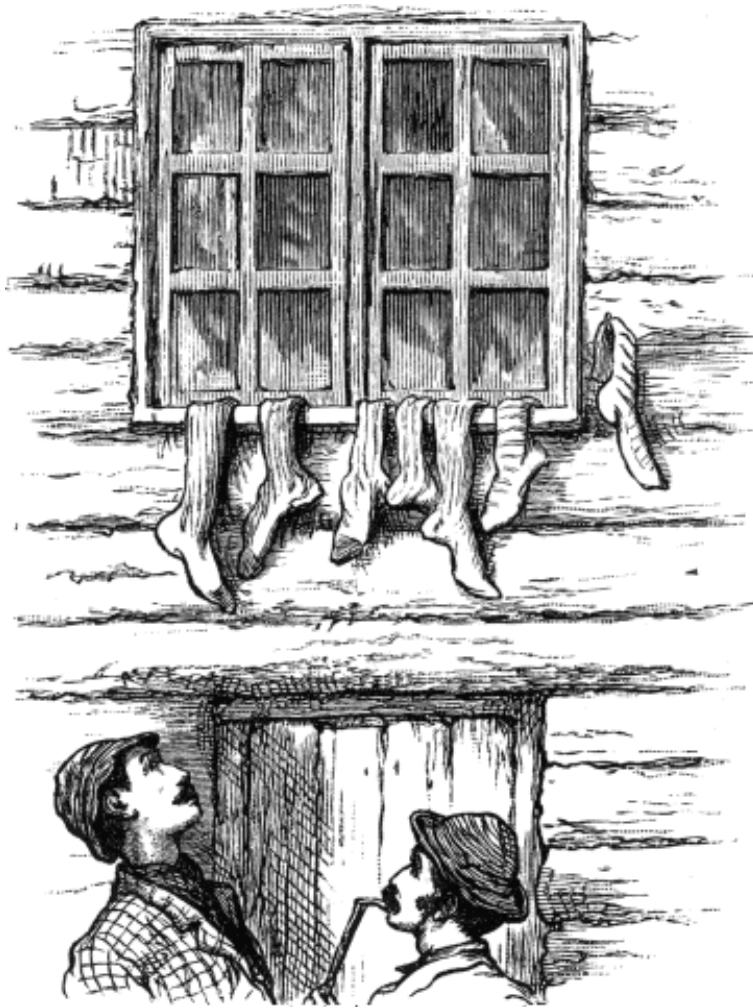


Figure 4.1: Midnight Study of Stockings at Dalbakken

the rooms. This fact was first conveyed to our minds by seeing four pairs of socks[4] hanging out of the upstairs windows to dry (see figure 4.1); at which sight we began to suspect that things were going to turn out unpleasant for us; but at last we got a room with one very small bed between us. We tossed for this bed, and the Skipper won; so Esau passed the night on the floor, on a sheepskin, and was very comfortable—at least he said so next morning. The natives here were much impressed by all our habits and belongings, but especially by our sleeping with the window open; wherefore the old woman of the Sæter<sup>2</sup> below kept bouncing into the room at intervals during the night to see us perform that heroic feat; and though it was flattering to be made so much of, still fame has its drawbacks.

The general appearance of the place caused us to expect nightly visitations from other foes, not human, but to our surprise there were none.

Dalbakken is only three quarters of a mile from a lake called Espedals Vand, where we propose to commence our cruise. It is beautifully situated on a small flat bit of ground halfway up the north side of the gorge: the hills on the south side not far away are so steep that they could not be climbed by all the branded alpenstocks that Switzerland ever produced. Looking to the east the gorge is very wild and grand,

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<sup>2</sup>A *Sæter* is a mountain farm, to which all the cattle are driven during the summer, so that the lowland pastures can be mown for hay.

covered with pine trees and steep crags, and no dwelling in sight; while to the west, in which direction Espedals Vand lies, it is more level and open, and slopes gradually downwards again, Dalbakken itself being the highest point in the track.

## Chapter 5

# The first camp

### 5.1 *July 15.—*

We slept well, and at eight o'clock the Skipper, always first to wake, got up, and looking out of the window saw thence the four bad men who had taken the rooms before us and hung their socks out of the window, just starting on their journey, and looking as if they did so with an easy conscience.

Some men can carry with a light heart and gay demeanour a weight of crime that would wreck the happiness of less hardened ruffians.

Then he turned his gaze in the opposite direction, and oh, joy! our luggage and boats were in sight, and arrived directly afterwards. The man in charge said he had travelled all night with them without sleeping, and to judge from his appearance we imagined that his statement was correct. He had been sitting on the Skipper's bag for thirty-eight miles, and from the state of its interior we calculated his weight to be about twenty-two stone. He was very ill-tempered after his mere trifle of a journey and vigil, and asked for more money on hearing that he had three quarters of a mile further to go. This was very sad, and we thought showed an unchristian spirit; but we sternly urged him forward, and all ended happily on our arrival at Espedals, when we paid him his money and a shilling extra.

It only took us a quarter of an hour to get to the lake, and after unpacking there and dismissing the men we put the canoes into the water, and then put water into the canoes until they sank; while we sat on the shore watching the trout rising all over the rippled surface of the lake, occasionally eyeing our sunken canoes in an impatient, longing sort of way, but never attempting to start on our great voyage.

These tactics to an inexperienced 'voyageur' might look like the acts of an ordinary lunatic; but it should be explained that the long exposure to the sun which the canoes had undergone had caused them to leak badly, and they required soaking to swell up the joints, before they could be intrusted with our valuable property and persons. Besides this we were hungry, and thought it a good opportunity for lunch, and had to make some previously arranged alterations in the baggage with a view to lightening it. As long as the land journey lasted, strength was the chief object to aim at, but now lightness was of more importance. About one o'clock, when we had got all our things aboard and were just starting, a strong head-wind arose. This was always our luck. We decided to make only a short voyage. The waves were fairly big, but the canoes weathered them bravely, though they were very low in the water, and we had to keep the pumps going (i.e. mop them out with our sponges) during the whole voyage.

We landed not more than a mile and a half from the end of the lake, and found a very nice camping-ground about ten yards from the shore on the south bank, with what the poets call 'a babbling brook' close to it; pitched the tent, and had a simple dinner



Figure 5.1: The Start on Espedals Lake



Figure 5.2: The Skipper's first Cast



Figure 5.3: Our Camp on Espedals Lake

of bacon, eggs, and jam, the last dinner during our trip at which trout did not find a place. Then we sallied forth in the canoes to fish. Esau was the last to leave the shore, and as he paddled off he noticed the Skipper's rod in the familiar Norwegian shape of a bow, and found him struggling with two on at the same time, both of which he landed, and found to be over 1 lb. each. 'First blood claimed and allowed,' to quote the terse language of the prize ring. Not a bad beginning, but we only got a few more about the same weight. They came very short, but were remarkably game fish when hooked, and in first-rate condition. We turned in about eleven, when it began to rain a little, and slept with our heads under the blankets, the mosquitoes being in countless multitudes.

## 5.2 *July 16.—*

It was a lovely morning, and the lake looked its best, but it is not strikingly beautiful compared with many that we have seen. It has high rugged hills on both sides, and pine woods down to the water's edge, and some small islands dotted about the upper end of it; but the lake is rather shallow, the pine trees rather stunted, and there are a good many wooden huts and sæters on the hill-sides, which, although they appear to be mostly uninhabited, detract from the wildness of the scenery.

The natives have one or two boats on the lake, and do some fishing on their own account. To-day we saw a man engaged in the atrocious employment of fishing with an 'otter.'

Any natives who see our camp when rowing past come to shore to inspect us and our belongings. They all adopt the same course of procedure. They land, and stare, and say nothing; then they pull up their boat and make it safe, and advancing close to the tent stare, and say nothing either to each other or us. Then Esau says confidentially, as if it was a new and brilliant idea (he has done exactly the same thing some scores of times), 'We'd better be civil to these fellows; perhaps they could bring us some eggs, and they look pretty friendly.' The natives are all the time staring and saying nothing. Then Esau remarks in Norwegian, 'It is fine weather to-day; have you any eggs?' To this the chief native replies at great length in his own barbarous jargon, and Esau not having

understood a single syllable answers, 'Ja! ja! (yes), but have you any eggs?' Then aside to the Skipper, 'Wonder what the deuce the fool was talking about?' Soon the natives perceive that their words are wasted, and relapse into the silent staring condition again, and after a time and a half, or two times, they depart as they came. Sometimes they return again with eggs in a basket, when we pay them well and give them some fish; at other times they look upon us as dangerous lunatics, and avoid us like the plague.

Esau learnt this habit of asking for eggs when we were on a fishing expedition near the south coast of Norway. On one occasion there we arrived at a small village, with an enormous quantity of trout that we had caught in the adjoining fjord; and found a small crowd of about fourteen or fifteen seafaring men, idly lounging round an open space between the cottages. He first went round and presented each of those men with two trout solemnly, without a word, as though it were a religious ceremony. Then he began at the first man again and said, 'Have you eggs?' and receiving a reply in the negative, he went on to the next, and to each one of the group asking the same weird question.

The men, who had been chatting busily amongst themselves up to the moment of our arrival, became silent; they did not laugh, but only looked at one another; and one of them shyly felt in his pocket to see if there were any eggs there whose existence he might have chanced to forget.

Presently, as we could get no eggs, we moved off sorrowfully but not discouraged; and the men remained looking after us silent and uncertain. Thus the interview ended, and we regained our boat.

The beach here was capital for bathing, and we enjoyed a delightful tub this morning, the more pleasant indeed because at Dalbakken we slept in our clothes, and only had a soap-dish to wash in next morning. Immediately after bathing we lit a fire, and the cook commenced operations; the office of cook being held alternately by each of us for one day. The man from Dalbakken brought us some milk, so we indulged in coffee. When we have only 'tin milk' we drink tea; for though tin milk will do fairly with tea, we think it wretched with coffee. After breakfast we each took our canoe, and went fishing wherever the spirit moved us, taking lunch with us. On a day of this sort, if the fish are rising we have a great time, and if they won't rise, we lie on the bank in the sun and smoke, or sketch, or kill mosquitoes, and have a great time in that case also, so that the hours pass in a blissful round of enjoyment, and all is peace. Having each one his own ship we are quite independent, only taking care to return to camp about six o'clock to get dinner ready. After that there is nearly always a rise, and we fish till about eleven, when we generally turn in, though it is by no means dark by that time; and on a few occasions when the fish were rising very well, we have fished on all through the night and into the next day, losing count of the almanack, and conducting life on the principles of going to bed when tired, and eating when hungry, so that, like the Snark, we might be said to—

Frequently breakfast at five o'clock tea,

And dine on the following day.

There was very little wind to-day, and these fish being very shy, and apt to come short, it was almost impossible to get them without a ripple until evening, when large white moths began to show on the water, and the trout became bolder; consequently we did not make great bags, though the fish caught were very good ones.

At night there was one of the most lovely sunsets ever seen. The sun went down right at the other end of the lake, so that we had an uninterrupted view, with all the glorious colours of the sky reflected in the water; and we agreed that the effects about half-past ten this evening formed as good a symphony in purple and orange as a man could expect to find out of the Grosvenor Gallery.

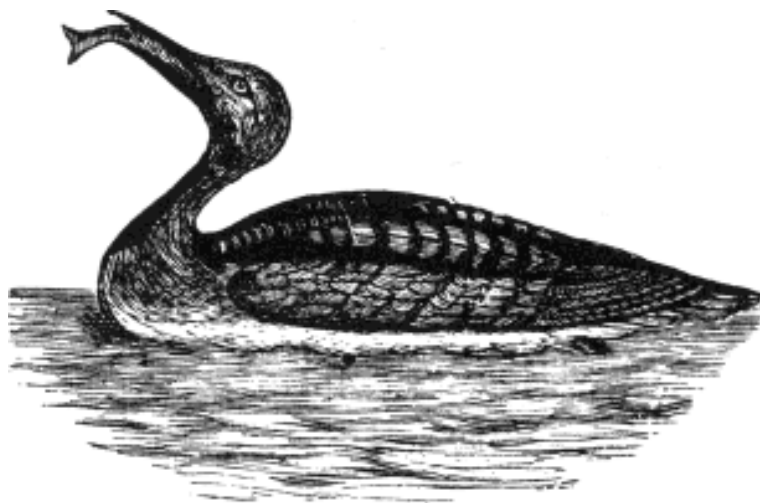


Figure 5.4: Black-throated Diver

### 5.3 *July 17.—*

The morning began with a dead calm, but this soon gave place to such a wind down the lake that we were induced to strike the camp, pack the canoes, and proceed on our voyage into the unknown.

We started soon after eleven, lunched near Megrunden,<sup>1</sup> and saw there two black-throated divers on the lake, which Esau pursued for some time, but of course never got near them. Some of the dives they made to avoid his advancing canoe seemed to be about half a mile in length. Just below Böle we caught several fish, but kept paddling on with our favourable wind, casting every now and then in likely places, and soon came to a rapid with a rough bridge thrown across its upper end. The rapid was very shallow, so that we did not dare to attempt to run it with loaded boats, and had to make a portage. Even then we got a few bumps in running it, but arrived at the bottom all right. Now the scene changed; we were in a smaller and narrower part of the valley; buildings had entirely disappeared; there was nothing to be seen but gloomy pine forests and black-looking mountains: the weather also was quickly changing, and evidently intending to be wet and stormy; so we pushed on rapidly, one coasting on each side of the lake till we reached its further extremity, where Esau was nearly swamped crossing the waves, as the wind began to blow harder every minute. Soon the rain was upon us, while we looked for a camping-ground but found none, as the shores were everywhere very swampy for a quarter of a mile inland. At length we came to a second rapid, where the natives have thrown a clumsy weir across for some unknown purpose, and here we found a fairly dry spot, made our portage in heavy rain and wind, with a great deal of groaning, misery, and brandy and water; pitched the tent, and after struggling for about half an hour, got a dyspeptic fire to fizzle, and so cooked some fish and eggs, and then had tea in the tent. After this we were a little more comfortable, as it was very nice and dry inside; but it was midnight before we had finished all our portage, got the canoes down into the next lake, and made everything snug for the night, so that we were quite exhausted, as our day had commenced at seven A.M. The mosquitoes were more numerous here than at any place we have yet seen.

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<sup>1</sup>The various places mentioned on the voyage are not villages, as one might imagine from the dot that marks them on the Ordnance map, but generally only a single one-roomed log hut, and for the most part not inhabited or habitable.

## 5.4 *Sunday, July 18.—*

It rained all night, but as Tweedledum said of his umbrella, *not under here*, and a ditch we made last night kept our floor quite dry. Lighting a fire for breakfast was a toilsome business, but at last we found some wood dry enough to burn. It continued raining in a nice keep-at-it-all-day-if-you-like kind of manner, so we resided in the tent, and read, and indulged in whisky and water for lunch to counteract any ill effects of the reading—for some of it was poetry.

Our tent was about three-quarters of a mile from the end of Bred Sjö, and after lunch we both went in one canoe to reconnoitre the next rapid, which is a long one down to Olstappen Vand. We found that it is quite impracticable for canoes; the river simply running violently down a steep place till it perishes in the lake; about a mile of rapid with hardly enough decently behaved water in the whole of it to hold a dozen trout. But there were a dozen, for we caught them, one wherever there was a little turnhole. How we were to get down that river was concealed in the unfathomable depths of the mysterious Future.

# Appendix A

## Misery

### A.1 *July 19.—*

It rained all night again and all day. This was dreadful, and not at all like Norway.

We have always made a rule that we may fish on Sunday, but not shoot. Some people draw an even finer distinction, and say it is allowable to shoot with a rifle, but not with a gun: this we have always thought too subtle. Now yesterday was Sunday, and Esau having observed two divers on the lake while the Skipper was out fishing, went and secreted himself with a gun where he expected them to come over, hoping that they would be alarmed by the other canoe on its return. This soon happened, and they flew within forty yards of him. Both barrels were discharged, and Esau returned to camp, muttering something about *birds of that kind having immortal bodies if they hadn't immortal souls*. The result of Sabbath-breaking was no doubt this miserable weather.

The camp to-day presented a most cheerless prospect. The canoes were drawn up on land and turned bottom upwards; the kitchen stowed away 40 under a soaked sack; a very third-rate camp fire smouldering before the tent, surrounded by old egg-shells, backbones of fish, bacon-rind, and some apology for firewood; our two rods standing up against the gloomy sky with the wind whistling through their lines, and all the scenery blotted out with rain and mist, and scudding, never-ending clouds that drifted down the valley, and gave very occasional glimpses of extremely wet mountains. The cook, clad in a macintosh with a spade in his hand, watching a pot which was trying to boil on the spluttering fire, his trousers tucked into his socks, and his boots shining with wet, would have given any one a pretty good idea of the meaning of the expression *played out*.

The mosquitoes were bad here, and we spent much of our leisure time making war against them. Esau's favourite way of *clearing the road* was to bring in a smoking log of pitch pine, close up the ventilation, and fill the tent with smoke. It forced us to quit, but not the mosquitoes, as they appeared to fall into a deep and tranquil sleep, from which they awoke refreshed and ready to renew the attack just a few minutes before the tent again became habitable for human beings. Prowling round the tent and squashing them with our fingers was perhaps the best plan, but we were obliged to sleep with a rug over our heads and covered up at every point, to avoid their intrusion at night.

### A.2 *July 20.—*

Still rain, and nothing but rain; it stopped for an hour or two last night, and the lake looked uncommonly pretty among its dark surroundings, but the downpour soon began again.



Figure A.1: View of Bredsjö by Night.

In our desperation yesterday afternoon we arranged with a native, whom the Skipper discovered, to bring a horse and sleigh to-day to meet us at the next rapid, and help us down with our baggage to Olstappen. Therefore we got up early and were down at the rapid about ten o'clock, where we found our man waiting. The rain at this period was the worst variety we have yet seen, and it has tried all kinds during the last four days. We packed everything on the sleigh, covered it with our ground sheets, and then put the wheels on our canoes, and followed down the track.

There is a saw-mill halfway down the river which is simply perfect. It is perched on piles over the middle of the stream, where it dashes through a rift in a huge black cliff, and the water goes tearing past down a long shoot made of logs, and plunges down at the end churned into a mass of white foam, with noise and spray that quite bewilder one.

We got down to Olstappen at last, not without a good deal of hard work, and paid our man 4s. 6d. On our way we met a Norwegian tourist, who was on a walking tour with his sister, and had left her rained up, so to speak, in a Sæter, and was strolling about in the forest to wile away the time: he spoke a very little English, and we had a long talk with him; as he had a fellow-feeling for us, and was quite ready to curse the rain with us or any one else.

The Norwegians, men and women, seem to go a good deal on walking tours, and probably know infinitely more of their fatherland than does the average Briton of this island, the superiority of which he seldom fails to impress on the long-suffering foreigner.

At midday we launched our canoes on Olstappen, which is a fine wide lake, and not so rainy as Bredsjö, being several hundred feet lower. We paddled across to the mouth of the Vinstra River, a rather perilous undertaking, for where the wind met the river there was a nasty sea on, and we shipped some water, but got safe to land. We could not find a decent camp till we had walked a quarter of a mile from the lake up the river. There we found a nice sheltered place, pretty, and close to the river, made our portage, and pitched the tent, and with tea our drooping spirits began to revive (who is proof against a hot meal of trout and bacon, buttered eggs, and tea?), even though our clothes and equipments were all wet through, and we had a damp change of raiment, sleeping rugs, and boots. But now the wind had changed, and we looked forward to the morrow as the wearied traveller always does look forward to the morrow.

There were many sandpipers at the mouth of this river; we caught one young one,

and had serious thoughts of taking its innocent life for our tea, but better feelings prevailed, and we released it as an offering for fine weather, and caught four trout instead.

### **A.3    *July 21.—***

Hurrah! the rain stopped during the night, and this morning actually the sun shone out now and then. We heaped up a huge fire and dried all our belongings, and then had nearly a whole day before us free for fishing.

A voyaging day is a big business. We calculate that it takes us two and a half hours to pack up from an old camp, breakfast, and get aboard ship; but to pitch the camp in a new place takes much longer. First you have to find a suitable place, often a matter of great difficulty in a country like this, where level spaces a yard square are very rare; dig a trench; pitch the tent, and arrange everything in it; collect firewood, and make a place for the fire; see that the boats and everything about the tent are safe from harm should the stormy winds begin to blow; and then cook dinner. All this cannot be done under three hours of hard work; so that if in addition you propose getting over a considerable amount of ground, it is sure to be a long and toilsome day. But the following day you wake up with a glorious feeling of duty performed and pleasure to look forward to.

The Skipper, with a hankering after cleanliness, washed a lot of clothes, and himself, having left the rain to perform the latter operation for the last two or three days; but Esau, not being troubled with any such absurd remnants of civilisation, went up the river reconnoitring in his natural condition. He came back to dinner in a perfectly rapturous state, having caught a remarkably nice bag of fish, got a beautiful view of the Jotunfjeld Mountains, and found a waterfall, which he said was the best in Norway, and therefore in the world. The Skipper had tried the lake in the afternoon without success, so after dinner we both went out and soon discovered the reason. Seven boats full of natives were out with a huge flue net, which they shot in a circle, and then beat the water enclosed till all the wretched fish were in the net. We saw them get thirty in one haul, and besides this there was a boat *ottering*; and although we captured a few fish, it was obvious that with all this netting it would be impossible for the lake to be good.



## Appendix B

# Happiness

### B.1 *July 22.—*

This was a really fine day, such as we consider proper to Norway; no uncertain half-and-halfness, but a day when an untiring sun shone down from an immaculate sky; and everything looked lovely. Our tent was on a nice bit of turf close to the Vinstra River, which is about as broad as the Thames at Eton, but with probably twice the volume of water, and certainly three times its rapidity; it rushed past our door at such a pace that no boat could stem it; and as far as we could see up the reach it came down in an equally swift torrent, so that all day and all night there was a swilling, rushing sound very pleasant to hear, and creating a sensation of coolness in warm weather. Esau considered it just the beau ideal of a trout stream, for any fish hooked in it gave a lot of trouble before he was safe in the bag. It ran into the lake about a quarter of a mile from our tent, forming a good-sized delta at its mouth. At the further side of the delta there were some fishermen's huts (from which emanated the seven boat-loads of natives whom we saw yesterday netting), and thence a track leads up the banks of the river to a lake called Slangen, two miles away.

The inhabitants of these huts came in a boat this morning to see our camp while we were at breakfast inside the tent. They poked their heads in, grinning and staring, and saying nothing. Then we did the honours, showed them our most interesting possessions—American axes, fly-books, knives, rods, etc., with all of which they were greatly impressed; then one picked up a bar of yellow soap that was lying on a box, and they all *wondered much at that*; then we talked to them for a brief space, chiefly out of *Bennett's Phrase Book*,<sup>[2]</sup> and considered the interview at an end, but they would not go, and remained silently staring at all our movements. So at last we ignored their presence altogether, which we have found the most effectual way of getting rid of a Norwegian peasant, and they gradually departed one by one till only one was left. To this man we gave a cup of our now cold coffee, which was not at all good, especially when compared with the delicious coffee which is always forthcoming even in the meanest Norwegian hut. He drank this, for they consider it a breach of etiquette to refuse proffered food; and immediately left, as if he remembered an engagement, having first thanked us in a rather constrained manner.

We were glad when our callers were gone, for we had found them *difficult*, as the French say; but we took advantage of their arrival to make arrangements with one of them to bring three ponies and sleighs to the other side of the delta to-morrow morning, when we hope to renew our journey.

After this we both went up the river on opposite sides; for the Skipper had become inflamed by a wish to see the waterfall which Esau discovered yesterday.

One of the great advantages of Norway consists in being able to leave your tent and

all other belongings quite to themselves, even when you know that there are several people about, and shrewdly suspect that the place where you have made your camp is a hay meadow belonging to one of them. We had a dim idea that such was the case here, not because there was any grass, but because there were very few stones, and a Norwegian mows down everything for hay except the stones. The Skipper came back with a very pretty bag of fish; he had been up to the fall, and thought it quite deserved all Esau's commendation; and his opinion is worth more because he has seen many of the great American falls and other stock sights of the world. It is not marked on the Ordnance map; there is no path to it, or near it, but you come on it suddenly by following the river up through the pine forest, and on turning a corner see the whole body of the Vinstra shooting over a cliff in one mad leap of perhaps a little more than a hundred feet. Of course the height and volume of water are insignificant compared with many falls, but the beauty of its situation can scarcely be excelled; and to us its greatest charm is its solitude and freedom from paths, tourists, and all the other unpleasant attributes of show places.

Esau following up the north bank of the river was not so successful fishing, and after crossing the Slangen River (which joins the Vinstra about a mile above our camp) he struck across the forest to see his beloved fall again, and try to sketch it. He came back in a bad temper, saying that he thought Ruysdael and Turner could make something of it—the former to do the water, and the latter the spray, mist, rainbows, and roar—and he wanted to write home and get them to come out on purpose; and when the Skipper suggested that they had given up painting, he said it was a great pity, for he had not time now to do it himself.

There is a corduroy bridge over the Slangen River, close to its junction with the Vinstra, and over this bridge we shall go to-morrow: we had intended to cruise up the Slangen and fish Slangen Lake, but we found that it would be impossible to continue our journey from the further end of it if we did so, and therefore decided to omit that part of the programme, though we are sorry to leave out Slangen, as it is a beautiful lake.

We have probably been repaid for the miseries of the last week by the beauty of our waterfall, the volume of which has doubtless been much increased by the exceptional rain of the last few days.

Early to bed—

## **B.2   *July 23.—***

And early to rise. We breakfasted soon after seven, and then packed everything, and crossed the mouth of the Vinstra in two Norse boats, assisted by two or three men who had come to help our horses and sleighs on the journey. We had terrible difficulty in getting the canoes placed in what we considered a safe position on the sleighs, but it was done at last, and the motley caravan started about 10.30.

First the noble owners; then a man who had got nothing on earth to do with the affair, then two women laughing and yelling like lunatics, then a sleigh drawn by a large pony, and carrying two boxes, cans, guns, and canoe; next some boys urging the large pony to herculean exertions; then the organiser of the transport department, who was apparently a professional fool, by the inordinate laughter which his every action caused; then some more women, and a smaller pony and sleigh, with the other canoe and all the rest of the luggage excepting one bag; lastly, another man leading an extremely small pony and sleigh with absolutely nothing on it, the man carrying the remaining bag for fear of tiring the pony. This mob of loafers had arrived in boats from Svatsum, which is a small village five miles distant at the north end of Olstappen. But they only accompanied

us for a quarter of a mile, when they all departed except the three men, who remained to manage the ponies.

The pace was not very great, about a mile an hour, for these little ponies insisted on stopping to rest every hundred yards when the path was good, and every twenty when it was bad.

We followed the river till we crossed the Slangen bridge; after that the path began to rise and get rapidly worse. We strolled along very leisurely, sitting down from time to time to rest and admire the view. The scenery was occasionally very beautiful, with the Jotun Mountains gleaming white in the background; and the forest itself was an endless delight, with its hoary moss-covered pine trees, and many-coloured carpet of berry-bearing plants, and the delicious odours with which a Norwegian forest in summer always abounds. In a fir tree here Esau came upon a family of cole titmice, and another of creepers, all very busy swinging themselves about, and creeping up and down the tree in search of dinner. They appeared to take a certain amount of interest in his proceedings, but showed no fear, and after watching them a long time he put the point of his rod up to one of the titmice, which actually pecked it rather angrily, but seeing that it made no impression took no further notice, but returned to its occupation of collecting food. In the next tree was a little spotted woodpecker which they call a *Gertrude bird*. The story is so prettily told in *Forest Life in Norway and Sweden*,[7] that it shall be inserted here.

— This woodpecker – or an ancestor of hers – was once a woman, and one day she was kneading bread in her trough, under the eaves of her house, when our Lord passed by leaning on St. Peter. She did not know it was our Lord and His apostle, for they looked like two poor men who were travelling past her cottage door. *Give us of your dough for the love of God*, said the Lord. *We have come far across the fjeld, and have fasted long.*

— Gertrude pinched off a small piece for them, but on rolling it in the trough to get it into shape, it grew, and grew, and filled up the trough completely. *No*, said she, *that is more than you want*; so she pinched off a smaller piece and rolled it out as before, but the smaller piece filled up the trough just as the other had done, and Gertrude put it aside too, and pinched a smaller bit still. But the miracle was just the same, the smaller bit filled up the trough as full as the largest sized kneading that she had ever put into it.

— Gertrude's heart was hardened still more; she put that aside too, resolving as soon as the stranger left her to divide all her dough into little bits, and to roll it out into great loaves. *I cannot give you any to-day*, said she. *Go on your journey; the Lord prosper you, but you must not stop at my house.*

— Then the Lord Christ was angry, and her eyes were opened, and she saw whom she had forbidden to come into the house, and she fell down on her knees. But the Lord said, *I gave you plenty, but that hardened your heart, so plenty was not a blessing to you. I will try you now with the blessing of poverty; you shall from henceforth seek your food day by day, and always between the wood and the bark* (alluding to the custom of mixing the inner rind of the birch with their rye-meal in times of scarcity). *But forasmuch as I see your penitence is sincere, this shall not be for ever; as soon as your back is entirely clothed with mourning this shall cease, for by that time you will have learnt to use your gifts rightly.*

— Gertrude flew from the presence of the Lord, for she was already a bird, but her feathers were even now blackened from her mourning, and from that time forward she and her descendants have all the year round



Figure B.1: Sunset at Fly Sæter

sought their food between the wood and the bark; but the feathers of their back and wings get more mottled with black as they grow older, and when the white is quite covered the Lord takes them for His own again.

*No Norwegian will ever hurt a Gertrude bird, for she is always under the Lord's protection, though He is punishing her for the time.*

Whether this is the true reason or not, the fact remains that the bird is never harmed by any one, and is as tame as possible.

We continued climbing slowly up the hill till about one o'clock, when we came out above the forest on an open plateau covered with rocks, grass, and low scrub: this was the Fjeld. At Finböle Sæter we stopped to refresh on milk. The road—which had gradually dwindled from a decent path to a sleigh track, then a footpath, a cow-path, and a goat-path, just sufficient to swear by, or at—now lost itself altogether. The men had been complaining that it was a *dole vei* soon after the start, now they said it was *schlamm*—a very expressive word; and Esau agreed with them, and said it was *damm schlamm*, which does not sound like proper Norsk; but it was such heart-rending work to see our beloved canoes bumping and jolting along, every moment in imminent danger of getting staved in, that to indulge in a few such Norwegian idioms was only human; and we decided to walk on and spare ourselves the agony of the sight: so, taking the bearings of *Fly Sæter*—which was our destination for the evening—we rambled on across the fjeld—a splendid walk, with some of the most beautiful mountains in Norway all round us.

We got on very well with the assistance of an Ordnance map and compass, till we came to the river Hinögle, after passing Hinögelid Sæter. The bridge here was not in the place marked on the map, so that after crossing it we had some trouble in finding Fly Sæter, and might perhaps have perished miserably like the Babes in the wood, had we not opportunely met a mediæval fisherman in a red night-cap, looking like one of the demons in 'Rip van Winkle,' who was going thither and conducted us. We arrived at seven o'clock, and appeased our hunger with the usual meal of trout and coffee, and such cream!

The sæter was a long low house, with three little rooms and only two windows. Its legitimate tenants were a very nice man and his equally nice wife and three children; but there were some occasional visitors here to-night in the shape of ourselves, our three men, the mediæval angler, and another traveller, twelve altogether to be apportioned

among four beds; and to make matters worse, the rooms were continually invaded by sheep, pigs, and goats, of which there were a large stock.

The Norwegians are so uniformly kind to all their animals, that their tameness is really troublesome; they insist on going where they like, and following one about begging for food like dogs, causing the Skipper to exclaim,—

*Ite domum saturæ, venit Hesperus, ite capellæ*; which he translated—

Out of the house in the evening! Get out, ye goats of the sæter!

We slept in the cheese-room very comfortably, one on the floor, the other on a good hay bed, and were warm for the first time for several nights, as we have not had sufficient blankets in the tent. Where the other ten people slept we did not inquire, but hoped they were happy. Our men and sleighs did not arrive till 10 P.M., at which time a most glorious sunset was going on, so that we could not attend to them at once. The sky, at first blue and yellow, gradually deepened into purple and orange, and finally the most brilliant red and almost black clouds, the hills all the time glowing with exquisite tints. After it was concluded we turned to the men, and were much delighted to find that nothing was smashed so far: the men had been very careful, and took eleven hours to perform a journey of ten miles.



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