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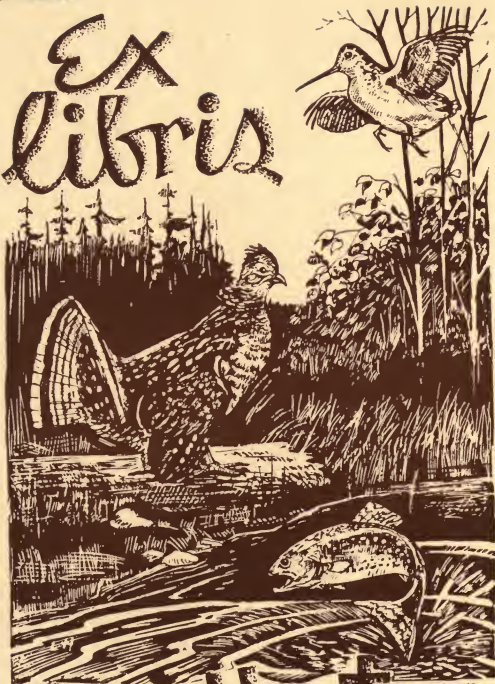
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ON *FLY* TYING



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Don Horter



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2nd



Cotton's Fishing Mouse.

James OGDEN

ON

FLY TYING,

ETC.

2nd ed

CHELTENHAM:

JAMES OGDEN, 28, WINCHCOMB STREET.

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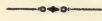
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CHELtenham:
JOHN T. NORMAN, TYP., BENNINGTON STREET.



P R E F A C E.

ERRATA.

Page 18, in line 21, read wings for legs.

Page 21, in line 20, read me for we.

Page 23, in second line from bottom, after points add—
viz., size and colour.

Page 51, in line 20, read Inn for Sun.

Page 59, in line 13, read pulling for putting.

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I who,

as well as myself, have fished Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, North and South. Most of our practice, however, lay in Derbyshire.

When I meet with an angler who has gained his knowledge of the rod, and can make a basket on these Derbyshire streams, I at once conclude he can kill fish on any river in the world; for I have proved beyond doubt that these waters test the eye as to size and colour, in dressing the artificial fly, far more than other streams.

CHAPTER I



Introduction



P R E F A C E .

IN introducing my Manual to the angling world, my principal object is to give anglers a lesson on Fly Dressing, and Setting on the Wings in my own peculiar style. It is also my intention to give my readers the experience of many years devoted to the science of "Fly Fishing."

I have for some time felt a desire to introduce my practical experience, together with that of my late father, who had seventy years' practice on the rivers Wye, Derwent, Lathkill, and Dove, Derbyshire; and who, as well as myself, have fished Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, North and South. Most of our practice, however, lay in Derbyshire.

When I meet with an angler who has gained his knowledge of the rod, and can make a basket on these Derbyshire streams, I at once conclude he can kill fish on any river in the world; for I have proved beyond doubt that these waters test the eye as to size and colour, in dressing the artificial fly, far more than other streams.

It is remarkable that the very least colour, and which can only be discerned by the aid of the magnifying glass, should make so much difference. I have frequently taken three or four fish with the middle fly a dropper, and have then changed my end fly for a similar one to the dropper, but with no better success, but have filled my basket with the dropper fly. At the close of the day's sport I have placed the two flies under a magnifying glass, and discovered the slightest shade more colour in the dropper with which I had killed the fish than could be seen in the other fly. A Scotchman would say, if they take one fly why not another? and laugh when I speak of size and colour being necessary; and would say he could make a fly, while going to the burn, from a bit of wool pulled out of his cap, that would beat all my artistically tied flies. They certainly have killed fish with what they have made, but have been glad to beg some of mine before the day was over. I remark this, here, to show how much more our fish are enlightened as compared with those in Scotland. Then again, where the Scotch streams have only one rod on them in the course of a week, many of ours have a dozen in a day thrashing them; and the fish get to know a line as well as the angler himself. I have often been amused to see how soon a feeding trout would leave off on being presented with an artificial fly, particularly if the angler does it at all unskilfully, or shows even his shadow on the water. I frequently take off my hat and creep along, in the endeavour to take a fish off his guard; and have often been repaid by basketing a fine trout. I have

always followed Izaak Walton's advice in fishing fine and far off. My remarks in these pages are chiefly confined to Trout and Greyling fishing ; and the angler must not feel disappointed that I have touched so briefly on flies, and only given a list of my favourite standard flies, which I have proved from experience no angler should be without. My old friend, Alfred Ronalds (with whom I have spent many pleasant days fishing on Tal-y-llyn lake), has given a full and correct account of the flies for each month, in his book called "The Fly Fisher's Entomology."

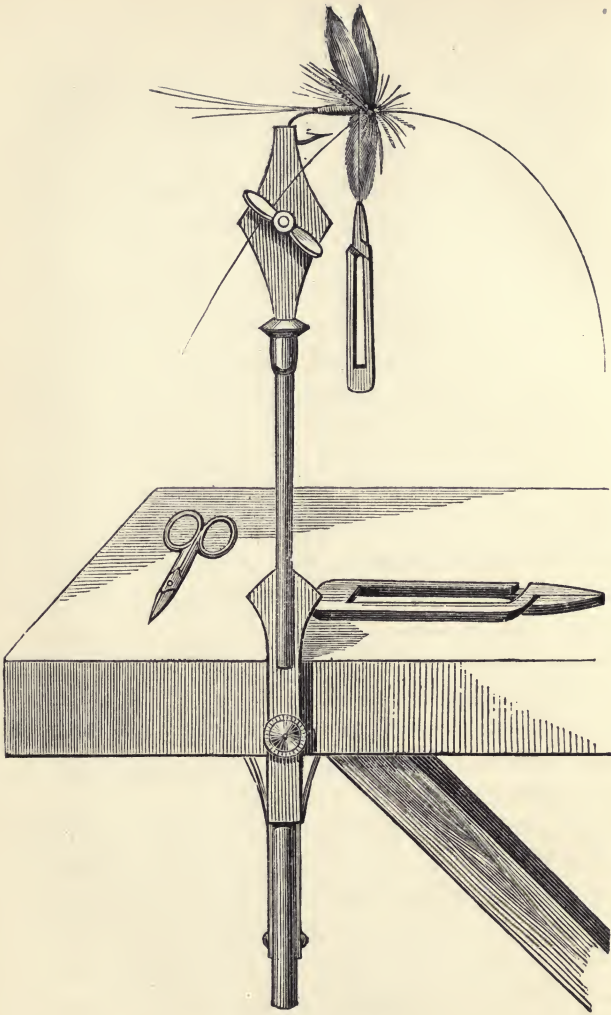
I have had considerable practice in Pike fishing, but do not consider it necessary to treat on that subject at all. That worthy angler, Mr. Cholmondely Pennell, in the second edition of his work on "The Habits of Pike and Angling for them, with Suitable Tackle," has completely and satisfactorily exhausted the subject ; and I must say his buffer knot is a great boon to anglers, and no salmon casting line can be depended on without it.

I feel every confidence in saying no angler could have studied the gentle craft more than I have done from my youth, always testing my own inventions, to prove their killing qualities, before introducing them to the public. It is well known that I am the inventor of Floating Flies, the Seat Basket, and the Spring Folding Landing Net, which is so conveniently carried on the basket strap ; also the celebrated Devil Killers, which have proved so deadly that they have been prohibited on many streams. I have frequently made a bet that I would go to a stream and take a trout the first spin (of course I knew where to try for them), and have been con-

fident of winning, as I knew the spinning qualities of these devil killers to be such that the fish could not resist, but would come at it like a flash of lightning. The angler should spin it quickly and keep it well under water ; not use it like the late Dr. Jephson, of Leamington, did. Soon after I brought it out, he sent for three ; a friend of his, who had used it successfully, recommending him to try it. He tied a piece of line to the three devil killers and threw them into the river Leam, securing the line to the bank, and leaving them in all night. The next morning, on attempting to take them up, he found two fast to the bottom, and of course lost them. He told his angling friend he did not think much of my devil killers, as he had put three in the river all night and had not caught a fish, losing two of them into the bargain. I have briefly described how to use the real and artificial minnow.

The anecdotes I have related are facts and incidents in my own fishing experience. I have borrowed from no one ; but have written in the plainest language, so that the youngest angler may understand it and profit by my experience. I think my little Manual will receive a hearty welcome in the angling world, and will be as heartily disapproved by the trout, who will take it hard that seventy years' experience of their tricks should become public property.





OGDEN'S IMPROVED FLY VICE



ON FLY DRESSING.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRESSING SMALL FLOATING DUNS AND BROWNS, WHICH WILL ENABLE THE ANGLER, WITH CARE AND PRACTICE, TO WING AND DRESS A FLY AS WELL AS "OGDEN."

IN the first place I consider it almost impossible to make a small floating midge firm and neat, without a proper fly vice to screw to the work table. The one represented in the engraving is my last improvement. When I was a lad, and tied flies for my father, such a thing as a fly vice was not thought of ; but they are now become very general. It is a great assistance to the tyer, and leaves the hands at liberty. The screw that works the jaws of the vice is very convenient to hold or pass the tying silk round, to prevent it slacking, while getting the materials ready for use. It is very essential that the hands should be clean. First select your materials, such as gut, hooks, dubbing, wings, and hackles. Take a small piece of wax (made after my receipt) about the size of a small bean, and wax your silk well. (This should be fine and strong. It is very

difficult to obtain, but very necessary to the fly dresser and angler. I have mine made specially for the purpose by a silk manufacturer who is also an angler. Use silk as near as possible to the colour of the natural fly you copy.) To commence, fix your hook firm in the jaws of the fly vice, leaving sufficient of the shank out to the right to form the body of the fly. Put three turns of waxed silk round the shank of the hook, leaving less than the eighth of an inch bare hook to wing and head upon. Take a length of gut, which for fineness should correspond to the size of the hook ; test it by drawing it through the hands or a piece of india-rubber, taking care it is not flat or tawsy ; lay it underneath the hook, and wrap down with the waxed silk close and even, not one wrap on another, neither allow the silk to slack. The smoother the foundation, the better the fly will look. This refers more especially to floss silk and plain silk-bodied flies. After wrapping down, try your gut with a steady pull to see that it will not slip, for that is unpardonable. Avoid making the body too long. I would rather see them a little too short than otherwise. If the fly you wish to copy has tails, take three strands of a large cock's hackle, either duns or reds ; secure them with two wraps of silk, cut off the waste ends, give the silk a twist and wrap close back up to the shoulder, still leaving the bare hook to wing and head upon. This is a plain silk body, which I prefer. (Dubbing or wool bodies will be described hereafter.) Now for setting on the wings, which is the most difficult part in making a midge fly. We will commence with starling wing, which

should be smooth and clean. Take a right and left wing. Get a centre feather from each wing; strip off the fag end, and with the right finger and thumb divide as broad a piece as you wish one side of the wing to be. Draw the tips carefully down, till quite even, without separating the fibres; at the same time holding the quill and roots firm with the left finger and thumb, easing them occasionally to let the wing lay even and smooth, coaxing the fibres gently together. (Practice alone will accomplish this satisfactorily.) This being done, with the left finger and thumb hold the quill and roots of the wing firm, while with the right finger and thumb press very tight, keeping the wing flat, and with a sharp twitch separate the wing from the quill, taking care not to slack your hold or disarrange the fibres. Lay it carefully down on the work table, the outside part of feather uppermost. In precisely the same manner take a wing from the other feather exactly the same size as the one just taken off. When done, place it carefully on the inside of forefinger of left hand, the inside of feather uppermost, and the roots of wing pointing to tip of finger. Pick up the other half of wing (which I do by moistening the tip of my forefinger of right hand), and put it to the other half of wing. Lay the tips very evenly together, and (inside of feathers facing) press them together, keeping them flat, and, without altering their position, place them on the top of the bare hook. For length, they should reach to the bend of the hook, but no longer. Take the tying silk in the right hand, open the left finger and thumb slightly at the tips, to allow the silk to pass up and

down, then close and press tight, at the same time drawing the silk very carefully down (or it will break) on to the roots of the wing. Take two more turns of silk in the same manner, keeping all the time a gentle strain on the silk or the wings will twist round. Pass the silk securely round the screw of the vice, and release the left finger and thumb to see that the wings set properly. If so, draw your gut carefully on one side, avoiding the shank end of hook, as it will sometimes fray it. Trim off the roots of wing neatly with a sharp pair of fly-dressing scissors; then take two turns of silk on the head, holding the wings as before, not allowing the silk to slack or the wings will draw out. (I always try the wings to see if they are firm.) Pass the silk behind the wings ready to tie the hackle in, which should be proportioned to size of hook and tapering. Strip the fluff off the hackle, and take it in the right hand, root downwards, the outside part of hackle to the right; tie it in sideways, close up behind the wings, with two turns of silk, taking care not to disarrange the wings. Cut off the quill end of hackle, not too close, or it will pull out. With the tweezers lay hold of the point of hackle, keep it well on the edge, and put two or three turns behind the wings, bringing the hackle well forward underneath. Secure it with one wrap and two hitches before taking the tweezers off; cut off the silk and point of hackle; press it well back from the head; open and adjust the wings with the scissor points, and cut out any stray fibres. The fly is now finished; and made this way will last much longer, and is much neater, than when finished at the

head. I know from experience it is not possible to set the wings well upright, like the natural fly, if they are put on last. It may do for a sunk fly, but not for a floater. As a rule I make all bodies of fles first. For a dubbing or wool body I twist it sparingly on the waxed silk, and wrap up from the tail to the shoulder, tapering the body and setting the wings on as described before. I strongly recommend every angler to learn to dress a fly. He may have with him a well-stocked book of flies, but he will find, as I have frequently found in the course of my practice, they are not of the exact colour. "The fish may be well on the feed," but the angler will only get one occasionally. Be particular as to size and colour, and don't mind if they are not dressed artistically. They will tell on the basket, and the circumstance will add much to the day's sport. In dressing buzz or hackle flies I make the bodies first, and form the head with two or three turns of tying silk. I then tie the hackle in at a proper distance from the head, and either take two or three turns with the hackle close together, or carry it half way down the body, according to fancy. But in no case should it be finished off at the head, as the fly will wear so much better finished off behind the hackle. In making wool or dubbing bodies, be particular to well test (that is, to pick it apart with the fingers) and blend the colours together thoroughly, so that no one colour predominates.





MY FAVOURITE STANDARD FLIES.

THE RED OR OLD JOAN FLY.

THE first fly I shall describe is the February Red or Old Joan Fly, and, when it is an early mild season, will be seen by the end of January, and be found in greater abundance towards the middle of February. It is an excellent killing fly, and deserves a place in the angler's book. I dress it as follows: Hook, No. 2, or even smaller; body, ruddy sheep's wool, mixed with an equal quantity of the reddest part of squirrel fur, with a turn of light claret-coloured wool only at the tail, to form a tag; wings, from the soft quill feather of the pea-hen's wing, which is the nearest approach to the colour of the natural fly. Tie this wing in flat and full. The wings should cover the bend of the hook. For legs, a hackle stained a rather dark claret colour, and two turns will be sufficient. This fly is useful in Devonshire, dressed buzz, with a good brassy dun or grizzle cock's hackle over the same body.

THE HARE'S EAR BLUE DUN OR COCK WING.

This is an excellent spring fly, and one that I use occasionally all the season, varying the colour of the wings and hare's ear—the wings, by giving them a slight tint of olive in onion dye ; the hare's ear, by mixing with it a little olive fur from a monkey's neck, or olive Berlin wool mixed with fur from the hare's face. When the season is mild this fly will be on the water by the end of February, and is most killing on cold days. When using them, allow your flies to sink a little, letting the water do the work ; by no means hurrying or dragging them against the stream. I dress it as follows :—Hook No. 2 is a good general size ; body, fur from the hare's ear spun on fine yellow silk ; three strands of a red cock's hackle for tails, and a tag of fine gold tinsel. For a change I use fine yellow silk only, well waxed, for the body ; wings taken from a starling wing feather. The wings should be broad and set on very upright, as it is the most butterfly-like little dun the angler will have to imitate. After setting on the wings, spin more hare's ear fur on the silk, and give two turns close up behind the wings, bringing it well forward underneath ; fasten off behind the wings, and pick out the dubbin to form the legs. For a variety, I rib the hare's ear body with fine gold tinsel or twist, and put on upright wings taken from a woodcock wing feather.

THE BLUE DUN.

This is also an early and standard fly for a cold day. Hook, No. 2, or smaller ; for the body, a small portion

of water-rat's fur spun on primrose silk ; wings, from a dark starling wing feather, set on very upright ; for legs, a dark dun hen's hackle set in close up behind the wings, and brought well forward underneath. This fly is dressed in a variety of shades too numerous to mention, but all of them are useful at times.

THE MARCH BROWN.

This fly is similar in shape to the Blue Dun, and is eagerly devoured by the trout. It appears on most streams, but is more numerous on the river Usk, Monmouthshire, than any other stream I have fished. I have seen them come on there by thousands, and when the water is low, the rise of the fish, which is generally in the middle of the stream, is worth seeing ; but it is useless trying the artificial March Brown while the rise is on. The best time is between the flights. I then generally use my own fancy fly, or Hoffland's, and have been successful with them. The March Brown is more numerous in rapid rivers than slow currents. Imitation for the body : fur from the hare's ear, mixed with a little yellowish olive mohair spun on yellow silk, well waxed, and ribbed over with fine gold tinsel, gold twist, or yellow silk ; tail, three strands of partridge tail feather ; wings taken from the reddish-brown feather of the hen pheasant wing, set on very upright and full ; for legs, a feather from the middle of the back of a brown partridge set in close up behind the wings. I have had excellent sport on the river Usk with one dressed as follows :—body, fur from the hare's ear mixed with a

little of the red fur from the hare's neck, and ribbed over with olive silk, not waxed; wings taken from the dark freckled feather of a partridge tail; and for legs, a feather from the wren's tail wound on as a hackle close up behind the wings. As the season advances make the body of pale olive mohair, ribbed over with fine gold twist, and a honey dun hackle for legs; wings from the marbled part of the hen pheasant wing feather. This fly is a good killer all over the continent. It requires a warmer day to enable it to come to the surface than does the Blue Dun. If early at the river, try first the February Red, then the Blue Dun; and when the March Brown is on, use the imitation till two o'clock, then try the Blue Dun again.

THE IRON BLUE DUN.

This is one of the smallest of the dun species, and, I can say with confidence, one of the best killers. What a number of pleasant recollections this little fly brings before me, of the sport it has afforded me, and the baskets of trout and greyling I have made with this little dun. They shew themselves more abundant on cold days, and the fish feed on them more freely. It is a great favourite of mine, and I have interested myself in it from a lad, dressing it in a variety of ways and killing fish with most of my imitations. I shall only describe what I have proved to be the two best methods of copying this little dainty fly—No. 1, dressed as follows: hook No. 0. use reddish purple silk, waxed with white wax, to keep the colour of the silk. The gut should be very fine, and avoid making the body too long. Tail, three strands from

a yellow dun cock's hackle. Take the smallest pinch possible of mole's fur, lay it on the body, give the silk a twist, and rib back over the mole's fur, not too close, about three or four ribs, to shew the fur between the ribs of silk. Nothing makes so natural a body as this. For wings, two feathers from the breast of the water rail: just the tips of the feathers, not too long. Set them in very erect, and turn the quill ends back and tie them in to prevent their drawing out. Take the smallest yellow dun hackle, tie it in close up behind the wings; two turns will be sufficient for legs, and the wings will require trimming. The body of No. 2 is made the same as described before, but the wings are taken from a tom-tit's tail feather—not the tips—by stripping it off the broad side in the same way as the starling wing feather. When dressed this way and used as a sunk fly, it is very useful, more especially in streams. This fly is very abundant on some rivers about the latter end of April.

THE RED SPINNER.

This is a fly that kills well from April till the end of the season. I have proved it excellent on bright days when the fish would not look at any other artificial fly. I make the body of ruddy-brown floss silk, wrapped on very smooth and tapering, and ribbed over with fine gold twist; tail, three strands of a red cock's hackle, set on rather long; wings taken from a dark starling wing feather, put on broad and upright; for legs, a good dark red cock's hackle, set in last, close up behind the wings. The size of hook may vary from No. 1 to No. 3.

OGDEN'S FANCY.

Since I brought this fly out, it has become a great favourite with those anglers who use a dry fly, it having all the properties of floating well. It is also very attractive when thrown over a rising fish, not allowing it to drag, which is the grand secret of using floating flies. My mode of dressing it is as follows: body of bright yellow silk waxed with white wax, wrapping down evenly from the shoulder to the tail. Avoid making the body too long. Make a short tag with two or three wraps of fine gold tinsel round the bare hook, then tie in three strands of a red cock's hackle for tails, not covering the tag of gold, as it is a great attraction to the fly. Cut off the tying silk after securing it neatly; wax a fresh length of the yellow silk, set in at the head, and tie in the wings, which should be broad and taken from a bright starling wing feather. Set them on very upright. For legs, a bright red cock's hackle with a black root, and tapering to a point. If the hackle has a strip of black up the centre, so much the better, and the more killing the fly. Tie the hackle in close up behind the wings, and wrap the clean waxed silk down the body to the tail. Take the tip of the hackle in the tweezers, put two turns at the shoulder close up behind the wings, and rib the hackle down the body as close together as it will allow for it to reach the tag. Before taking the tweezers off tie in the tip of the hackle neatly with one wrap and two knots. Be particular not to cover the tag. Cut out any stray fibres that will not lay even. Use it only as an end fly. The size of hook may vary from No. 0 to Nos. 5 or 6,

according to the size of the waters fished. A blood red or mahogany coloured hackle makes an excellent variety.

THE COW-DUNG FLY.

I shall only briefly describe this fly, as it is so well known, and is to be seen on most plats in the fields. The female is smaller and has a more olive tint than the male. It frequents the water on cold windy days, but is never seen in great numbers at once. When they are on the water is the best time to use the artificial fly, dressed as follows : for the body, yellow wool, mixed with a little dingy brown wool, well tested together and spun on brown silk, making the body short and full. Wings should be taken from a landrail's wing feather, and set on flat. For legs, a ginger coloured hackle slightly stained in copperas. To make this fly buzz, put a cock's hackle, stained as above, on the same body.

THE YELLOW DUN.

This fly comes on in April, and is one of my first favourites, as it was of my late father, and many a heavy basket have we made with it. My father always dressed it as follows : body of yellow silk well waxed with shoemaker's wax ; wings taken from a young starling wing feather, and set on upright. I well remember him having a favourite yellow dun game cock, which he valued very much, and used the hackles only to dress this fly with for his own use. It was a great favour for a gentleman to get a fly dressed with one of these hackles. A friend once offered him threepence each for the hackles. He replied :

“I will give you two or three, but will not sell them as they are worth a shilling each, and I can always depend on making my basket with this fly.” The hackle of that bird was the best shape I ever saw. I have been trying all my life to breed one similar to it, and have produced some very near to it, but not perfect. This makes my theory good that colour is the great secret, combined with size. Occasionally it happens that an angler kills a few brace of fish with a fancy fly dressed with a hackle taken from any barn door fowl, but that I call chance, and is not to be depended on. The Yellow Dun is generally seen on the water from ten till four, and kills well on warm days till the end of June. I make the body of fine yellow silk, waxed with white wax; tail, two strands of honey dun hackle, rather long; wings from a young starling wing feather set on very upright; legs, two turns of a good yellow dun hackle, varying the sizes according to the water. It kills well on streams, dressed buzz, with the same hackle put on sparingly, and a small portion of yellow wool spun on the waxed silk. The dottrell hackle on this body is very deadly both for trout and greyling.

THE ALDER FLY

Is another favourite of mine, and which I have proved an excellent killer from May till the end of June; and, if dressed to float well, is very valuable to the angler when the green drake is on the water. Formerly I used to dress it with reddish brown tying silk; body of bronze peacock herl, made full, with a small tag of dark claret-coloured mohair; a dark brassy dun or a black cock's

hackle, or, what is better than all, a good furnace hackle ; wings from the hen pheasant centre tail feather, dressed full and rather long ; hook, No. 4, or smaller. I have made an improvement in this fly, and will try to describe it. Use mulberry-coloured silk, waxed with white wax. After wrapping the gut down firm carry the silk back to the head. Set in one broad strand of bronze-coloured peacock herl, leaving sufficient bare hook to wing and head upon. I only use one strand of herl, for if it is kept on the edge and wrapped close and even, not one wrap on another, it makes a much better body than when two or three herls are wrapped down together. I generally work my tying silk down with the herl, as it strengthens it, and may prevent the herl unravelling after being used. I finish off at the bend of the hook, as I like the body of this fly to be rather long. Finish off firmly with two wraps and two knots, and cut the silk off. Set another length of silk in at the head, leaving plenty of bare hook to wing upon. Tie the quill end of hackle in close up to the peacock herl ; give it two or three turns and fasten off with two knots ; cut off the end of the hackle, pass the silk up to the head, and snip some of the fibres of the hackle off, at the top of the hook, to allow the wings to lay flat. I then take a centre feather from the hen pheasant's tail, take off the fluff (and no more, as that soft part nearest the root is the best to wing with), divide a broad piece, get the ends even without disarranging the fibres, and, holding it tight in the finger and thumb, take it off the quill with a sharp twitch. Lay it down and take off another piece in a similar way ; lay it on the top

of the other piece, glossy side uppermost. Take them both up together and place them flat on the top of the hook, allowing the wing to cover the bend of the hook. Press the left thumb and finger on the wings, and put two wraps with the tying silk. Trim off the fag end of wings, and put two or three more turns of silk to form the head. On no account disarrange the wings, or let any of the fibres slip round. I dress all my flat wing flies in this way.

THE GOLDEN DUN MIDGE.

I have proved this to be a very useful little fly, which kills well on the rivers Wandle, Test, Itchin, and is become a favourite on the Usk and Monnow. I have also used it successfully on the Teine and the Derbyshire streams, more especially on warm days. It makes its appearance in April, and continues in season till June. I imitate the body of this small insect with a very fine strand of light olive floss silk, wrapped on very smoothly, and ribbed over with narrow gold tinsel; wings from a young starling wing feather, set on very upright; for legs, a rather light dun hackle. Use very fine primrose silk, waxed with white wax. Hook, No. 1, not larger.

THE BLACK GNAT.

This little midge is a great favourite with both trout and greyling, and they will gorge themselves with it when it comes on the water. It is very useful on warm days and sultry evenings. The best imitation for the body is a strand of black horsehair wrapped close and even down the body; upright wings from a light starling wing feather;

for legs, a small black glossy feather from the starling breast, or a small black hen's hackle. It kills well dressed buzz, with two turns of a glossy starling breast feather on the same body; and a tag of silver tinsel makes it attractive.

THE COCH-Y-BONDDU,

Or, as some call it, the Marlow Buzz, is one of my standard flies, and no angler should be without it. I have always had the best sport with the smallest size, particularly in Derbyshire, where I have filled my basket numbers of times with this little buzz fly. It is very important to have a good furnace hackle for this fly, and I will here describe what I call a good furnace hackle. It should be a dark blood red, both sides as much alike as possible, with a black centre and black edges; the dark red shewing between the centre and the edge, and should taper down to a point. When I was a lad I could find this coloured bird at any barn door; but now you may travel a hundred miles and not see one the right colour, which I think must be owing to the decrease in the breeding of game fowls. The dressing for the body should be peacock herl tinted with magenta dye, which gives it a rich bronze colour. Use orange-coloured silk for tying it, waxed with white wax, and, after wrapping on the gut, make a tag with fine gold tinsel, bring the silk back to the head and tie in the furnace hackle; show one or two wraps of orange silk at the head; take three turns of the hackle, tie it in securely, with one strand of peacock herl close up to the hackle; wrap the herl evenly

down to the tag, and finish it off with two knots. Avoid making the body too long. The hackle requires pressing well back to make the fly look neat.

THE OAK FLY, OR DOWNLOOKER.

This is another favourite, and kills well from May till the end of June. It is most useful on windy days. I make the body of bright orange floss silk, nicely tapering it. The tying silk should be lead coloured, and shewn at the head and shoulders. Legs, a good furnace hackle, and ribbed down the body. Snip off the fibres from the lower part of the hackle nearly close to the body, leaving a sufficient quantity for the legs. Wings from a feather of the woodcock wing, dressed flat. These wings are best tied in last with lead-coloured silk, and the upper part of the hackle should be snipped off to allow the wings to lay flat. Hook, No. 2 or 3. This fly was used formerly, in its natural state, for the cruel practice of dibbing, but I am pleased to say that mode of fishing is almost extinct.

THE FURNACE FLY.

This was an old favourite of my father's ; he rarely fished without one on his cast. The body is made of bright orange tying silk ; wings taken from a starling wing feather, set on upright ; for legs, two turns of a good furnace hackle ; hook, No. 2.

TINKLER'S DUN.

This fly was a great favourite of the late Captain Tinkler (who was an excellent angler) and invented by

him. It is a good general fly, especially for evening, and is dressed as follows : pale primrose coloured silk waxed with white wax ; tail three strands from a red cock's hackle ; body made with a strand of white purse silk well twisted and wrapped close together ; wings, upright, from a starling wing feather ; for legs, a ginger hackle. I have had good sport with this dun in the summer evenings till after dark.

THE WREN'S TAIL.

This will be found very useful in July. There are two or three shades of this little insect, but I have found the trout and greyling take it best dressed as follows : body of light red fur from the hare's neck spun on brown silk with fine gold twist ribbed over it ; a feather from the wren's tail wound on answers for wings and legs ; hook No. 1 or 0.

THE LITTLE ORANGE FLY.

This fly is a great favourite of mine, and numbers of heavy baskets of trout and greyling have I made with my imitation dressed as follows : body made with deep coloured orange floss silk ; the ^{wings} legs are put on flat and should be taken from the water rail wing, or hen blackbird wing ; legs, a dark furnace hackle ; hook, No. 1.

THE STONE MIDGE.

This is an excellent little fly both for trout and greyling. I have killed more of the latter with this fly than any other I ever used. I have found it kill well

on the Teeme, Lugg, and Arrow, and is a great favourite of mine on most streams. The body is best imitated with a strand from the broad feather of a heron's wing, wrapped close on the body, which should be made short. Two or three turns of a glossy feather from the starling's breast answers for wings and legs. Hook, No. 0, or even smaller.

THE WHIRLING BLUE DUN.

This fly is a standard killer and a great favourite on the river Colne, at Fairford. It is very useful on all the Derbyshire streams, especially on a cold October day. I dress it as follows : body, reddish brown fur from the squirel's legs spun on yellow silk waxed with white wax ; tails, three strands of red cock's hackle ; wings, upright, from a dark starling wing feather ; legs, a pale ginger hackle ; hook, No. 2.

PALMERS.

These are all favourites of mine, and many an excellent basket have I made with them. They are a numerous tribe, and choice food both for trout and greyling. When I go to a stream where I have not seen the fish on the feed, nor could find any flies on the bushes or grass, I always commence with a cast of Palmers, especially after a flood. I will give the dressing of my three favourites, and commence with the end one. Palmer hook No. 6, which is rather long in the shank ; body made rather spare with narrow bronze peacock herl, ribbed over with gold thread. A bright red cock's hackle or a good furnace hackle wrapped down by the

side of the thread. All hackles for Palmers should taper to a point and be wrapped down the body slantwise, and shew the herl between the hackle. The Middle Hopper : hook, No. 4 ; the body made of bright orange floss silk with a strand of magenta coloured peacock herl wrapped down the body at intervals, and a honey dun hackle, This may be varied with a brassy dun or grizzle dun, with or without gold. The third fly—a Black Palmer : hook, No. 4 ; body made of black ostrich herl, ribbed over with rather narrow silver tinsel, and a black cock's hackle wrapped by side of tinsel. I have great confidence in these Palmers, more particularly after a fresh, by fishing down stream, edging the side well and allowing the water to do the work. Commence with these Palmers as soon as the water begins sinking, and I warrant you will make a basket. If by mid-day it gets bright and sunny try the duns and browns.

THE BLUE BOTTLE AND HOUSE FLY.

These flies are sure killers for trout and greyling in September and October. I have the name for dressing these flies closer to nature than any other maker. I will describe the Blue Bottle first : hook, No. 3 or 4 ; body made full of narrow black ostrich herl, and ribbed over with blue tinsel ; for legs, a black hackle, which should be snipped off at the top to allow the wings to lie flat, these are composed of two broad strips of starling wing feather, and require great care in putting them on unbroken and even. The head and shoulders should be tied with brown sewing silk, waxed with white wax to

keep the colour. This fly kills well on windy days. The little House Fly I dress as follows; hook, No. 2. The best imitation for the body is two or three strands from a brown freckled turkey tail feather, wrapped close down the body, a short piece of light stone coloured Berlin wool tied in at the shoulder underneath, doubled back and tied in at the end of the hook, which gives that strip of light color that is seen in the natural fly. The hackle may be either from a black hen's neck or a glossy feather from the starling breast; the wings are two broad pieces taken from the dark starling wing feather, and set on flat like the Blue Bottle.

THE SMALL WILLOW OR NEEDLE BROWN.

This little fly is extremely abundant on some streams all the season, but more especially during the months of September and October, and is taken very freely by trout and greyling. I had always found a difficulty in imitating this fly satisfactorily till the autumn of 1878, when I went to Pembridge in October to fish the Arrow for greyling. I had with ~~me~~^{me} a book of choice flies, but the weather being so unfavourable, I had no opportunity of using them, for it commenced raining the day I went. I only had two hours fishing the next morning when, with perseverance I took a brace of greyling with a small palmer and my blue bottle. I found the Needle Brown on the water in great numbers, but unfortunately had none with me. Had I possessed a good imitation of this little creature, I believe I should have killed a few brace of greyling, as they were taking

them freely until the water rose too high. I waited a week in vain, but the river was flooded all the time. I brought several of these beautiful little insects—male and female—home with me, and bestowed much time and labour in copying it correctly in size, shape, and colour. If the water had got in order I intended trying them, but it did not until the season was too far advanced. I hope to give them a fair trial this coming season, as I have not the least doubt they will prove killers. I will endeavour as plainly as possible to explain how I dress this little fly. Palmer hook, No. 1, which is rather long in the shank, and fine in the wire. The body is best imitated as follows: after wrapping on the gut, which should be fine, with dark silk, choose a narrow strand of peacock herl that has about a quarter of an inch of light color at the root, strip the fluff off and dye the light part a slight tint of orange to form the tag, set this in neatly at the end of the hook and wrap even up to the shoulder. This is the best imitation for body of the male fly. The head should be made next by wrapping black silk, well waxed, round the extreme end of hook, forming it round like the head of a pin and leaving a slight vacancy between the head and shoulders. The wings should be a slip of starling wing feather for under-wing, with a slip of hen blackbird wing for the upper wing, glossy sides uppermost. The wings must lie very flat and hollow on the back, not at all broken. The under wing should be a shade longer than the upper one, and both should cover the end of the hook. It requires skill and practice to set these wings on properly.

The left thumb should be pressed on them until they are secured with the tying silk, which can be passed under the tip of the thumb without removing it. The best imitation for legs is a few grizzle hairs about half an inch long, cut from the side of the neck of a badger skin, place these crosswise underneath where the wings are tied in, and well secure them with the black tying silk, passing it between the hairs, bringing some forward and others back; the wraps of silk forming a shoulder and securing the legs. Leave a vacancy between the head and shoulders, as it gives the fly a very natural appearance. Finish off with two knots in front of wings and snip off the legs to a proper length. I prefer the badger hair to a hackle for this fly. The Female Needle Brown is a little larger than the male. The body should be made of yellow silk, with the striped peacock herl ribbed over, shewing the rings of yellow silk between the ribs of herl. The under wing of the female is a slip of starling wing feather. The upper wing a slip from the thrush wing—not the yellow part, but that just above it. The head and legs are the same as the male fly. If I have not made these instructions sufficiently clear to my readers, especially as regards the winging, I shall feel great pleasure in assisting them, not only on that subject but any other connected with the gentle craft, if they will accompany their questions with a stamped envelope. Before concluding my remarks on flies and fly tying, I would recommend the angler in selecting or tying his flies to be most particular on two points,* which will, if strictly adhered to, always ensure him sport on the most

* Viz., size and colour.

delicate waters. In tying flies it is necessary to have a good selection of all shades of dun hackles, both cock and hen. The dotterell feather is most useful—it is taken from the upper part of the wing. A most invaluable hackle to the angler is, the furnace, taken from a game cock, as already described, and if right in colour will always ensure sport. If the angler cannot dress his flies neatly they will kill with the hackles mentioned. I am always pleased to see a neatly tied fly and as closely resembling the natural insect as possible.





SALMON FLIES.

I SHALL only make a few remarks on salmon flies, as so many authors have fully described them ; and for a long list of salmon flies, with instructions for dressing them, see Blacker's work ; "Ephemera on the Salmon" ; and Francis Francis' book on "Angling." I tie my salmon flies of as many colours as the rainbow to suit the different waters, as well as the varied taste of the salmon and salmon fishermen ; and would invite an inspection of my special patterns of salmon and sea trout flies, which I have proved, by actual trial on the principal rivers and lakes of the united kingdom, to be certain killers. As a rule, gaudy colours ensure the most success. For sewin and the white trout of Ireland, I have proved the following flies the most reliable. The "Prince of Wales" fly and the "Polly Perkins," properly tied, are pretty sure killers of fresh run fish ; but on waters some miles distance from the sea, flies of a more sober colour prove the most successful. I will give the dressing of two or three. Hooks should be in proportion to the waters fished and the size of the fish ; the body of good claret or puse-

coloured floss silk, ribbed over with gold tinsel ; a golden pheasant crest feather for tail ; and a wing of good brown mallard feather, well freckled. This is laid over a golden pheasant tippet feather. Another, is an orange and black floss silk body ; or the same colours in mohair, with a good furnace hackle ribbed down the body, and the same wings as before, is a certain killer of salmon or sewin on most of the rivers. The same colours, but varying the body with deep-coloured orange floss silk, ribbed over with gold tinsel or twist, will often prove a very attractive fly for sea trout and salmon. A very useful fly for sewin is a large blue dun, with a body of water-rat fur ribbed over with silver tinsel ; tail, a golden pheasant topping ; wings from a blue jay wing feather, set on upright ; a blue dun cock's hackle, wrapped on at the shoulder, for legs. Another good general fly is a body made of black pig's wool ribbed with silver tinsel ; tail, three strands of a dark grizzle blue dun cock's hackle ; a galinea feather tied in at the shoulder, and wrapped half way down the body ; wing of dark brown turkey tail feather. This fly will kill well in the evening till dark. I would also mention the "Jock Scott" is a favourite with the salmon, and many others too numerous to mention. But with the few flies I have enumerated, made in various sizes, the angler for salmon or sewin will be certain of success, if the fish are at all on the rise, and it is little or no use attempting to fish with the fly when the water is rising or discoloured, but my Devil Killers, gold and silver, will then prove deadly, especially so when the fish are coming up fresh from the sea. These migratory fish, which give such noble sport,

are often the most capricious in their choice of food. Sometimes in low water they will take trout flies in preference to the gay flies tied for their special benefit. They will also take the real minnow as well as the artificial, and sometimes worms, shrimps, lobster, or even crab's claws.

ON SALMON CASTS.

I can with confidence recommend my salmon casting lines, tied with the buffer knot ; and I am confident no casting line can be depended on without it, as the silk prevents the gut fraying between the knots. I will try to describe how these casts are tied. Take two strands of best round salmon gut, well test it to see that it is good, lay one end over the other, form a loop with the short end and pass the end through the loop, drawing it tight. Reverse it and do the other the same. Then well wax a length of strong light silk. Give six or seven wraps of silk between the knots ; cut off the silk, and with a pair of pliers draw the knots close together. If it breaks, try it again ; if it does so a second time, discard it and take a new length. I prefer gut that will stand without soaking. I consider ten lengths of gut ample for a salmon cast. My fine trout and greyling casts are much approved of, the gut being selected with great care to taper regularly. In fact, every part of the tackle should taper regular, from the butt to the end fly.





THE MAY FLY.

I WILL now make a few remarks on the May Fly or Green Drake, and its decrease on many trout streams. When I was a lad, and carried the landing net for my father in Bakewell meadows, Derbyshire, the drakes have risen from the bed of the river in thousands, the air being quite thick with them. I have myself taken more than a hundred from my hat and put them into a drake basket for use. My father never used the natural or artificial drake. He used to say he could make a better basket with the yellow dun and alder fly, and the black gnat for evening. It generally turned out he had the best basket at the finish. In October, 1864, I went down greyling fishing on the Wye and Derwent, Derbyshire, staying at that delightful inn, "The Peacock, Rowsley Bridge, where I met with the Duke of Rutland's steward, who, in the course of conversation, asked me if I thought my floating May flies would kill on their waters. If so, he should prohibit the use of the live fly, as anglers came from all parts, and at that season used the live fly with great dexterity, killing all his best trout. I told him I



The Peacock
Kingsley
Derbyshire

had no doubt but they would kill there, as I had used them with great success on the Test and Itchin, Hampshire, the Stour, Canterbury, and many other fine waters. Gentlemen anglers, who fished the Wye, said no one could dress an artificial drake to kill on those streams. The steward wished me to come in the next drake season and try my floating flies, to which I consented ; and on the 5th of June, 1865, I went down, with great confidence, having a first-class assortment of artificial floating drakes. I found several anglers waiting at the Peacock Inn for the fly to come up. I went up to Bakewell, as I knew from past experience the fly would rise there two or three days before it did in Rowsley Meadows. At the Rutland Arms, Bakewell, I met a number of anglers waiting for the fly to appear. An elderly gentleman, named Hobson, asked me if I was son to old Frank Ogden, who was well known to be the best fisherman that ever threw a line on the Wye? I replied in the affirmative. He said : "Then it was your father who gave me my first lesson in the gentle craft ; and for a number of years I had the pleasure of meeting him on the Wye and Derwent, where we had great sport together." He then asked me if I intended to use the natural drake. I informed him that I was come at the request of the duke's steward to test my floating drakes or May flies. He wished to see them. I took out my box and they all indulged in a hearty laugh at them, Mr. Hobson saying if he had not known me to be an angler born, he should call me a fool to bring those butterfly things to kill fish on their fine waters. I told him I had every confidence that I should kill fish with

my artificial flies, when they were feeding on the natural drake, and promised to let him know when I commenced. The first fly I saw rise was on the dam, just below Bakewell Bridge. It was instantly taken by a trout. I at once informed Mr. Hobson that I was going to commence fishing on the dam, to which he replied that he would watch from the bridge, where he was accompanied by many other anglers. While putting my rod together, to my great delight I saw several drakes taken by the trout. After well soaking my cast, and testing it, I put on one of my artificial drakes, which looked very tempting dressed as follows: a straw body, ribbed with red silk well waxed; tail, three strands of hen pheasant tail feather; hackle, a pale buff with brown centre, rather short in fibre; wings, upright, taken from the wood or summer duck. I made a cast to the fish I first saw rise; my fly had scarcely touched the water, when it was taken. Mr. Hobson shouted from the bridge: "That was a live fly you used!" I told him to come and see for himself. He replied: "If it is not so, I am convinced you will kill fish, for it alighted like the natural fly." I killed nine good fish in a very short time. One trout I noticed in the middle of the dam, was taking every fly that came in his way. I could not reach him without wading, which was prohibited; but the steward gave me permission to wade in order to thoroughly test my flies. I went into the dam, venturing as far as I dared, and found I could just reach the fish by making a long cast. He instantly came and took my fly. I mounted my rod to keep him from the bed of weeds, and led him down stream; but

on trying to move I found I was stuck in the mud. With great difficulty I extricated my right leg, and, in trying to release the other, I lost my balance and fell backwards, of course losing hold of my rod. I quickly regained it, and on reeling up I found my fish still on, but fast in the bed of weeds. I went a few paces down stream, holding on with as much strain as I considered my tackle would bear. At last I saw the weeds give way, and out he rushed, several times trying to get back again, but I managed to lead him down the stream, the head keeper landing him for me. It was in splendid condition, weighing over two pounds. I may here mention a countryman, who was looking on from the bridge, shouted : " If he hadn't fell in, he'd a killed every fish in the watter." Of course, after my immersion, I was glad to return to the inn to change ; and further fishing that day was out of the question. The day following I returned to Bakewell to meet the keeper. We met several anglers on the bridge, who insulted me as being the cause of stopping the use of the natural fly. I found it would not do to fish there again, so went to the steward for advice. He said : " Never mind, Ogden ; you have carried out my wishes, and from this morning I have prohibited all natural fly fishing. If they cannot kill with the artificial, they shall not with the live fly." He at once gave me a ticket for the river Lathkill, the duke's private water, where I spent a pleasant week. Although the water was as clear as possible, I had excellent sport with my floating drakes.

Some forty years ago, when I introduced my floating

flies, the love of angling was increasing at the rate of ten to one from when I was a lad. I always found the more a stream was whipped over, the more wary and shy the fish became ; and I always made it a rule never to leave a good rising fish while he was feeding. I have tried every dodge, and often every fly in my book. By changing my end fly (not intending to do so) I have occasionally made a cast with a dry fly. In those days it was said this would scare a rising trout and cause him to leave off feeding. On the other hand, I found while my fly was still on the surface, without a ripple, it has tempted the fish to seize it, after I have been throwing a sunk fly over him, in vain, scores of times. These observations were the cause of my introducing floating flies. I found it advisable to use one fly only with a shorter casting line. I always carried two or three of these casts with me, but still followed the old plan of using three sunk flies. I used to throw up stream in shallow water ; after a fresh, down stream, as I found I could edge my side much better down than up stream, and only used the dry fly as mentioned above ; or, on meeting with a shy fish, I have found it most useful, and many dozens of wary fish have I taken in this way. I commence dressing my flies with upright wings, as follows : Make the body first, next set the wings on upright, and then the hackle close up behind the wings, finishing off close up behind the hackle ; but for a sunk fly the wings should be set on last. This is not so neat, but they lay closer to the body in the stream ; and if not too full of hackle or wing may prove deadly. Never hurry your flies, but rather let the

water do the work, mounting your rod top as your flies approach. After a few years I found the fish on most streams getting more cunning, and found my floating flies were the only ones to be depended on for making a basket. It certainly is the most scientific, and affords more sport, than any other method of fishing.

I would here give young anglers a few hints (which I hope will prove useful) on using the dry fly. Never carry your floating May flies in a fly-book, but use a flat tin box (I have found a sandwich box answer the purpose very well), not crowding it too full, but always keeping a stock box at the inn; and you will find it to your own advantage to rise early in the morning and dress a few flies of the right size and colour, not too large, but according to the size of the water. The best wing to use is the Egyptian goose, wood or summer duck, and the brown mallard feathers. These are my favourite wings. I do not care for dyed feathers, though I use them occasionally. Avoid being short of the alder fly when the drake is on, as I have found it very useful, and have killed numbers of fine trout with it when they have refused every drake I offered them; also keep a supply of the yellow dun and the black gnat. I have frequently made a good basket with these small flies when they would not look at a drake. Two yards of gut, nicely tapered, is quite sufficient for a May fly cast. Avoid dressing your flies on too fine a gut, or you will soon lose them. In making your cast, do it in such a way that when your fly alights it will ride on the surface without a ripple. When it does not float even pick it up and throw

rather up stream, always keeping below your fish. (This applies to all fly fishing.) When your fly alights, by no means mount your rod top, but rather lower it, extending your arm to avoid a drag. Never hurry in casting over your fish, but wait on him, sitting on your basket (which should be made for the purpose, and which I shall describe hereafter.) After giving your fish a rest, cast very neatly over him, avoiding a drag on the fly. If he is a good trout, stick to him ; and I warrant you will take him off his guard and soon have him snugly packed in your basket.

I will here give a hint to anglers (more particularly young beginners) regarding the bad practice of what is called "striking." I cannot lay stress enough against this bad practice, and will endeavour to give a few reasons for so doing. In the first place, if you have from fifteen to eighteen yards of line out, I defy any angler to strike in time to hook the fish before he has taken the fly. The angler, striking just as the fish is turning down with the fly, necessarily strains his tackle, and should the fish be but slightly hooked he breaks his hold and gets off. I have, in the course of my experience, seen some of the best of rods and tackle broken by this means. I strongly recommend anglers not to strike at all. All that is necessary can be done with a twist of the wrist, and then mounting your rod to a proper angle, keeping a strain on the line. Avoid being hasty ; give and take according to circumstances ; and feel your fish until he is safely lodged in your net. I will give one of many illustrations I have met with in support of my theory. About ten years ago

I was fishing on the Teeme, at Tenbury, for greyling. I was staying at the White Swan Inn, near the bridge, and had a very good week's sport. A gentleman angler met me one day by the stream, and, as is usually the case, enquired: "What sport?" and asked to see my basket. "With pleasure," I replied, and thereupon emptied its contents (eight brace) on the grass. "Dear me," said he, "what have you killed them with?" "The willow fly," I said, "and if you will allow me, I will put one on your collar." While doing so, a fish rose. I said, "Now sir, make a cast, for the fish appear to be on the feed." I noticed, from the way he handled his rod, that he could throw fairly, and at the second cast the fish took the fly and was well hooked; but as the fish was turning he made a rash strike, and away it went with the fly and the greater part of his collar. Seeing this, I was much annoyed; and rather hastily asked him if he was in the habit of striking his fish in that manner. "Yes," he said, "I always strike them." "Why?" said I, "do they insult you by taking your fly?" I then asked to be allowed to see the contents of his basket, which contained but three fish. I asked him if he had risen many fish? "Yes," he replied, "but owing to my bad hooks I have lost them, or I should have had a fine basket of greyling." I told him I was not at all surprised at the low state of his basket, after seeing the way he struck and lost his last fish; and I advised him to give up striking his fish for the future, when he might reckon upon heavy baskets as the result of his day's sport.

Some fifteen years ago I accompanied a Scotch

gentleman, named Grant, to try our hands on the river Wye, Derbyshire. We commenced in Rowsley meadows. He had with him a splendid book of flies, no doubt very suitable for the rivers and burns of his native country (he called them spider flies), and had great confidence in their killing qualities. My book was full of suitable flies, dressed specially for the Derbyshire waters, and consisted of duns of all shades, with a good selection of red palmers, small orange and clarets, with a variety of others. The natives have given these palmers a new name and call them "bumbles." When these flies are properly put together with various shades of dun hackles, such as yellow dun, honey dun, dark brassy duns, and with a good furnace hackle, called in Wales a coch-a-bonddu, they are first class, particularly after a fresh, by fishing down stream and allowing the water to work (not hurrying) them, and edging the side well and carefully, letting them come close to the bank before picking up to throw again. This was a favourite mode with my father when he wanted to make a good basket. But we will return to Rowsley meadows. Mr. Grant and myself commenced fishing about two o'clock, up stream, and to all appearance there was not a fish in the stream till about four o'clock, when they commenced feeding, the water then being all alive with them. We tried nearly every fly in our books, but with no success—could not even get a rise. We both sat down disheartened. I thought I would catch a few flies to see what they were feeding on. I held my landing net in the stream for some time, carrying it carefully to the inn; but we could see no signs of a fly

on the meshes by gas-light. The next morning (always being an early riser) I was out in the garden by four o'clock, when holding up my landing net to the sun, I could see a number of the smallest midges imaginable. On placing them under a magnifying glass I could see the insect was what they call in Yorkshire a "stone midge." Getting my book of materials, I found the best imitation for the colour of the body was a strand from a centre feather of a heron's wing ; two turns of a glossy starling breast feather answering for wings and legs ; hook No. 0, being the smallest size made. I broke a little bit off the hook to shorten it, and dressed more than a dozen flies before my friend made his appearance. He was astonished when he saw the little insects on the meshes of the net and my imitation of them. I told him I thought we should have a little sport with the artificial flies I had made when the fish were feeding on the natural fly. After breakfast my friend wanted to commence fishing at once. I told him we must wait till feeding time, as we might as well fish in the meadows as thrash the stream before they were rising. We went at one o'clock, and waited until they commenced feeding, about four o'clock, as before. They must have heard the dinner bell, for they were feeding by dozeus. I put up two casts with three of my flies on each cast. In a short time we got some very nice trout and greyling ; and before leaving off we both filled our baskets, and lost many through the smallness of the hooks.

I could give many instances of size and colour being a grand secret, as very frequently in my younger days,

when fishing with my father, the trout have been feeding freely, and, although we tried numbers of our favourite flies, we could not get a rise, my father saying we were wrong in colour ; and, requesting me to catch a natural fly, he would place it under his magnifying glass and get his material book to compare his colours with the real fly. He had a wonderful eye for colour, and always made his materials wet before comparing them with the natural fly. I well remember on one occasion, when my father was fishing the river Derwent, opposite the Lee hat factory, below Cromford (the late Sir Richard Arkwright's water), I caught a natural fly from the water, sat down on the bank and made three imitations, putting them on his cast. There were numbers of trout and greyling rising, and he had been trying his flies with no success. The first or second cast he made with the three flies he hooked three fish, one on each fly, and had an excellent battle in bringing them to the landing net. One fish broke his hold, and lay exhausted on the water. I instantly jumped in, regardless of consequences, put my net under it as it dived down, threw it out on the bank, and landed the other two. My father was very angry with me, telling me I might have been drowned ; but I could not resist the momentary impulse of jumping in after it. My father made a heavy basket of trout and greyling that day with the same kind of fly. This is only one instance out of numbers in which I have observed that colour is a grand secret in fly fishing.



ON COLOUR.

As I walked by the bank in the balmy Spring
 The Spring when the duns are out,
 I marked a splash and a broadening ring,
 And I hastened forward my fly to fling;
 For I knew 'twas a feeding trout—
 A feeding trout; but how to entice
 Him out of his native stream?
 Ah! that's the question! for once or twice
 I've offered him flies which I thought as nice
 In the trout's esteem, as vanilla ice
 In a lady's, or strawberry cream.
 Without success, for he still would feed
 On the flies which came floating past;
 But of my pet lines not one would heed,
 And it seemed as though it had been decreed
 By some aqueous elf, that his shameful greed
 Should be peacefully sated, from danger freed
 As long as the rise would last.
 But at length, as the sun, at the dawn of day,
 Bursts forth and chases the mists away,
 Scorching the lips of the new-mown hay,
 If the clouds be not too dense;
 So flashed upon me that useful hint:
 "Many's the shade in a color's glint,"
 A maxim straight from the coining mint,
 The mint of experience.
 Then come; let us glance at this lightsome thing
 With its fairy body and gossamer wing,
 "Olive encircled with yellowish rings;"
 Enough; there's the very shade.
 Now craftily cast just a foot above
 The nose of that *specially* wary cove—
 He was the King of Trout in the *dove*.
 He rises—he's hooked—here's a game of who wins!
 Even a trout's not above the pomps
 And lines of this wicked world.
 In vain he gasps in unfeigned regret,
 For he's safe in the folds of my landing net.

I will now state my reasons for what I believe to be the cause of the decrease of the May fly, or natural drake. The first and most important is the sewage from large towns being allowed to drain into the rivers, and mixing with the gravel in the river beds where the drake breeds, to a certain extent poisons it. To prove this, I have often, when a lad, waded into a stream during the month of May, for a spadeful of gravel, to examine the chrysalis; sometimes it was a moving mass. I have proved they were the natural May fly, by putting the gravel containing the chrysalis into a perforated box, sinking it into the bed of the river and allowing it to remain until they were hatched. On opening it I have found several drakes perfectly hatched, but drowned. I have tried the same plan recently, and in a spadeful of gravel have only found two or three chrysalis, where formerly there were hundreds. This fact is much to be regretted, and my opinion is that, unless the sewage be kept from the rivers, in a few years the May fly will become almost extinct.

Secondly, a great cause of its decrease is owing to the number of enemies waiting to devour it the moment it is hatched. The swallows take them by thousands; the water wagtail, the reed sparrow, and, in fact, all the small birds feed freely upon them; and I have often been much amused to see how cleverly the birds will pick them off the water. The ducks, too, will soon clear them off a stream.

Lastly, the voracious trout, when they commence feeding, take every drake that comes in their way, and

their appetites are not easily satisfied. I have taken them with my artificial drake, and when killing them they have thrown up a quantity of the natural fly, apparently just taken.

I could give numerous instances of the enormous appetite of the trout which would seem almost incredible. Some fifteen years ago I was fishing with a friend on the Windrush river, below Swinbrook, and killed some excellent trout there. The May fly was just coming on. One fish, weighing over three pounds, looked very much gorged. On opening it with my pocket scissors, to my great surprise I found twenty-six minnows and two May flies, all fresh, apparently just taken; yet he took my artificial fly freely the first cast. That same day, while walking along the banks of the Windrush, rod in hand, looking out for a rising trout, I overtook a rustic angler, who was looking very disconsolate across the stream. I asked him what he was looking at. Pointing to the opposite side he said: "Can you see that large trout near that tuft of grass? He is a five or six pounder. I hooked him this morning with a live fly and he broke me, taking my casting line and the only hook I had; and when he takes a fly I can see the cast very plainly." I told him to wait, and he should have his hook and cast back again, at which he laughed incredulously. I took out my box of May flies, selecting a rough one, and soaked the gut well in my mouth. The man was quite amazed when he beheld my artificial flies, having never seen anything of the kind before. I told my friend to get the landing net ready, as I should soon have hold of the

fish. I went a few yards below, and threw slightly upstream. The fly first struck the tuft of grass, and rebounded on the water, the fish seizing it instantly. I mounted my rod, keeping his head well up to avoid the weeds, and led him down stream to some open water free from weeds, where I tired him out and landed him myself; and sure enough the man's hook was in his tongue, with the cast attached. I gave him the priest (which I always kill my fish with before attempting to take a fly out), and, taking the hook out, I said to the man: "Here's your cast; did I not tell you I would give it you." I shall never forget how simple and astonished he looked; he could scarcely believe his own eyes as he thanked me. This trout weighed over two-and-a-half pounds. I then left my friend and wandered farther down stream towards Witney, passing some very heavy trout water. I met with a shoemaker who was jack fishing, of whom I enquired if there was any trout in that reach of water? He replied, "No; there's nothing here but coarse fish and pike?" I said, "What is that rising by the willow tree growing in the water?" He said, "Only a large chub, sir." I said, "let him be what he may, I will try and present a fly to him." It was some time before I could do so, losing two or three flies in the willow by having to cast through a small opening in its branches. I succeeded at last, and the moment the fly touched the water the fish took it; and when I mounted my rod he rushed down stream, clearing everything before him, trying hard several times to get back again, but I would not allow him. The shoemaker said, "He is only a big chub, sir," to which I

replied that he fought very strong and trout like. I had an excellent battle with him under the water, as he did not show up at all. I asked the man if he had ever landed a fish with his hands, as I had left my landing net with my friend. He said he had landed scores of fish by tickling. I promised him two shillings if he succeed in landing this one for me. He laid down on the bank, and I brought the fish gently up; but as he caught sight of the man he rushed across the stream, throwing himself in the air two or three times, sea trout like, and I then saw it was a very large trout. I played him till he was exhausted, and the man landed it in his own way by throwing it out over his head. It was a very fine-looking old trout, in fair condition, and weighing over five-and-a-half pounds. I returned to my friend, who had met with no sport. He was surprised to see such a fine fish, who still had my May fly in his mouth.

A very favourite river of mine is the Kennett, Hungerford, Berkshire. I have no hesitation in saying it is one of the finest rivers in England, and is the very perfection of heavy trout water. I have killed, with my floating May flies, many fish over five pounds; the best trout I ever killed on that stream weighing six pounds two ounces, which I had preserved by Cooper, of London, and is now to be seen in my shop, as is also a greyling, weighing three pounds, I killed on the Test, below Stockbridge, with many others I now look at with much pleasure. Some very heavy trout have been killed in the river Kennett; one, in particular, which weighed thirteen pounds, whose favourite haunt

was under the carrier bridge that crossed the river below the tan-yard, which is built over the river. It was said this fish knew the sound of the dinner-bell, for he came out most days while the men were at dinner, as they were accustomed to feed him. He would swallow a small boiled potato ; if more than one were thrown to him, he would go down the stream and take it as it met him. He would also take pieces of bread or meat, with which the men occasionally baited a hook, but which he passed as if he did not see it. The men tried him with every bait they could think of, but he avoided them all, and it was remarkable how soon he detected the finest gut line. But with all his wariness he was caught at last, I was told, with rod and line, baited with half a boiled potato, having been starved for several days. I am glad to hear they have formed a club upon this river; but unless the commoners can be bought off the stream, I am quite sure the club will only be preserving fish for them. I have proved this. When Toms and Mathews held the water they tried hard to get a good stock of trout, but failed ; which is not surprising, for I have seen the commoners fishing, as they called it, some by wiring, others with spears and night lines, and many netting it. Some twenty years ago, when I first went to the Kennett, it was four o'clock when I arrived, and that same evening I got several brace of good fish with the orange palmer, one or two being over two pounds, while fishing from the bridge to the mill.

I visited Hungerford for a number of years, generally meeting with good sport. I was there in June, 1865, and

for some days went down the stream below the bridge. On the 12th I went up above the mill, to the end of Hungerford liberty, where I saw five or six anglers, some of whom I knew, throwing over two or three splendid trout. I sat on the rails some little time looking on, when a reverend gentleman came up and asked me to put my rod together and come and try them. I refused, as the gentlemen were friends of mine. He said: "You must come, as I have made a bet that you will hook the three fish." Under the circumstances I went, when they immediately left off, sticking their rods in the ground. I put my rod together, selecting a strong casting line, well testing it through my hands, and soaking it. I then took out my box of May flies, choosing a large one, dressed as follows:—Body, cream-coloured Berlin wool, tested; tail, three strands from a hen pheasant tail feather; wings, a dyed mallard feather, rather dark; a long buff hackle, with brown centre, ribbed down the body, and a small tag of gold tinsel. This is the correct dressing, as I have the fly before me now. After attaching the fly, one of the gentlemen wished to throw with my rod, exclaiming, "That's the fly that will kill them!" It was a long throw, (nearly twenty-five yards,) to the opposite side, close to some hazel bushes. He threw a splendid line, and the fly went over the fish a dozen times, but he took no notice of it. The gentleman who had made the bet, said, "Give up the rod; Ogden will have him directly." I told them I must give the fish a rest. I sat down on my basket, carefully watching how he was feeding; and after he had taken a few drakes at intervals, I said I would try him.

I went a few paces below, and threw up stream. My first cast did not please me, and before the fly well touched the water I picked it off, not wishing it to pass over the fish unnaturally. I made a second cast, and was delighted to see my fly alight within a few inches of his home. I eased my rod, by lowering the top, to prevent a drag. The fly floated well without a ripple, and the trout came to it instantly. I mounted my rod, and he rushed across the river as quick as lightening. Of course I had a slack line, as a ditch behind prevented me running back. I reeled up quickly, as I found him near my feet in deep water, and could see his tail. One of the gentleman wanted to land him at once. I said, "By no means; I will serve him as I do sulky salmon, and other fish, by putting a strain on the line and striking the butt of the rod." I did so, which caused him to rush out, and in going across he threw himself in the air, salmon like. I eased, but still felt him, and found I must try and take him down stream. He complied with my wishes till I got him into a reach of water free from weeds, allowing my rod to do the work by giving and taking a few inches when required. I told the gentleman he might land the fish on one condition, namely, that he did not knock it off. I instructed him to plant his landing net in the water as far as he could reach, ten yards below, and I would bring the fish over the net, he moving the net up gently, and, when the fish was bagged, drawing it out, not lifting the net up in the air, but pulling it forward gently in the water. He succeeded in landing it, and a splendid trout it was, like a mass of gold, short and thick, weighing

five and three-quarter pounds. The gentleman who I mentioned before as having had a throw with my rod, came up and asked me how I did it, remarking that he threw as good a line as I did. I replied I could not tell him if he gave me all Hungerford. He begged me to make free with his brandy flask. I dried my fly and took my stand below another fish, on the feed, throwing up stream. At the second cast he took the fly. I mounted my rod and took him down stream, and a rare battle we had. This fish was in first-class condition, and weighed four-and-a-half pounds. The gentlemen cried out, "Now Ogden, for the third fish," which was a little higher upstream. I sat down on my basket, nearly opposite him, to watch how he was feeding. This he was doing very cautiously, allowing several natural drakes to pass by him, now and then selecting one. He was very wary, and it took me some time and trouble before I could catch him off his guard; but I stuck to him, giving him a rest occasionally, not letting my fly pass over him more than two or three times on each occasion. He took it at last, and a fine contest we had together. When taking my fly out of its mouth, I discovered an old May fly fast in its tongue, without any gut attached to it. To all appearance it had broken some one previously, and that, no doubt, was the cause of its being so wary. I have both these flies still, and keep them with other old pensioners. The total weight of the three fish was twelve and three quarter pounds. One of the gentlemen said he had been throwing over the fish for three days, chiefly using the sunk fly. I gave the fish to them, being well satisfied with the sport

as my share. Since then I have killed several fish there over four pounds, and one six pounds, in weight, being the one I spoke of previously, and which is now to be seen in my shop.

The River Colne, Fairford, Gloucestershire, is a very favourite stream of mine, and one which I consider by far surpasses any other stream in England for producing fine-flavoured trout. Forty years ago it was not uncommon for anglers to fill their baskets with a sunk green drake, dressed buzz; but since then the fish have become more enlightened, and now it is a difficult matter to get a brace with the floating flies, dressed ever so artistically, work as hard as you may. I have seen good hands fish for three or four days without getting a brace, there being, at the same time, plenty of trout feeding on the natural fly. This makes good my theory that the more a stream is whipped, the more wary and shy the fish become. I am convinced it is well stocked with trout, for I have stood in one spot where I could command and throw over seven or eight good fish, some of them over two pounds in weight. This has been in the May fly season, when they were feeding on the natural drake; and I have tried them with nearly every artificial drake, for over two hours, to no purpose, and have at last sat down on my basket and given way to some other angler, who has tried them with no better success. The only reason I can give for this is the fact of the stream being so much fished. I have seen as many as eighteen or twenty rods all thrashing the stream, and many of them fishing for days without getting a single trout. This is easily accounted for, and unless

the number of rods be limited, I think in a few years it will be impossible for even a first-class angler to get a brace. To show what a change has taken place in this respect, I may mention that sixteen years ago, with my floating drakes, I killed thirty pounds of trout in one afternoon, several being over two pounds. The last good day I had on this stream was in June, 1871, when I first introduced my "Multum in parvo" fly rod; and that day's sport I shall never forget. I was staying at the Bull Inn, and sat down to luncheon with a number of gentlemen anglers, who were talking about minnow fishing, the best tackle for the real minnow, and the best artificial baits. A gentleman asked me if I had one of my devil killers with me. I told him I had one in my portmanteau, and he wished me to show it to those present. I did so, upon which a gentleman exclaimed, "That thing kill fish?—why it will scare all the fish in the river!" The remarks annoyed me, and I said: "Gentlemen, I will make a bet that I go to the stream and get a fish at the first throw." "What will you bet?" said they. "Not much," I replied, "say half-a-crown." Nearly a dozen gentlemen accepted my bet at once. I had then to ask the landlord's permission to use the killer, as they were not allowed on that stream. He said under the circumstances I was quite welcome. I informed the gentlemen of the fact, and the time was fixed for two o'clock. I had every confidence, as I well knew where to find fish. I put my waders on, and with my little eight-foot "Multum in parvo" rod in hand, waded up to the arch of the bridge, from which there were a number of people,

besides the gentlemen anglers, looking on. I got close up to the mouth of the arch, and, saying "Gentlemen, here goes!" sent my devil killer nearly through the arch. I had not moved my bait a second before I had a splendid tug. I got the fish from under the arch and led him down stream, where I landed him. He was in splendid condition, weighing over two pounds. The May fly or green drake was just coming up, and the same afternoon, with my floating drakes, I killed eight-and-a-half brace, several of them nearly three pounds in weight, using my little eight-foot rod, handled with leather, a full account of which was published in the "Field" newspaper of June 17th, 1871.

On another occasion I went up to Fairford, with a friend, to fish the river Colne, but finding so many anglers there, I told the landlord I should not go down his water that day, as it might interfere with the gentlemen fishing; and I asked him if he thought Squire Barker, who resided at Fairford, would give us a day on his half water. He replied that it would be useless to ask him, as he never gave permission to anyone. But we thought, however, we would try him, and fortunately met him in the park. I at once told him our errand, and begged his acceptance of some artificial drakes out of my box. He said he did not fish himself, but would give them to his brother, who was an angler. He gave me and my friend permission to fish a day or two on his half water, and we went up to Quenington to commence. The fly was coming up strong, and I soon had some fine trout in my basket. My friend went higher up the meadow, but soon returned

to ask me to go back with him and try for a five or six pounder that was rising under some alder bushes on the opposite side, and near which he could not get a fly, having lost several in the attempt. It was, indeed, a fine long fish to look at. There was but a small space where I could present a fly to him, and he came out and took it. I mounted my rod, and the fish rushed up stream, salmon like, drawing my rod-top into the water. As my line was got fast round the handle of my reel (I have my reels made on a different principle now) the consequence was he broke me, taking the most of my casting line. My friend was very excited, and said I should never hook so fine a trout in the Colne again. The next day I was fishing two meadows below, and noticed a fine trout now and then taking a fly very cautiously. I tried him with several tempting flies, and at last he took one, and a good battle resulted. On landing him, to my surprise I found the fly and piece of cast that I had lost the day before, and which I had dressed at the ^{Inn} Sun, before starting, still in his mouth. My friend could scarcely believe his own eyes. The fish weighed only three and a quarter pounds, being very long but in poor condition. According to its size, it ought to have weighed seven or eight pounds.

Another favourite river of mine is the Usk, Monmouthshire, which I have fished from its source for nearly forty years, for both salmon and trout. It rises on the northern side of Carmarthenshire, some miles above Treecastle, and receives numerous small streams before it reaches the county town. The river abounds with

salmon, and, as a trout stream, I think it by far the best in either North or South Wales. The angler, in following this delightful stream down to Crickhowell will, with the scenery and the sport, meet with all that can be desired. Thirty years ago the angler could fish most of this water by asking permission ; but for several years it has been strictly preserved by the owners, and clubs have been formed on some parts of it, of which, in consequence of the number of applicants, it is a difficult matter to become a member.

The Monnow is another splendid trout stream, and well deserves a visit. Some twenty years ago most of this stream was open to anglers by asking permission, and many a fine basket have I made from it. I used to put up at that excellent little inn, the Bell, close to the stream, and within a short distance of that capital stream, the Trothey, where I have killed many trout over two pounds in weight, with the artificial minnow. These trout surpass any I ever killed in either North or South Wales, being short, thick fish, as pink as salmon, and very choice flavor. I think it is very difficult to get a day's fishing on either of these streams, except through a member of one of the clubs.





THE GREEN DRAKE.

I HAVE made this fly my especial study from a lad, and have always felt the greatest interest in watching its progress from the bed of the river, and have dressed it in every way imaginable. When a lad I commenced tying them buzz, with a strand of buff-coloured wool for the body ; tail, three strands of hen pheasant tail feather, set on rather long ; for wings and legs, a mallard breast feather dyed yellow with fustic chips and copperas. For a change I used a bittern hackle set in with the dyed mallard, and many a basket of fine trout have I made with this buzz fly. Another good pattern is two or three turns of bittern hackle at the head, and ribbed down the same body as above, at intervals, not too close. Snip off the fibres nearly close to the wool, leaving the two turns at the head for legs. Wings stripped from the dyed mallard feather, and set on last. I used this, as a sunk fly, for many years with great success, and have noticed that when the fish would take a sunk fly it was by far the most deadly, and did not require half the labour or skill as the dry fly. I continued using the sunk fly till I

could not take another fish with it, when I introduced my floaters, and I am confident I am the originator of Floating Flies, having introduced them forty years ago, and, up to the present time, have proved them very deadly. A great favourite of mine is dressed as follows : Body made of buff-coloured chenile, ribbed down at intervals with gold or silver tinsel, below the ribs of chenile ; a ginger hackle, rather long in fibre, wrapped down the body by the side of tinsel ; wing, two dyed mallard feathers, set in very upright, back to back for floating wings ; tail, three strands of cock pheasant tail feather. This fly is an excellent floater, and kills well amongst large trout at Hungerford. I do not approve of dressing May flies cock-tail fashion, as the tail frequently comes in contact with the nose of the fish, and will not stand as those dressed on the hook only. Of late years I have dressed my floating Green Drakes as follows, and which I shall fully describe, as I consider they are the best floating May flies the angler can make : Hook, No. 6, not too large or too long in the shank—I prefer bright hooks for May flies, not too heavy in the wire ; shape, according to fancy, as some prefer the sneck to the round bend. I always test my hooks first, to see if they will straighten out or break. Fix it in the fly vice, put three or four wraps of the tying silk, well waxed (which may be any light colour), round the shank of the hook, leaving sufficient bare hook to wing upon ; select a strand of good round undrawn gut, according to the size of the hook ; test it well by drawing it through the hands till it is perfectly straight, lay it underneath the hook, and wrap

down the body with the waxed silk, close and firm; not one wrap on another; try the gut with a steady strain, to see that it is tied in firm. No fly should be made without this precaution. Set in three strands of hen pheasant tail feather for tails; well wax a length of red silk and set it in at the shoulder. Take a clean bright straw, (which may be obtained at any fancy shop,) split it down the centre, cut off about three-quarters of an inch, more or less, according to the length of the hook; taper it at each end with the fly dressing scissors, and fit it to the body of the fly. A little practice will soon teach the tyer how to cut the straws and fit them nicely to the body. If the straw is damped a little, it will bend better and without splitting. Place the straw underneath the hook, bringing the two edges close together on the top of the body; put two or three wraps of the red silk at the shoulder on the straw, pressing it well together to form the body, and close the straw together. Rib the red silk down on the straw, not too close, about four ribs down to the tails. The wings for this fly should either be Egyptian goose, wood, or summer duck; set the wings on perfectly upright, not letting them twist round. Turn the quill ends back and tie them down to prevent their drawing out. Take three turns of peacock herl at the head to form the wheel; pass the silk behind the wings; take a freckled bittern hackle, and tie it in close up behind the wings; take three or four turns to form the legs, and fasten off with one wrap and two hitches. This wears much better than finishing off at the head. For a change use any hackle you may fancy. The one I prefer is

taken from the wing of the ubar bustard, and certainly approaches the nearest in colour to the legs of the natural fly. A ginger cock's hackle is also good; and, for a variety, use a partridge rump feather, with a ginger hackle. The wings, to match, should be Egyptian goose. The cork bodies are dressed in precisely the same way, but I give straw the preference of three to one over cork either for colour, wear, or floating properties. In speaking of wings (the most essential point in the dry fly), I consider the Egyptian goose feather, taken from the side of the breast, the best for the purpose, as from their oily nature they resist the water much better than the wood or summer duck, and are whipped dry much quicker. I must not omit to mention the different mallard feathers which are good for wings of the floating drake. My favourite mallard feather is taken from the side of the shoulder, where the large brown feathers are found which are so useful in tying salmon and sea-trout flies, and many others. These short dark feathers make excellent wings, and match a cork body ribbed over with fine gold twist. Another is the mallard feather, taken from the side of the breast. It is most difficult to dye this feather the right shade, to match the tint of the natural wing. I have tried almost every vegetable dye, with various barks and chips. The best I have yet found out is produced as follows:—After taking off the down or fluff, wash the feathers in hot soap and water, and afterwards rinse them well in warm water. Put two quarts of soft water and a small cupful of ebony chips into a tin saucepan; boil well till it is reduced to three pints. Put the washed

feathers into a large basin, and pour the boiling dye on them. Stir them well and let them stand in the dye at least twenty-four hours ; then put about a pint of soft water, a cupful of shumac (the kind used by tanners), and a lump of copperas, the size of a walnut, into the dye saucepan, well boil the compound and pour it over the feathers. To ascertain the colour take a feather out, rinse it well in cold water, and dry it. To deepen the colour, add more copperas to the dye, and simmer it over a slow fire. With care and observation you will get them the exact tint of the natural fly. When the feathers are taken out of the dye, be careful to rinse them well in plenty of water. My mode of drying feathers is as follows—Squeeze them well in your hands, and put them into an ordinary paper hat box ; hold it over a very slow fire, and shake it till the feathers are dry. I find the following an excellent plan when feathers are crushed and bent, be they ever so bad :—Put them in a basin, pour boiling water over them, let them stand till cold, and then dry them as above, which method will restore them. I frequently do as follows to some of my floating May flies which have been worked hard, and look done up : I get a little hot water, lay hold of the gut, keeping the wings in the hot water a few minutes. This will straighten them, and you can easily dry the fly by wafting it in the air, at the same time placing the wings in their proper shape ; and I have been many times rewarded by basketing a fine trout with one of these worn out flies, as some would call them. Of course they will not float so long as a new fly.

It is not necessary for me to give any more recipes for dyeing materials or hackles for fly dressing, as Judson has conferred a boon to the angling world and the public in general, by bringing out his useful dyes, of every shade, at a trifling cost, with full instructions for using them.

THE GREY DRAKE.

This is an excellent killer, and I have frequently taken a fine trout with my artificial grey drake, when they have refused the green drake, alder fly, and yellow dun. I have dressed them in a variety of ways, with wool bodies and straw bodies, but shall only fully describe my latest improvement, which I find is the best pattern of any :—Hook, No. 6 ; tail, three or four strands of bright freckled guinea fowl feather ; body, a bright straw, nicely tapered, and a strand of fine black sewing silk ribbed over it at intervals. Then take a long guinea fowl feather, strip off the right side of the feather, and snip off the other side, not close, leaving it about the eighth of an inch long, tie it in at the shoulder with a few inches of silver tinsel, rib the tinsel down to the tails on the black silk to prevent it slipping, and rib the hackle down by the side of the tinsel, keeping it on the edge that is stripped off. Finish off with the black silk, under the tails, with one wrap and two hitches. The wings for grey drakes should be the speckled feather taken from the side of the teal's breast. Set two of these feathers on quite upright, back to back ; turn the quill ends back and tie them in ; form the wheel at the head with two or three turns of black ostrich herl, and tie in a small gallinæ

feather, giving it two or three turns behind the wings to form the legs. My old favourite pattern was a straw body and a hackle with black centre and white edge, ribbed down the body at intervals ; or the hackle at the shoulder only, is a very good pattern.

Before leaving the subject of flies I will give my recipe for making white wax :—Take four ounces of the best white resin, half an ounce of fresh lard, and quarter of an ounce of white wax. Let the resin be well melted in a jar, over a slow fire, stirring it all the time with a stick. Add the white wax and lard, simmer for a quarter of an hour, then pour it out into a basin of cold water and work it well with the hands till pliable, putting it for half an hour before the fire. It cannot be worked too much. Cut it up into small peices, and keep it in cold water ready for use. If it is too hard, melt it up again with a little more lard ; and if too soft, add more resin. These alterations chiefly depend on the weather being warm or cold.





ON RODS.



THIS is a most important article to the angler, and should be selected in every possible point to meet his wishes. I do not agree in going to extremes. The rod should neither be too stiff or too whippy. The action of a well-balanced salmon or trout rod should play true and even from the butt to the top, and when put together and held out, ought to lay nearly straight from the hand. If it drops in one part more than another, it will be sure to break there, and may do so even when picking up the line to make a cast. If it should last for a short time it is very unpleasant for the angler to try and make a correct cast. For single-handed fly fishing I think an eleven or twelve foot rod ample for most streams. I seldom use one longer than eleven feet, and prefer an eight foot when wading, as I can do the work much better, and throw right and left under overhanging bushes, which it is impossible to do with a long rod. If the angler uses a rod he cannot wield with ease it makes a toil of what would be a pleasure; he soon becomes tired, and feels the

effect in arm and wrist. I do not recommend a rod made up of three or more different kinds of wood, as I think it impossible to get the action quite true. From a practical experience in rod making during the last forty years, I have come to the conclusion that the very best wood is the dark-coloured blue mahoe, free from flaws, and which is superior to greenheart, lancewood, or hickory, being very tough and fibrous, and which, if good, appears, when broken, to be composed of a series of strings welded together. It will keep its pitch marvellously well. I have tested it by leaving a two-pound weight tied to a peice of line attached to a joint of this wood for a whole night, and, when removed in the morning, it has sprung up as straight as if it had not been used. For top joints, lancewood or greenheart are preferable.

It is now some thirty years since I first introduced the blue mahoe wood for rod making, and I have used it ever since with unvaried success and satisfaction. Many a gentleman angler has brought the rod I had previously made for him, telling me of the extraordinary work he had done with it, recounting anecdotes of its performance, and saying the rod was as good as the first day he used it. Formerly this wood was very difficult to procure, but now large importations are received from the West Indies both at London and Liverpool. I found this wood out quite accidentally in Birmingham. The owner was making ramrods of it, and its peculiarly pleasant aroma attracted my attention. I sprang a piece, and found it came well back to its pitch, which pleased me so much that I bought up all he had, and the next day commenced making a rod

of it for myself, being anxious to try it. A gentleman angler came into my workshop, and asked me what I was doing. I told him I had found out a new wood, and was making a rod from it for myself, being anxious to try it. He said he liked the appearance of it much, and would like one made of it for himself, but that he had so many rods of different makers. He left, but soon returned, saying he must have a rod of the new wood. That was quite thirty years ago, and I have frequently met with him since, as he comes every May fly season to fish the Colne and its tributaries. His first subject of conversation is generally of the rod I made him from that then unknown wood. He considers it worth its weight in gold. I have made him new tops to it. He tells me he has killed hundreds of brown trout with it, besides greyling and numbers of sewin, and a few salmon. Fourteen years ago I received a most satisfactory testimonial from him, which spoke most highly of its merits, and only last year he told me he would not part with the rod for twenty pounds. It was many years before I could get a supply of this wood, or even ascertain its name. I discovered at last it was called "blue mahoe," and that it grew in the jungles of Jamaica. I have used it ever since for salmon and trout rods, and have received numbers of testimonials from gentlemen anglers who have purchased them.

I will try to describe a few of the qualities of this wood. It is very light, and breaks like jungle cane. The dark-coloured is by far the best, and when it will split straight is invaluable. I have worked up a large quantity during the last twenty years, and if I meet with

a log that will not split straight, I discard it at once. If at all cross-grained, it will snap like a carrot where there is no imperfection visible. This will not occur if the wood will split straight previous to its being worked up. I consider the mottled canes excellent for both trout and salmon rods. They should be of a proper taper to play well down into the hand. A three-joint rod made with these canes, if they will come in so as to get a proper action, is invaluable, and will last much longer than any other ; but the difficulty is to get canes with little or no taper to them, and that is why so few are in use. These cane rods require great attention in the making, particularly in putting on the ferrules, the edges of which should be rounded so as not to break the skin of the cane, neither should there be the smallest shoulder made. The ferrules should cover the skin of the cane, and, when rivetted on, should be done in the middle of the ferrule, or it will soon break out. I have recently seen a rod I made twenty years ago of mottled cane. It is quite straight, and looks as if it would stand its work, with care, for an equal period. I am always delighted to see an old rod, and to hear of the numbers of salmon and sea trout it has brought to the pannier, some of them under difficult circumstances.

The rod for salmon fishing should be from sixteen to eighteen feet, every inch over which adds to the weight. I never yet handled a twenty-foot rod that an angler could use with ease and comfort. True, a rod of that length will make short work with a twenty-pound salmon ; but I strongly object to pulling the fish out in that way, it being

always attended with danger to the tackle, and especially to the rod. A salmon rod should be made of the best Indian mottled cane, or blue mahoe wood, and so made that when a fish is hooked the strain comes into the butt, and tells in the hand, which greatly relieves the top and middle part, and also prevents an unequal check on the casting line and fly. This kind of rod is a medium Castle Connell, and I find it will throw a line better than those which are made stiffer; and, being handled much easier, makes the fishing a real pleasure, and not a work of toil to the angler. Rods that are made from woods such as blue mahoe, greenheart, lancewood, or hickory, I prefer, for my own use, the butt ferruled and the top spliced. They play more equal, and are not so liable to break, as when ferruled. It may be a little more trouble in putting it together for use, but it will repay the angler in the result of his day's fishing. I can splice my rod in five minutes in a manner that it will stand its work for a week. The splices should be made a little stouter than the other parts, by leaving a little more wood in them. On no account put wax on the splices. The wrapping for these should be four or five strands of hemp, well waxed, not twisted, but kept as flat as possible, as it will hold the splices much firmer when flat than when twisted, and is better than string or whipcord. In wrapping the splices together, commence at the top of the splice, and start with two or three easy wraps; then holding the hemp tight in the right finger and thumb, close to the splice, and twisting the lower joint with the left hand, it is done at once. I usually put my wraps about a quarter of an

inch apart, but that is of no consequence so long as it is firm. The hemp should be passed under the guide to secure it. A rod, properly put together in this way, will stand a week's fishing without any trouble or inconvenience.

With regard to using the rod, I have seen some anglers very impatient, putting more strain on the rod than it was able to bear ; and then, as a matter of course, it came to grief. I have seen more rods broken by hasty throwing, and not allowing sufficient time in picking up a long line from the water, than by playing a fish. I have also seen some of the best of rods broken by the fly getting entangled in a twig, or a blade of grass ; and the angler has declared it was quite rotten, while there was no fault either with the wood or the maker. A sudden twitch or jerk will break the best rod that can be made. I have often heard the angler say : "I was only throwing or striking very gently, when it snapped off like a carrot." A sudden jerk will break whipcord, while it can rarely be broken by a fair strain. As such, my advice to all anglers is to handle their rods as gently as possible ; for by so doing they will avoid disappointment and unpleasantness with the rod maker.

One of the best and most useful rods I have brought out is my much approved "Mulum in Parvo Fly Rod." I made the first for my own use, which was only eight feet in length. I was suffering at the time from rheumatism, and could not use my ordinary fly rod, but did not like to be disappointed in meeting a party of gentlemen anglers, whom I had joined with much pleasure, for over thirty years, on the river Coln, at Fairford, in the May fly season.

They were highly amused at my little eight-foot rod ; one gentleman remarking that I ought to have known better than bring that toy to kill a two-pounder with. But it deceived us all ; for that day I landed several weighing two pounds, and one or two nearly three pounds in weight. In fact I made the best basket, and there were more than twenty rods on the stream. Many of the anglers handled my little rod, and wished to have it ; but I would not part with it, and I have it by me now. I took several orders for similar ones, and have had an increased demand for them ever since. I make them of greenheart wood, various lengths—eight, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve feet, in two joints, spliced, and handled with leather. I vary them in action, making some after the Castle Connell salmon rod style, to play into the hand. I can show numbers of testimonials speaking in the highest terms of them, especially the eight-foot rod. A gentleman has told me he can throw nearly twenty yards of line with his “multum,” and kill a salmon with it. He generally uses it for white trout fishing, as it affords him more sport than his fifteen-foot rod, especially when fishing from a boat. In a letter received July 29th, 1878, Lord Northbrook says : “I killed a trout of eight pounds with one of your little rods, and was quite surprised at the power of so light a rod.” I will here give an extract from the “Field” newspaper of June 17th, 1871 :—“May Fly Fishing on the River Colne, Fairford, Gloucestershire.—I was much pleased with this delightful stream, which was well stocked with fine trout, but found the fish very shy in taking the dry fly ; and having to whip against a

high wind which prevailed part of the time, caused the flies to fly off at rather a fast and expensive rate. I found some of the best fishers of the day at the Bull Inn, and among them the veteran Ogden, of Cheltenham. He was using a very light eight-foot rod, handled with leather, which, for lightness and power, quite astonished me. I found on handling it I could command the stream better than with my eleven-foot rod, and with scarcely any labour to myself. His best day's kill was eight-and-a-half brace. Several fish were taken over two pounds, and a few nearly reached three pounds. To those who would combine hard work with the least amount of labour and trouble (especially in streams where trees and bushes overhang) I would strongly recommend a trial of the rod above quoted. I feel confident it is the rod of the day for work and comfort.—MAY FLY."

I have lately brought out a double-handed Multum in Parvo rod, which I consider by far the most useful the angler can have. It is a fifteen-foot rod, and forms a twelve-foot rod with the short butt. It has three tops, one for fly fishing, one for spinning, and one for worm fishing. The middle and butt is made from choice mottled cane, and the top from greenheart that has been split from the log. (No top should be worked up from sawn greenheart; it is not to be depended on unless it will cleave.) The action of this rod plays well into the hand; and I feel confident it will meet with approbation, being two rods combined in one.

I must not omit to mention another useful rod I have just brought out. It is a Portmanteau Rod.

in five joints, and is more especially adapted to gentlemen travelling, or commercial travellers who are fond of doing a little fly fishing when an opportunity occurs. These little rods are nine and ten feet in length, and will throw from eighteen to twenty yards of line, and kill a three-pound fish with ease.

I have just received a splendid selection of East Indian mottled canes of the proper taper and thickness, which are so difficult to procure, and yet so essential to the proper action of either salmon or trout rods. These canes far surpass all woods for durability and throwing. I would here say that all wood for rod making should be kept at least six or seven years, after it is cut out, before being worked up; and should be tied in bundles, and laid down flat in a dry place, as it warps if kept upright.

If you wish to keep a favourite rod in good order never lay it down on the bank, but stick the spike or spear in the ground. After a day's fishing, if you do not wish to unsplice your rod, form a loop at the end with a piece of string and hang it on a nail, under cover. Avoid rearing it up in a slanting position, as that does a rod more harm than using it.

In conclusion I would say I have just brought out a very first-class salmon rod, which, in my opinion surpasses all others. The butt and middle of these rods are made from East Indian canes, picked out of thousands, to get a proper taper and perfect action. The tops are made of split greenheart of the finest quality. No wood will stand wear and tear like mottled canes, when properly made up.

I make these rods seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen feet in length, handled with prepared leather, which prevents the hands from blistering, and I have every confidence that they will recommend themselves to the angler.



A FEW HINTS ON CASTING.



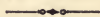
I WOULD advise the young angler, when learning to throw a line, not to commence with too much line out. He should try eight or ten yards at first, and if that is accomplished satisfactorily, he can try a few yards more. It is a good plan for a young beginner to try on a lawn or field, without flies, with a white feather for a mark. He should also place a book or other article under his arm when practising casting. The work should be done from the wrist and elbow. Never throw your body forward when making a cast, as it will not assist you to get an inch more line out. The angler should rather stand erect, or in a slightly stooping position. The art of casting or throwing the artificial fly is best learnt by taking a few lessons from an old angler who knows how to use his rod ; and practice will improve the young beginner, especially if he has a natural love for angling.

Before commencing to fish, soak the casting line in water for some time, and straighten it by drawing it through the hands or a piece of india-rubber. This is

necessary for two reasons ; it enables the angler to detect a weak place in the gut, and to make a cast with neatness and precision. The movement should be made from left to right in the following manner :—Take the cast near the end fly with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, and hold at an easy distance from the body, wave the rod from left to right, forming a semi-circle over the right shoulder. This should not be done hurriedly, or the angler will be minus his end fly. Make the downward stroke, not lowering the top of the rod too much, but allowing the spring of the rod to do the work. It looks very awkward to see an angler throw out his arm ; and he cannot make so long a cast as when doing it from the elbow and wrist. Avoid as much as possible showing yourself, or even your shadow, on the water, which will at once cause a feeding trout to cease rising.



ON REELS.



A REALLY good useful reel is very necessary to the angler ; but there is such a variety of different makes, and every fisherman has his fancy, that I shall only speak of what I consider the best kind. This should have a firm check to run free, and the handle fixed on the plate, as it prevents the line from catching. I prefer rather a heavy reel for a single-handed rod, as it helps to balance it, and

is of great service in making a cast. It also prevents the top of the rod falling too suddenly. For trout reels, the finest gun metal is by far the best ; but for salmon reels ebonite is preferable, being lighter ; and, if well put together, and bound with brass or German silver, are very durable. I like a reel well contracted, as they pick a line up so much quicker, and run out safer. The best reel makers (and who make my patterns) are Mr. Ryder, 48, Ellis-street, and Mr. Heaton, Upper Hospital-street, Birmingham.



ON FLY LINES.



A GOOD fly line is a very necessary article in the angler's requirements. I have for many years been trying to meet with what I could confidently recommend as a good fly line. Some anglers prefer those made by the Manchester Spinning Company. I have tried these lines, and was delighted with them at first ; but after using them a short time, I found they became soft and useless for throwing. If the dressing could be made to resist the water effectually, it would be invaluable, as these lines have some good points. They run clear through the rings, and pick up very little water. I would recommend a plaited silk line if well oiled and rubbed smooth.

When a lad I made my own lines with quills and horse-hair, but it did not answer very well, as it constantly

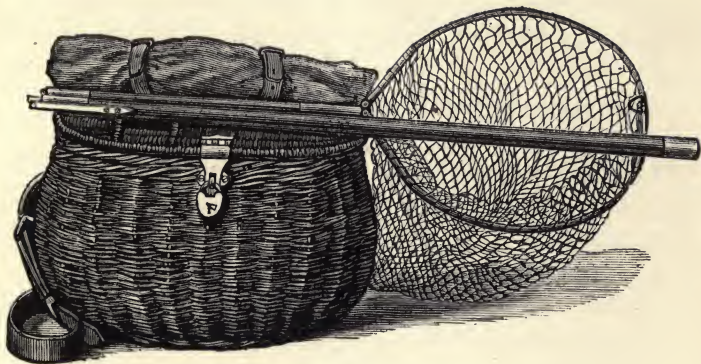
required trimming. I am also in favour of the lines made of silk and hair plaited together ; and if these lines are well made with plenty of good horsehair, I would give them the preference over all others yet brought out for trout fishing, both for use and durability. I have found from thirty to forty yards ample for trout fishing with a single-handed fly rod. For salmon fishing and trolling, in my opinion there is nothing better than a plaited silk line, with a good dressing on it. I have found it advantageous, when using these lines, to dress them occasionally with the following preparation :—Two ounces of bees'-wax, one ounce of mutton suet, quarter of a pint of pure boiled linseed oil. These ingredients must be simmered together in an iron vessel, over a slow fire. The line should be stretched between two posts, and a small portion of this preparation well rubbed in with a piece of wash leather. On no account should a line be put away damp, as it will do it more harm than using it.



OGDEN'S NOTED SEAT BASKET.



SOME fifteen years ago I brought out these baskets, as I often felt the want of a dry and convenient seat by the river side. They are made in four sizes. The enormous demand by anglers proves their great utility. I have them made with great care under my personal supervision. On



OGDEN'S FOLDING LANDING NET AND SEAT BASKET.

several occasions I have had them severely tested. A gentleman at Hungerford, who weighed eighteen stone, sat on my basket for a considerable time, while I was tempting a four-pound trout to take my floating May fly, and which I had the satisfaction of landing after a sharp tussle. I have made great improvements as regards the shape to fit the back ; and to my own I have two small leather straps attached at the back, by the hinges, to carry my macintosh, which I find a great convenience, as it does not interfere either in using it as a seat, or in carrying it on the back. This basket has many advantages, and I will name a few of them. First, and most important, is the dry and comfortable seat. Secondly, they are open, to admit air, and can be washed and kept clean without getting rotten, as is the case with the French basket.

I consider bags an abomination, as they entirely spoil the freshness of the fish, and unfit them for the table. The other day a gentleman, who is a great angler, brought his seat basket (which he had purchased of me seven years before) to be re-varnished. It was in a good state of preservation, and had kept its shape. He informed me he had taken it with him all over the continent, and had filled it scores of times with trout, greyling, and other fish. He had also found it a comfortable seat while sketching. The basket now looks as good as ever, and will, I have no doubt, accompany him on many another fishing expedition. They are fitted with locks and a broad leather shoulder strap, which I think is preferable to webbing, especially in wet weather.

OGDEN'S SPRING FOLDING LANDING NET.



THIS is my own invention, and is very useful to the angler, as it can be carried on the basket strap on the left hand side, and is considered the most useful and convenient landing net yet brought out. When the fish is exhausted and ready for landing, the net can be taken out from the strap with the left hand and jerked up, when it will spring out ready for use. They have the advantage over the telescope handles, which frequently set fast in damp weather ; and the right hand being engaged with the rod leaves the angler in a fix, and often causes him to lose perhaps the best fish of the day, through the line slacking or other causes. All this I have experienced.

For wading, I would recommend my Vade Mecum landing net. It is all that can be desired, and may be carried with ease. My method is to have a large button fixed on the outside of my coat, under the left arm. I tie a loop of string in the centre of the hoop, and pass it round the button. It is easily detached, and the length of handle may be varied according to the height of the angler. It can be carried in a portmanteau, is inexpensive, and will be found very handy where a short landing net can be used.

For trout and greyling fishing I prefer silk nets, well prepared ; but for salmon or heavy fish (where the angler does not use a gaff) I have found the Manchester nets, if

well prepared, answer very well, as they are strong and pick up but little water, and the hook is not so liable to get entangled as in those made of twine, without preparation.

I make a great variety of other landing nets, too numerous to describe here. The long cane handles with a folding hoop are useful, but require a gillie to carry them.

In landing a fish the net should be held in the water below the fish, and, as soon as it is bagged, should be drawn out through the water, not lifting the net in the air, but pulling it forward.



ON MINNOW FISHING.



THE rod for spinning the artificial minnow should not be too stiff. I frequently use my fly rod; it gives to the first tug, and, by so doing, secures more fish. I have frequently known them knock themselves off through the angler using a stiff rod, which causes a dead strain. It is not the artificial bait most closely resembling the minnow gudgeon or miller's thumb that kills the best. It is the arrangement of the hooks and the spinning qualities that ensure the angler sport. If not hooked at the first flash, the fish will not stop to chew the bait till he is taken. I recommend the hooks should stand well out

from the minnow, and fly round with it. To keep the artificial minnow well under water it should be of a proper weight. It cannot be too heavy, according to the size of it; but the spinning is the grand secret. I prefer throwing up stream, and drawing the bait down stream. By no means make your spins by jerks. Even in a rapid mill stream the quicker it is drawn the more deadly it proves; and if so situated that you cannot draw it down stream, work it from the opposite bank, edging your side well and quickly. If used as directed, and a fish gets a sight of it, I will bet ten to one that he comes like a flash of lightening. Never be in a hurry to land your fish, but rather slack your line. I never strike, but give and take according to circumstances, and wait my opportunity to land the fish. By no means attempt to take the hooks out of his mouth till you have given him the "priest," as they are apt to get in the fingers while he is struggling. The hooks should be cut out of his mouth with the pocket scissors, not pulled out, and you may then arrange them for another fish. Avoid having too much line out, and on no account show even your shadow on the water, or your basket will be light at night. I prefer fishing with the minnow up stream. If the river is very weedy I work it up stream, in the channel; and when I meet with a large hole, free from weeds, I use my minnow in a sink and draw mode.

I prefer the swivels about three lengths of gut from the head of the bait. In my early practice I thought I could not get them too near, and have, even at much trouble, placed them in the mouth of the bait; but

experience has proved to me that they relieve the line better by being at least two feet from the bait. I have three swivels joined together, which I find much neater than the old plan of putting them singly. It is a mistake to suppose that the swivels make the minnow spin; they only relieve the line from twisting.

I make my devil killers in three sizes, always using the heaviest and largest when I get to a mill race, and the smaller sizes in shallow water. It is useless making more than three or four spins in one place, for if your fish intends to come he will do so at the first. I believe the worm to be a deadly bait, but I never use it. In fishing with the real minnow I do not agree with spinning it too rapidly, as it is more deadly when done by jerks, or merely sunk and drawn.

The latest tackle I have brought out, and which has proved the best for the real minnow, is two large treble hooks, on gut, tied about two inches apart. With a baiting needle I run the gut in at the vent and out at the mouth, passing the lead (which should not be too large) into the stomach. I have a treble hook fastened to a loop of gut, which I pass down the trace, and which may be allowed to fly loose or to lock up the mouth of the bait. This may be used as sink and draw, or it will spin freely if preferred. The varieties of minnow tackle are endless, most of which I have tried. Col. Hawker's and Pennell's are both good, and are fully described in their books; but I have only mentioned those I have proved to be the best killers. The sink and draw or diving minnow prove very deadly, and can be used in

many places where it is impossible to use other minnows. The great secret in using it is, when you feel a tug to give a slack line, so as to allow the fish to gorge it. Then tighten your line, give a slight turn of the wrist, and give and take till you land him. I believe many a good fish is lost through the angler being too hasty.



IRELAND.



I will now give a few anecdotes of my experience in Ireland, which I have visited, on fishing expeditions, numbers of times. I was there in 1851, the year of the first Exhibition. It was my rod and line tempted me there, but, being on the spot, I inspected the fishing tackle department, where was an excellent show by most of the principle tackle makers in the world. I met several gentlemen anglers there, who, like myself, were much interested in the sight. I showed them my books of salmon and trout flies, when one of the gentlemen, a cotton spinner from Lancashire, asked me where I came from. I told him, and he then said: "I have frequently seen your name in the 'Field' newspaper." He liked the appearance of my flies better than any in the exhibition, and wished to know where I intended fishing, as he should be pleased to accompany me, having, like myself, come for fishing. Both being fond of the rod and line

we soon became fast friends, and agreed on the following day to try the river Shannon, at Athlone, first. On arriving at the station we found the omnibus had just left for the town ; but seeing a ragged Irishman lying on the bank, I asked him to take our luggage up to the town, promising to remunerate him well for his trouble. He turned round, without rising, and said : " Your honour, I can't do that thing." I asked him if he was ill ? " Oh, no, your honour, I'm very well ; but I earned twopence this morning, and shall want no more to-day." I said, " Do you mean to tell me you can live on twopence a day ?" " Oh, yes, your honour ; I got a pennyworth of buttermilk and a pennyworth of praties, and shall want no more till to-morrow." His clothes were composed of all manner of bits of rag and cloth stitched together, and I asked him how he got them on after taking them off ? He said, " I never take them off, your honour." I told my friend I thought a good horsewhipping would do the Irishman good. After waiting some time the omnibus came, and we were soon set down at the hotel. We afterwards walked out to view the town, which we were much pleased with, and took apartments at the house of a very respectable draper. We then enquired for the best fisherman in the town, and were fortunate in securing the services of a capital hand, who had fished the Shannon from a boy, and who was also a first-rate salmon fly dresser. We engaged him, with his boat, for eight o'clock next morning.

The river Shannon is a noble stream. We tried our hands for salmon, but did not get a rise. Towards evening

I put on a cast of trout flies, dressed as follows:—The end fly was dressed on a No. 6 hook; body, orange floss silk; a black hackle at shoulder; wings from a brown mallard feather; a gold tag and three strands of golden pheasant tippet feather for tails; middle dropper, a grouse hackle; third fly, a black hackle, with blue floss silk body, a gold tag, and a wing from under covert feather of the jay's wing. I got a few very fine trout with this cast, working hard till dark. The next day Pat persuaded us to try spinning, and recommended a piece of an eel for a bait. We succeeded in killing several fine trout. I tried one of my artificial baits, but without success.

We spent a very pleasant week, but did not get a rise with the salmon. We met with an angler, a captain in the army, and he, being stationed at the barracks, gave us an order to visit that place, which was a great treat, especially the playing of the band.

From Athlone we went to Mullingar, to try the West Mead Loughs. We put up at the head hotel, which we found miserably dirty, especially the beds. From what we saw we decided to pass the night in our chairs. My friend was a good hand at making punch and playing on the flute, and I joined him with some of old Izaak Walton's songs, and so we passed the night. In the morning we sent for the best fisherman in the town, Pat Arkell by name, who observed that I had an excellent assortment of flies, but no green drakes. I told him they must be over, as they came in May. He informed me they rose three times in the year on the loughs, and, taking off his cap, he shewed me several live drakes which he

had caught on the lough the previous day. I asked him if he had any materials for dressing the artificial drake. He brought me a very nice assortment, and I at once dressed a few floaters. We drove to Belvidere lough, and while the man was getting his boat ready I put up two rods, one to trail the boat with my devil killer, the other with one of my floating drakes. My friend put up a cast of trout flies. Pat pulled against a strong breeze for some miles, and at last he pulled in his oars and let the boat drift, requesting me to put out my bait. I said, "I shall be fast to the bottom unless you row." He replied, "Throw your bait, and look." To my surprise it was spinning all right, so I let out thirty yards of line, making the rod fast to the stern of the boat, and watched for a trout to rise at the natural drake. As soon as I saw one do so, I threw my floating fly close to the spot, but with no effect. I threw to several, but had no rise, and then began to find out my mistake. The trout in rivers keep to their rests waiting for the flies to come over them; but in loughs, when they are on the feed, they rove about very rapidly, taking a fly, and in a second are ten or fifteen yards away, so that it is a mere chance to make a cast in their progress. When I did so, I was certain of a rise. In this respect the natural fly has a great advantage over the artificial; but I have often said, and repeat it again, that I would as soon be placed in the stocks, as to hold up my rod and watch a natural drake float over the waves in search of a roving trout. I must admit it is a very deadly method, and requires little or no skill beyond simply holding the rod at proper angles, and, when the fish is hooked, giving

and taking according to circumstances. To say the least of it, I consider it very unsportsmanlike and cruel to the flies used for the purpose.

But to return. My friend and myself spent ten days on these loughs, killing some fine trout which averaged over three pounds each. In trailing the boat with my devil killer in Belvidere Lough, I killed a splendid perch, weighing over six pounds. The drake comes on a week or ten days earlier there than on Lough Owell. Then comes Dinnamara Lough, which I prefer of the three, as the water is not so clear, and I have had the best sport there. But give me river fishing from the bank; the wilder and more difficult it is, the better I enjoy it.

On leaving Mullingar we took train for Belfast, the most business-like town in Ireland; and from there to Randalstown, where we had good accommodation and every comfort. The landlord was an Englishman, and he obtained permission for us to fish in the river Maine, which runs through O'Neil's park, and empties itself into the great Lough Neagh. I was delighted with this reach of water, having good sport, and making a basket on most days. I got a few lough trout, weighing over two pounds, with my Derbyshire duns.

We next went to Toome to see the river Bann, the only one that runs from Lough Neagh. At first sight we thought it a perfect salmon river, and wished to have a few days' fishing on it. After some difficulty we obtained permission, through the kindness of a gentleman, to fish for trout, but not salmon; and we killed some very fine fish at the mouth of the river. I had one day's fishing on

the great Loch Neagh, alone, my friend not being well enough to accompany me. I engaged a genuine Irishman, who amused me with his quaint anecdotes. I killed one salmon weighing eleven pounds, and several fine trout.

I will here relate an incident of that day. We took a hamper of good things for the inner man, with plenty of whiskey, well knowing Pat's love for the craythur, and some brown ale for myself. There is but one small island on this large lough, and Pat proposed that we should lunch there, which we did. I was delighted with the scenery. The flowers and shrubs, which in England, scarcely grow to the height of a foot, there grow to four or five feet. The trees are covered with various coloured mosses, and with the birds warbling their soft notes, the scene appeared as one of enchantment. After lunch, and when about to start, Pat complained of the hamper being in his way, and proposed to leave it on the island till our return, to which I consented. We went several miles further down the lough and hooked a salmon, but lost it close to the boat. As the day was far spent we returned, and Pat called at the island for the hamper. I waited his return till my patience was exhausted. He came at last, his face plainly indicating what he had been after. I asked him where he had been so long, as I feared we should be benighted. He said, "Now, your honour, don't be angry; I couldn't just put my hand on it." I begged him to make good use of his oars. He worked very hard for some time, till I told him to rest and give me the whiskey. He said, "I can't do that, your honour; for the corks are come out and it's all spilt." Of course

I knew better, and contented myself with the ale. I did not go on the lough again, as it was too sea like to use the rod comfortably; and during the remainder of my stay I fished the river Maine, through O'Neil's park. We spent ten days in Randalstown, and enjoyed it very much.

I have great pleasure in recommending this station to gentlemen anglers, particularly to those fond of trouting. I prefer it to salmon fishing in many respects, and there is more skill and neatness required in taking trout and grayling, than salmon. I also enjoy sea trout fishing, and, at Connamara, prefer it to salmon fishing. Twenty years ago, I usually paid a visit, each season, to Ballynahinch and locality, stopping at a place called The Recess; and I do not know of a more charming place for the angler or tourist to rest. On my return I generally spent a few days on the beautiful Lough Coreb, staying at Oughterard, where I have killed many large brown trout; among others, one of thirteen pounds and another of eleven pounds, the heads of which I had preserved. This is also a first-class station for pike fishing; and it is not an uncommon thing to get one or two twenty-pounders during the day. The angler should enquire for Pat Gill, who is an excellent fisherman, and lives close by the lough. He has often given me some blarney, saying I was the best angler he ever had in his boat; and if I would go in May I should half fill his boat with fish. The last day I was there with him we killed several large pike, one over twenty pounds, and a few brown trout, which we took with the fly. Pat is certainly the best gaffer I ever saw; never missing his fish, but always striking him near the

tail. I told him I was leaving for Galway the next morning. He said, "Now, your honour; I've nothing to give you in remembrance of me but my old gaff, which you must keep for my sake." I thanked him, and packed it up with my rods. The next morning, when seated on the car, about to start for Galway, Pat came up breathless, and said, "Now, your honour; you forgot to pay me for the gaff." I told the coachman to drive on, as it was all right, and I have the old gaff by me till this day.

I have killed a few salmon above Galway bridge, but they are too numerous to rise at the fly. I have seen the natives take them with a shrimp or prawn, by letting it go down stream, and, when it stopped, striking hard, and pulling them out, as it were, by the head. This is what I call snatching, but they will not hear of it by that name. The last time I was in Connemara, I spent a few days at Ballynahinch, on the Amacloy river, where I found the fishing first-class both for white trout and salmon; but it was too expensive to enjoy it long. Pat took me to several delightful pools, and I rose and hooked several good fish, but only landed one of them, a nice active salmon, weighing eight pounds, and some white trout fresh run from the sea.

I took the car from Ballynahinch, and came on to fish Lough Orib, which name has been altered to "Corib." The total length of this lake is twenty miles, with a breadth averaging from two to ten miles, and a summer level of twenty-eight feet above the sea. It consists of an upper and lower expanse of eight and ten miles in

length respectively. Across the narrowest part of the intermediate channel is a ferry, connecting the western road from Galway with that of Headford. In the upper part of the lake are several islands, the total number of which, large and small, is popularly said to be equal to the number of days in the year. Many of the best of them have been purchased by English gentlemen, who have mansions on them, and most of whom keep a yacht, which they run down to Galway for supplies. Of these great western lakes Conn and Carra belong to Mayo, Corib to Galway, and Mask lies between both counties. The most northerly, Lough Conn, is about nine miles long, by two or three in breadth. Part of its shores are beautifully wooded, and where the lower and upper lakes unite, the channel is crossed by a bridge of one arch, called the Pontoon. The scenery is indeed magnificent.

Lough Carra is smaller than Lough Conn, but as a sheet of water nothing could be more beautiful; indeed, everything that delights the painter's fancy may here be realised. Lough Mask communicates with Lough Carra, and their united waters discharge themselves by a very curious subterraneous channel into Lough Corib. There are no waters in the United Kingdom (with the exception of the River Shannon) where larger pike are caught than those taken in Loughs Mask and Corib. It seemed to me that in these lakes the fish are proportioned in size to the waters they inhabit. It is no unusual event for pike of thirty pounds' weight to be sent to the landlords by their tenants; and fish of even fifty pounds, I am informed, have frequently been caught with nets and

night lines. The trout in the loughs also run very large. I have taken them from five to fifteen pounds in weight, which is no unusual size; and some have been taken that reached the enormous weight of thirty pounds.

Many years ago, when I first visited Randalstown to fish the Bann, the Blackwater, that delightful trouting stream, the Maine, and the great Lough Neagh, the otter and cross-lines were very much used, but I believe they are now prohibited. My boatman had an excellent otter, which he used most days on the lough, killing numbers of brown trout and a few salmon. I was much amused to see the otter keep up with the boat. Attached to it was a hundred yards of line with various flies, baits, and lampreys. The boatman did not draw the otter in till he had six or seven fish on, and then it was a very exciting sight; but he lost several, owing to their knocking themselves off against the boat. I preferred using the rod and fly. The drake and artificial May fly are generally good on Lough Erne and Lough Melvin, and the trout rise well to the natural drake in the latter part of April, and May. I found the best place to use them was where the river to Ballyshannon commences its current from the lough, which is twenty odd miles in length, in addition to the upper lough, above Enniskillen, which is of greater length. Both these lochs are studded with a number of small islands. The trout are thick to the tail, pink in colour, and delicate eating. Those generally caught seldom weigh under a pound, but mostly above, and not a few from two-and-a-half to three pounds, and occasionally up to seven pounds.

To reach these loughs the angler must go through Enniskillen, by rail, to Belleek, which is now a good place to put up at, but was very bad before the railway opened. But better accommodation still can be obtained at Gainson, on Lough Melvin, four miles from Belleek, but which is not on the railway. Belleek is the property of James Caldwell Bloomfield, and leave for fishing in his bays about Castle Caldwell must be asked from him. Belleek is also the head of the river Erne salmon fishing. The first fall is at Belleek Bridge, and leave can be obtained from Dr. Shiels, at Ballyshannon, who puts the applicants on turn. The fishing is very good, but all the fish have to be sent to Ballyshannon. Besides, it is very expensive fishing, for the cost with keepers, boatman, and often a car to drive from one occupied throw to another, generally amounts to upwards of forty shillings per day. The river in its course is about ten miles, and eight by road, and one salmon fresh out of the weir is presented to a successful angler on the day of his departure, he paying the messenger, of course. The angler has sometimes to wait for a vacancy in the sixteen rods allowed. No charge is made by Dr. Shiels, the owner or lessee of the fishing weirs at Ballyshannon. The family of the Scotts have good accommodation for anglers, better than is usually found, and they live on the shore of Lough Melvin. Leave for fishing was formerly readily obtained from proprietors of shores round which are the throws, but you had to fish from boats. The fish are long and thin, unlike the Ballyshannon fish, which are thick built. Although the Melvin river, the Bundrose, enters the sea

only five miles from Ballyshannon, the fish seldom go up the wrong stream, and only now and then a Bundrose fish is caught in the Erne weirs.

What a number of pleasant recollections I have before me now of the sport I have had, and the kindness shown to me by the natives ; which have made my visits to Ireland prove some of the brightest experiences in my angling career. In my estimation, Ireland is one of the finest fishing stations in the known world as regards salmon and both white and brown trout. It is superior to Scotland, North or South Wales ; and I would recommend the young angler who has gained his knowledge of the rod and line on our delicate streams, and wishes for further experience, to visit Ireland for salmon, white trout, or general fishing. Thirty years ago the angler had to rough it considerably. I have often slept in what we should call a hut, to be in readiness for the next day's sport. But of late years Ireland has been so frequented by anglers, that better accommodation is now provided, which of course makes fishing more expensive than formerly. Before saying adieu to dear old Ireland, I must say a few words in its favour. Treat an Irishman with kindness, and you may place every confidence in him, and he will do his utmost to serve you. The Irish lack the industry and energy of the English, I admit ; but I attribute this, in a great measure, to their being so priest-ridden. I have always found them a generous and warmhearted people, but I think it a pity they do not cultivate their land more extensively, for nature has most liberally bestowed her gifts on their soil.



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