

A LAKELAND VOYAGE.



COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

(From a photograph by Messrs. Poulton & Son, Lee.)

“ARE you ready for’ard?”
 “Ay, ay!”
 “Give way, then.”
 Two pairs of sculls dip the water, and the *Ripple* shoots out into the shallow streamlet which, after a merry race down Borrowdale, rolls lazily into that gem of English lakes, Derwentwater, close to the falls of famed Lodore.

The rain is coming down in real Lakeland fashion, and the crest line of Catbells is hidden by misty vapour, whilst straight ahead the clouds twist and wreath around the front of Skiddaw and sweep in moist battalions over grim old Saddleback. Altogether it is not exactly the sort of day on which one usually goes afloat for mere pleasure, and we have had some little difficulty in making the boat-keeper understand we really wished to charter one of his fleet.

We were a jovial party (eight all told—“walking”

the Lake district) imprisoned, at the foot of Borrowdale by a resolute downpour. When the first raindrops fell upon us tramping along under Casterlrigg, we had cheered our souls with the thought that at last we should look upon Lodore in all the glories of a cataract, and be convinced that sometimes at least “the waters come down” there in a manner worthy of Southey’s verses; but when next morning showed the clouds low upon the mountains and the rain descending still, we began to feel the monotony of it, and by the time luncheon was over were ready to entertain any idea that promised variety. A line of rain-filled wherries drawn up on the shore opposite the hotel suggested a pull upon the lake to a brace of aquatic minds and so we had baled and launched the *Ripple*, and put off with two fayre passengers aboard who chose rather to brave the elements than to endure the *ennui* of an afternoon indoors.

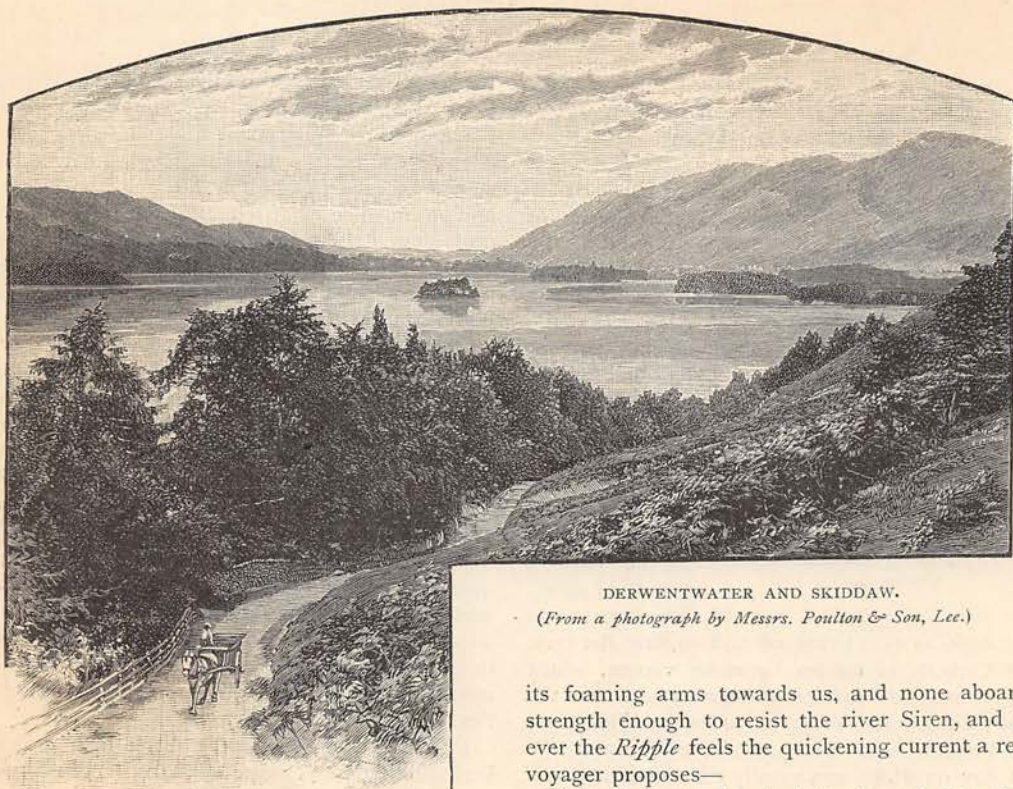
So here we be after an hour’s leisurely voyaging down the rain-pitted bosom of Derwentwater at its northern end, drifting into the mouth of the little river which runs out to join Bassenthwaite Lake some four miles off, and thence escaping to flow on past Cockermouth’s ancient castle to Workington and the Irish Sea.

Its current, swollen almost bank high, grasps our keel and carries us under spreading beech trees and past a trim-kept lawn to a grassy corner, where at the foot of a long water-slide the Greta pours its yellow torrent into the ocean-bound Derwent. The sight of those tossing, foaming rapids rouses at once the



BORROWDALE, FROM HONISTER PASS.

(From a photograph by Messrs. Poulton & Son, Lee.)



DERWENTWATER AND SKIDDAW.

(From a photograph by Messrs. Poulton & Son, Lee.)

canoeing instinct in the breasts of both our crew. What a splendid chance! But the passengers! The risk of capsizing the light craft, or at any rate half-filling her, our experience tells us is great, and for a moment we resist the longing nobly, and hold up against the stream, till the tempter suddenly gets the upper hand, and Stroke cries hastily—

“Shall we shoot these rapids?”

Two pairs of bright eyes in the stern-sheets flash a gleeful assent. Bow is all too willing, and with a couple of short strokes gets the *Ripple* headed straight for the rush.

“Sit steady and keep cool.”

With a lurch and one long roll the boat buries her nose into the swirling whirl, then lifting herself bravely, dashes down the madly tearing stream which leaps at her and flings spitefully its wavelets inboard. The banks slide past at railway speed, and even the racing river cannot keep pace with us as we dash onward, and with a last leap shoot out into the smoother reach below the rapid. Now comes the tug of war, for the *Ripple* must be got up stream again; but how to do it with no tow-line aboard is a puzzling problem which we discuss until a bend shows us Portinscale Bridge spanning our watery way, and the passengers beg us to “just row through it” before we turn; and so perforce we dive under its one arch and emerge into the soaking rain again. And here the die is cast, for just below another long dancing rapid stretches seductively

its foaming arms towards us, and none aboard has strength enough to resist the river Siren, and before ever the *Ripple* feels the quickening current a reckless voyager proposes—

“Let us try and get right through into Bassenthwaite.”

The other three receive the proposal with enthusiasm, and so, throwing prudence to the winds, we resolve to try to make the passage. Onward we sweep past sedges which are trailing their lithe lengths in the flood and willows, whose branches whip and thrash the swirling water; plenty of “fresh” below, and a clear course ahead, makes our task an easy one, our only care being to keep in mid-stream and not drive under the bending trees. But a mile below the bridge the river has lost its guileless look, and begins to lash and foam round sharp corners and dash amongst half-hidden boulders, and thrice in as many minutes do we run stem on into the banks, spun round on treacherous back-washes.

“Easy, Bow: we had better let her drive down stern first.”

That stalwart oarsman rather inclines to mutiny at such a precaution, but Stroke is firm, for snags and rocks are becoming too plentiful to be trifled with, and he has no mind to upset in mid-stream, or see our frail craft rip a plank from end to end. So round the boat is swung, the passengers are moved amidships, and the crew stand up, one forward and one aft, dipping each a scull paddlewise when the course is clear, and plunging it butt first to fend off from the foam-marked boulders. And well is it we are voyaging thus, for as we shoot a sharp bend, two rocks rise suddenly before us, half blocking the channel and leaving only a narrow passage between them down which the river leaps

with a tearing hiss. It is too late to check our way ; there is nothing for it but one bold dash for the very middle, and if we miss it, good-bye to reaching Bassenthwaite ; the upturned *Ripple* may, but her shipwrecked crew assuredly will not.

"Look out to starboard, there," cries Stroke, as he lunges at the left-hand boulder with his scull, and with one fateful thrust lifts the boat's stern into the narrow gap, and even as he shouts she swings athwart the rushing current. But Bow has not canoed the rapid Wharfe and rock-strewn Nidd for nothing, and before the stem catches the crag his scull is planted, and all his weight is thrown to hold the *Ripple* up. But the weight of the water behind is too great, the scull bends like a whip and snaps off short, and only the promptness with which he plunges his arms shoulder-deep into the flood and by main force shoves the stern out from the rock saves us from a capsizing. This is the last effort of the Derwent to stop us, though, and a few more twists and one long curve carry us triumphantly out into Bassenthwaite.

We have certainly done the deed, and feel proud enough of it ; but what now ? The outlook is not a very cheery one. A strong headwind is blowing down the lake : the only inn is at the further end, three and a half good miles away : we have only one whole pair of sculls : it is already 6 p.m. : Lodore is eight miles behind us, and if we do not turn up before dark, there will be anxiety and unrest there : we are all four drenched, and still the rain comes down.

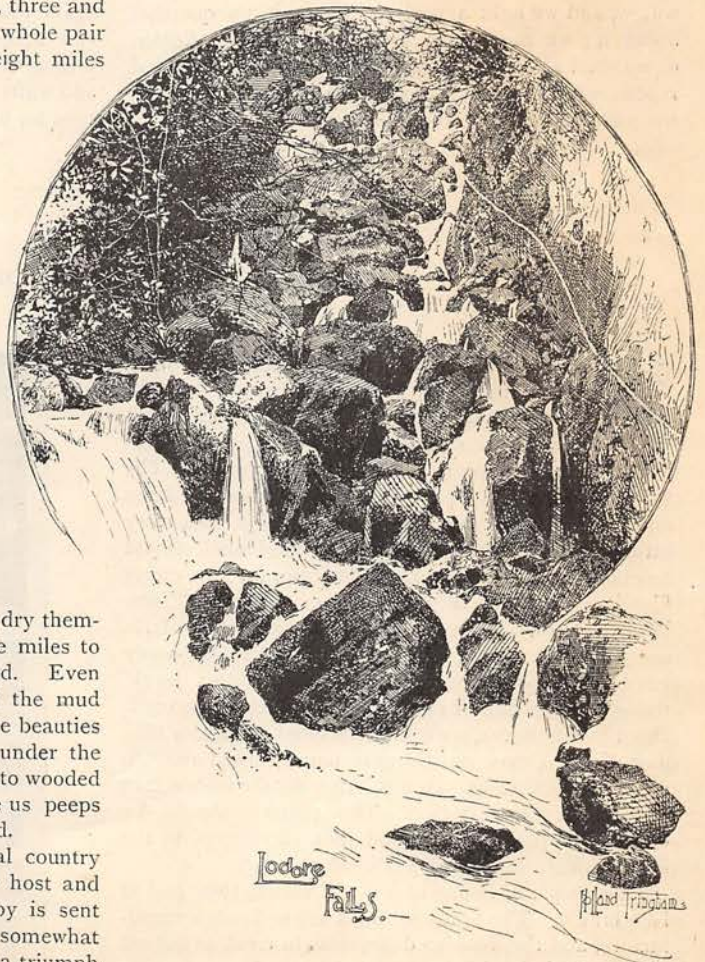
A council of war is held, and we decide to land and make for a farmhouse whose chimneys show above a belt of trees three fields from the lake ; so driving the *Ripple* ashore on a pebbly beach, we trudge through the meadow grass, and invade the rickyard. A buxom woman opens the door, and in a few moments we are steaming before her kitchen fire and she is bustling about to brew some tea for the chilled quartet. Her husband is away at Keswick, with their only horse, so she cannot get us to Lodore, and she knows no nearer place where we can get a steed than "T'Pheasant." Thither, then, we men set out, leaving our fellow-voyagers to dry themselves before the blaze, whilst we plash three miles to get some conveyance, if the Fates be kind. Even with the rain stealing down our necks and the mud thick beneath our feet, we can yet admire the beauties of this road which skirts the lake, winding under the shelter of Barf Fell and Lords Seat, diving into wooded hollows, and climbing little hills which give us peeps of the forefront of Skiddaw still cloud-capped.

Ah ! here is "The Pheasant," a very ideal country inn with roses trailing up its walls, whose host and hostess lend a ready hand to help us. A boy is sent to "fetch up Bess," and by the time that somewhat leggy animal is put into a dogcart, which is a triumph of local skill and workmanship, we have decided that,

having seen our fellow-voyagers safely off Lodorewards, in charge of the said boy who we are assured is a careful and competent driver, we will relaunch the *Ripple*, voyage hither, and take quarters for the night ; then next morning we will rise betimes and force a passage up the river back to Derwentwater. Mine host furnishes us with a pair of sculls, and his wife insists upon our taking two of her best cloaks for the comfort of the fayre passengers, and so we drive off in state, and half an hour later are launching our ship, having seen the trusty Jehu start with his convoy, who are charged to tell all whom it may concern that we "shall be back in time for breakfast."

With full complement of sculls and no weight aboard, we make the *Ripple* walk in spite of the stiff breeze ahead, and as the light is dying out of the cloud-dulled heavens we moor her in a tiny landlocked creek, and crossing through a strip of plantation, reach the inn.

Bless us, what is that row ? Only mine host hammering at the door and calling out that coffee is ready ; and lo ! when we stumble into the parlour there is a



(From a photograph by Messrs. Poulton & Son, Lee.)

dish of trout fried by himself, and as dainty a breakfast laid as ever you saw, albeit that the old grandfather clock in the corner by the chimney wants a few minutes to a quarter after four.

The breeze is still fresh from the nor'rard, dead aft ; so rigging up a macintosh upon a scull and boathook, we run gaily before it, chasing and chased by the tiny waves which flash and glitter in the morning sun. Here is the mouth of the Derwent, so down sail and out sculls, for it will be a stiff pull against the stream which it is rolling down, and we shall have to put our backs into it to make way at all.

"Easy all ; we are not rowing a race."

Bow throws his sculls inboard and catches a pollard and holds manfully on to it whilst the water tears and races past.

"Get ready. Let go !" Again we buckle-to, and pull amain. But the stream is beginning now to twist and turn, and with no steersman we are into bushes and both banks every few strokes, so the rudder is shipped, and a hand goes to the helm. But, alas ! one oarsman can make no headway against the "fresh," pull as he may ; we have lost twenty yards. This won't do ! So again Bow clings to a weeping willow, and we hold a parley. There is no question about it ; we must have a line and tow the *Ripple*, or we shall never get her up that long boulder-studded reach ; what geese we were not to think of it before we waved adieu to "The Pheasant !"

A little further and Stroke is just going to spring from the gunwale on to the bank when he catches sight of a stolid-looking youth gazing at us from the further shore, so promptly puts into practice his pet principle of "never take any bother if you can get someone else to." Yes, Bucolicus will get a cartrope from his father's farm ; which he hands over to us in all its frayedness, a good three-quarters of an hour later. However, its strands are strong, so Bow and our new friend get it over their shoulders, Stroke shoves off into mid-stream, and the voyage is resumed.

Oh, the pleasures of towing from banks where no towpath is, but trees and bushes every yard or two necessitate a sort of skipping-rope performance, and intersecting hedges and ditches add to the slowness of progression. Nor is it only the men at the rope who have gymnastic feats to perform, for the helmsman jumps continuously forward to fend off the *Ripple's* stem from rough rocks ahead, and as quickly aft again to seize the yoke and put over the rudder before she can dart into the bank. However, we stick to it, and somehow get along, up rapid after rapid, wading, poling, hauling, shoving as the sun swings through the sky, past high noon, and at last we float out once again into Derwentwater, muddy, tired, wet, thirsty, and famished, yet triumphant. The same kindly breeze which blew us down Bassenthwaite still holds, and wafts us back to Lodore, where we arrive, not in time for breakfast, but for afternoon-tea.

LACE BRAID EMBROIDERY.



PRETTY style of embroidery has been introduced lately which turns to account some of the best of the lace braids, which were in danger of being altogether forgotten now that point lace is no longer made. The work has a rich appearance not often found in linen embroideries, and may be greatly varied with very little trouble. Linen, either white or coloured, should be chosen for a background, and ingrain silk, either filoselle or twist, is needed for the actual embroidery, which is quite simple in character. It is not often that linen articles are to be found ready traced with an appropriate pattern for this work, though many braiding designs can be thus executed. Point-lace patterns, such as are printed on pink or blue glazed calico, may sometimes be found stowed away on upper shelves, and nothing is better for the embroidery now under consideration. The pattern should be copied on tracing paper, and then transferred to the linen with the aid of transfer cloth or paper.

Few people have any idea of the variety to be had in lace braids. The best and finest are of French manufacture, and these are so delicate as to rival, as indeed they should do, the beauty of the stitches originally used with them. Such a braid as this is shown at B in

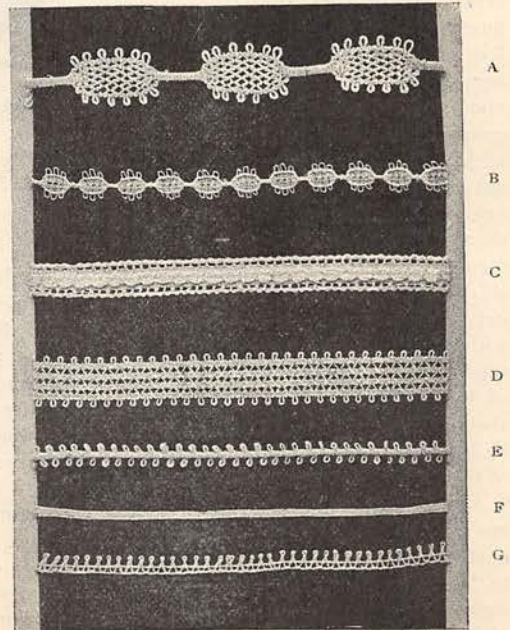


FIG. 1.—SOME OF THE BRAIDS.