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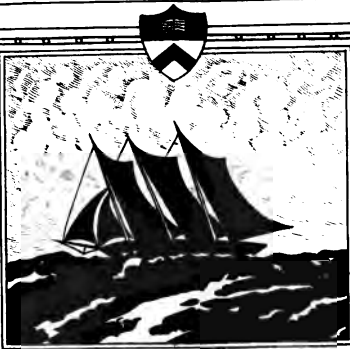
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THE  
HAND BOOK OF ANGLING  
FOR  
SCOTLAND  
ROBERTSON



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# HAND-BOOK OF ANGLING









THE  
HAND-BOOK OF ANGLING

FOR

SCOTLAND

AND THE

BORDER COUNTIES

EMBRACING THE PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

OF

THIRTY YEARS' FISHING

WITH MAP AND ROUTES, &c.

BY

JOHN ROBERTSON

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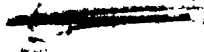
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## P R E F A C E.

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IN publishing again on Angling, it was the Author's first intention only to bring out another edition of the "Trout Fisher's Manual." He found, however, that the plan of that volume was defective, and tended so much to localise its utility in making Edinburgh a centre, or starting-point, instead of being guided in the arrangement by the natural features of the country, that he ultimately determined on completely remodelling the book upon a new and better system, whereby additional matter, pertaining to new districts, might be introduced in natural order. These and other improvements were found so extensive, that an entirely new book, the "Hand-book of Angling," is the result. In this new volume, the additions in regard to Angling districts, conveyance, and accommodation, will be

found considerable, and, it is hoped, very useful. In that part of the volume which treats of the art of Angling, few emendations or changes have been found necessary. This may be accounted for from the fact, that trout-fishing, as an art, has reached as high a position as it is ever likely to attain, however much room there may be for an extension of a correct knowledge of it. Some quarter of a century ago, owing to circumstances obvious enough, trout were comparatively easily caught; and the nice system now prevailing, and essential for success, of up-stream fishing, with the finest tackling, was in a sense uncalled for. But now the conditions against the angler are of such a nature, and are so well understood, that it is not likely they can ever be more fully developed, or more efficiently prepared for on his part.

It may be stated that the rules for fishing laid down in the "Hand-Book of Angling," are those which the most successful fishers are in the constant habit of practising.

It would be easy to extend this part of the subject indefinitely; but in a volume such as the present, it is both unnecessary and uncalled for.

There will always be something to learn. Even

the most experienced angler will seldom fish a day without acquiring some new notions, which, unconsciously it may be, go to make up the amount of his knowledge, and only manifest themselves by the best of all tests—increasing success, and which can hardly be expressed in words. Very many such little matters will only occur by degrees; and we can only advise attentive observation, when fishing, for acquiring a better knowledge of the art. If we added one other sentence here, it would be our conviction, that careful observation and experience on the water-side were worth all the rules that ever were penned.

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# PART I.

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## CHAPTER I.

### A CHAPTER FOR THE YOUNG ANGLER.

IN our angling experience, we have had no question more frequently put to us than 'Where shall I go?' This question it would be easy to answer were it only wished to be understood where good angling water may be found. But an answer, to be of much practical value, must also, and more particularly, have regard to the state of the weather, the waters, and the season. For instance, we would no more think of angling in some streams, under certain circumstances, than we would think of fishing for trout in the sea; and yet these very circumstances may be the most appropriate for other streams. It is to answer this question in regard to our favourite Scottish and Border waters, that this volume has been prepared; and it is offered in the belief that it will put those who consult its pages into a position to use their opportunities to the best advantage.

Though it is not our intention to enter particu-

larly on the subject of angling, simply as an art, yet there are several points intimately connected with success in angling, that we may with advantage shortly notice. First, as regards

**THE FISHING-ROD.**—To those experienced anglers who have already formed their predilections, we need offer no advice on this important requisite. But to the young angler we do not hesitate to recommend that his first rod should be about twelve feet in length, light, and rather stiff. To be properly equipped, however, in this article, an angler should be provided with three rods at least—viz., a fly-rod about ten feet long; a one-hand bait-rod about twelve feet; and a two-hand general rod, from fifteen to eighteen feet. The best anglers recommend Memel fir for butts; and we must add our testimony to theirs. A good fly-rod, and a one-hand bait-rod, should, along with their stiffness, have an easy spring at the top. Nor should these be expensive to be thoroughly efficient and trustworthy. Expensive rods are best indeed for the dealer, whose ideas run largely on trade and profit; but we write for the interests of the angler. In his choice of this article, the purchaser, if not sufficiently experienced himself, should be advised by a *practical angler*; not a *practical rod-maker*, who however good a judge of the finish of a rod, may be no judge whatever of its angling qualities, and these are what chiefly concern the angler.

**ARTIFICIAL FLIES.**—For trout-fishing the sub-joined list contains a sufficient variety of flies, when trout are at all disposed to take this lure.

1st. SPIDERS.—Made chiefly of feathers from the starling, dotterel, landrail, sand-lark, and golden plover.

2d. BLAE-WINGS.—Black heckle.

3d. WOODCOCK OR LANDRAIL WINGS.—Red heckle.

4th. TEAL-WINGS.—Red heckle.

5th. THRUSH, STARLING, &c. WINGS.—Hare's ear body—all tied with yellow silk.

The most useful size of wire to have these dressed on is Adlington's round bent-hook No. 2, corresponding with Bartleet's No. 12, or about No. 15 of the Limerick make.

On making up the fly cast, the gut must be carefully selected. It is most important that not only that on which the flies are dressed, but the whole gut used, be of the finest and evenest description, and stained to lessen its glitter. The end fly should be on *very fine* gut; the others on gut a little thicker, increasing in size as other flies are added, so that there be a nice taper to the very end. This is essential for the proper casting of the line. Nor should the flies be attached with loops, but the gut on which they are dressed should form part of the line. Thus, suppose they are dressed on gut about fourteen inches long, the first and second flies are attached by



the slip-knot, and after the waste ends are deducted there will be about twenty-six inches between the hooks. The next step is to join a length of gut near to the second fly, by the same knot, leaving about two inches with the hook suspended. The attaching of a third or more hooks is but a repetition of the process.

**BAIT-HOOKS.**—The best make of hook for bait-fishing is without doubt the plain round bend, and the most useful size about No. 8 Adlington's, or No. 4 Bartleet's wires.

**WORM-TACKLES.**—These are of two kinds—the one consisting of two hooks only, Nos. 3 and 8—on the larger of which the worm is strung in the ordinary way, and the smaller one then put through the head of the bait. The other consists of three small hooks—No. 3. Adlington's is best—on which the worm is hanked—the end hook being entered near the head, the middle one in the middle of the worm, and the last near its tail. This three-hook tackle is a great advantage on account of the simplicity with which it is baited.

**MINNOW-TACKLES.**—The best make of minnow-tackle is that now generally preferred, consisting of two hooks only. For ordinary trout-fishing, No. 6 and 9 Adlington's wires answer best. Drags, we are convinced, are generally the reverse of an advantage. The gut used in the construction of the tackle should combine the greatest strength with the finest

material, as the spinning of the minnow and the size of the trout which generally take this bait are such as test the quality of tackle to the utmost.

**MAY-FLY AND CREEPER-TACKLE.**—Two of No. 6 Adlington's hooks—tied so that the bend of the upper one comes close to the shank of the other—are best, when one fly, or creeper, is used as bait ; but a larger one, suitable for two insects, and on which a worm may occasionally be used, we frequently find a great convenience.

**REEL-LINE.**—We are quite of opinion, that for trout-fishing the plain, good old hair-line—of the best quality, of course—is at once best and cheapest. To cast properly, it should be finished with a nicely tapered line, beginning in twisted, and ending in single gut.

**LINES.**—With the exception of the reel-line, all lines should be made of gut. It is only necessary to remark regarding them, that the material must be of the best description, and that they be securely and neatly joined in their lengths, and tapered towards the end nearest to the lure. The gut should invariably be stained ; and twisted lines should be neatly wrapped at the tyings with fine silk thread, and varnished.

**ARTIFICIAL BAITS.**—As these meet with considerable recommendation in many books on angling, it may be well that we give an opinion on them here. This we have no difficulty in doing.

Our opinion of them generally is of a low description. In the waters of the south of Scotland we have little or no faith in them, and we know we do not differ in this respect from some of our best anglers. It is true, we have killed trout with some of these baits—for what may not one kill trout with sometimes?—but our success was never such as to give us any amount of confidence in their use. If we gave a recommendation to any of all those we are acquainted with, it would be to the ‘Phantom Minnow,’ and the ‘Protean Minnow.’ These, we have reason to believe, are killing enough baits in northern streams and lochs—weather and water suitable. But even their use we would not recommend for our much-tried southern waters; nor is there much need for them there, the natural bait being so readily procured.

We shall now proceed to notice the most approved methods of using the various lures.

## CHAPTER II.

## FLY-FISHING.

ON proceeding to operations—

In the first place, study the greatest concealment, both of person and implements.

In the next, drop the flies neatly and lightly on the stream ; and,

Lastly, preserve, in so far as possible, the natural appearance of the flies after they have been dropped.

As regards the first of these points, we do not think it much admits of dispute that concealment may generally, but especially in small clear streams, be best effected by angling up-stream. This, like other rules, is liable to exceptions, among the causes of which may be placed any object affording concealment—rock, bush, or tree, and a strong wind blowing down-stream.

In a book on angling by Mr Blakey, we meet with the following remarks on this point :—

‘In the progress of the art of angling many crotchety and fanciful rules are laid down with sufficient dogmatism. Amongst these, that which recommends fishing *up* a stream, instead of down it, still retains its advocates and defenders. We do not hesitate to say nothing can be more preposterous

than this notion. If the angler will observe attentively the manner in which flies lie on the water, when the line is thrown up against the current, he will see in an instant the *almost impossibility* (the italics are Mr Blakey's own) of the trout seizing the fly in such a position. But even if the fish should take it, the power is greatly weakened, if not entirely lost, to retain him ; for the tightness and tenacity of the line are destroyed by the captive rushing down the stream, right into your face as it were.'

Strong writing, which can only be excused on the ground of the writer being ill acquainted with the matter in which he undertakes to give advice. Mr Stewart, in his *Practical Angler*, completely settles all such reasoning, and his challenge at the end of his article still stands unaccepted.

In the next place, it is evident that the flies must be neatly and lightly dropped if they are to resemble insects falling on the water. But in doing this properly, lies, perhaps, the chief secret of the accomplished fly-fisher's success ; and, as a general rule, according as it is more or less skilfully performed, so more or less satisfactory will the results be. It is vain to lay down rules for the accomplishment of this end. It is only to be attained after careful practice ; and the only advice we need offer the young angler, is not to attempt too much at first. Let him begin by using a line not much longer than his rod, and by availing himself of a

favouring breeze. But let him not be disheartened if, after many an earnest attempt, his line falls in angles, and his flies in a cluster on the pool, frightening every fish within sight. There is nothing for it but to persevere, and, bit by bit, his bad casts will be lessened, and his good ones increased, while his basket will, in proportion, shew signs of improving skill. He need not, however, look for any decided success till he can manage to cast a line of considerable length, without a twist from end to end, and drop his flies like gossamer on the bosom of the stream.

In the last place, the best advice we can give for preserving the natural appearance of the flies after they have been neatly dropped, is to allow them to sink a little below the surface, repeating the casts pretty frequently. When the flies have once touched the stream, they should not be kept dangling on the top as with the intention of imitating the living insect. In such a position, they often enough deceive small trout, but rarely those of good size. If, on the other hand, they be allowed to sink slightly, the action of the water will impart to them, if well made, a much more natural appearance than can ever be effected by the other process. In doing this, care must be taken to keep the line in proper readiness to *strike*, and this will insure frequent casting; for otherwise it would be impossible to keep the line sufficiently stretched, without dragging

the flies with unnatural swiftness through the water. In night-fishing, we need hardly say, this rule of allowing the flies to sink slightly, if they do not effect a rise on touching the water, must not be rigidly adhered to, for the obvious reason, that if then allowed to sink, they might not be observed at all. Success in night-fishing must rather be expected from neat light casting, frequently repeated, particularly over those circles, in the quiet water, occasioned by the rising of a trout.

The description of water for fly-fishing, generally, and, we think, properly preferred, is that class of larger streams having a full body of water ; and of smaller ones, those confined within narrow banks. We would just instance the Almond Water, at least as far up as Newbridge ; the Blackadder and Eden waters in Berwickshire ; the Tyne in Haddingtonshire ; the under waters of Gala ; the Armit, below the forks ; the north and south Medwins ; and the Clyde, excepting in its upper tributaries. While making this statement, we are aware that some, and those first-class anglers too, do not admit this distinction ; at least, they are in the habit of using fly in the circumstances that we recommend the use of worm—in broken, streamy water. To fish such water properly with fly, it is essential to fish lightly up-stream, just allowing the flies to rest for a moment on every quiet spot where trout are expected to lie on the look-out for prey. This, though

difficult to manage successfully, is an agreeable style of angling, and neat and tasteful.

**THE NATURAL INSECT.**—Next in order to artificial fly-fishing may be ranked trouting with the natural insect—the well-known May-fly. When using it in its full-grown creeper state, we never found it to interfere with our sport to let the hook protrude freely, even to the barb. This we account for by the scales, which at that period incase the insect, being of such a nature that trout do not readily detect, in the presence of the hook, anything different from the natural prickliness of the insect. For this reason, prompt striking may be dispensed with; and it will be found best to allow the trout to bite freely, by which the bait will be so much broken, that on striking, the hooks will be far more certain to penetrate and fasten in the fish.

Strong, streamy water is the best on which to use this bait. The manner of using it is almost the same as that of the worm; but the striking should not be so instantaneous as in the case of the latter bait. On using the insect, however, in its fly state, the striking cannot be too prompt, else the presence of the hooks is at once detected, and ejected from the mouth of the trout. The fly is an exceedingly soft bait, and requires to be applied to the hook with care. Roughness in casting, or in dragging it through the water, will frequently ruin it completely; and if a trout only touch it, the tackle must be



baited afresh. It is this softness which renders the hook so liable to detection, and furnishes the reason for prompt striking.

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## CHAPTER III

### MINNOW-FISHING.

MINNOW, in suitable water, forms a splendid lure, and is more productive, in favourable circumstances, than any other. The trout captured with it are in general the best which the stream contains; a dozen of them generally weigh as much as two or three times that number taken with the worm or fly. So superior are the fish captured with this lure, that it often appears to us a matter of surprise that so few anglers practise it sufficiently to become expert in the use of it. One reason for this may be the difficulty of procuring the live bait, and the trouble of keeping them properly after they are got. There is not, however, any great necessity for live bait, as salted minnows, if properly prepared, make an excellent substitute.

Regarding baiting with the minnows, the following is a great improvement on the ordinary method: Instead of the larger hook being put in by the mouth

of the minnow, let it be entered at its shoulders, a much easier process, and not so liable to injure the bait.

Any stream containing large trout is appropriate for this lure ; but not at all times, of course, equally suitable for it. Slow-running streams, except when enlarged, or much agitated by a breeze, afford indifferent minnow-fishing—where, indeed, it cannot be pursued to advantage. The Blackadder Water is an instance of this. When that stream is small, in large portions of it there is not current enough to make the minnow spin. The Whitadder is greatly different in this respect, and is never so much reduced but that good minnow-fishing may be had in its many fine deep currents.

The angler's aim being to make his lure represent the living fish, these points particularly must be kept in view.

On angling in deep clear currents, where minnows are not expected to be from choice, but by accident or mistake, there are two characters, to one or both of which occasionally the angler must endeavour to accommodate his lure. He must consider how a minnow in such a position may be expected to conduct itself. If he proceed on the idea of its presence there being the result of mistake, then he must represent it as anxious to regain its proper place, and as sensible of the danger of its present predicament. Of course, the first endeavour of a minnow in such

a position will be to reach the side with all dispatch, and the lure should therefore be brought rather rapidly across the current. While this is being done, a trout may make a dash at it, but not generally; and that, therefore, is not usually a successful part of the cast. The time when an attack upon it may be expected, is when it is almost close at the side. We will suppose the trout to have eyed it on its way across the stream—and we have frequently seen them do so cautiously—but conscious that its chance of securing it while making violent efforts to gain its proper position is doubtful, and unwilling to risk the attempt, it watches carefully, endeavouring to steal below it unseen, for the purpose of making its attack from behind so soon as the minnow relaxes its exertions on reaching the side. If the water at the side be shallow and the current feeble, the minnow, considering itself out of danger, will pause, and quietly breast the stream. That is the moment for which its intending destroyer has watched and waited; and with one determined dash, it darts upon its victim. Let it seize it—just another moment—now one firm upward movement of the rod, and the conqueror in turn becomes a lawful prize. If, instead of shallow, there be tolerably deep water at the side, but having no good shelter-place for trout, the spinning should be briskly but not too violently continued, so as to represent the minnow as still at

fault, darting hither and thither, in the search for a place of refuge, occasionally pausing from fatigue, or to scrutinise its position. It is for those moments of comparative repose that its enemy has been biding its time, and it is then that the attack may be expected. If, again, at the side in deep water there be any place of shelter likely to harbour trout—large stone, bank, or old tree-root—so soon as the lure reaches that spot, and the spinning is slightly relaxed, the attack may be prepared for. Such, then, may be the supposed theory of minnow-fishing in such water, when it is intended to represent the minnow there from some unfortunate mishap, but healthy and vigorous. We will next suppose it there from accident, and more or less disabled. In this case it should be kept pretty much in the current—the mere toy of the stream. Its efforts to escape must be feeble; no violent spinning is admissible. Now and again it may make an attempt to stay its progress, but it is rather a pause in its downward course than a successful effort. Its movements are perfectly comprehended by its watchful enemy, and the deadly plunge may be looked for every moment. There it is—strike true—and yours is the prize.

There is still another condition in which the minnow may be used—dead, or completely disabled; and we have seen excellent execution done with it thus, even in small clear streams. The chief requisites to success here are an eye to the

best parts of the water, neat baiting, and concealment. If used in a stream possessing good sheltering banks, or old tree-roots, and the like, it should be borne down by the current as much into these shelter-places as possible, the angler keeping well out of sight; or dipped over the edge of the banks. The angler must bear in mind that when trout seize the minnow in these circumstances, it is not with the same determined rush that they make upon healthy vigorous specimens, hooking themselves by their very impetuosity. It is a much more deliberate operation on their part, and it is therefore safest not to 'strike' until they have had sufficient time to get the bait partly gorged, or, at least, completely into their mouths. For this kind of fishing, a single bait-hook—No. 9 Adlington, is a good size—is used. It is entered into the minnow at its tail, run carefully through it, and brought out at the mouth. The gut is then generally '*hitched*' round the tail, to keep it *straight* on the hook. We do not like this *hitching*, as it soon wastes the minnow, and prefer rather straightening the bait before every few casts. The minnow must be kept perfectly even, and the gut must be fine. The intention is simply to represent a dead minnow in the water. And there must be nothing to excite unnecessarily the suspicion of the trout. A small swivel should be used, as the bait is apt to spin by times. The dead minnow may also be used in

broken streamy water, when it is dealt with much as worm-fishing down-stream was practised, for that style of angling is now all but exploded.

We have still to consider the use of the minnow in coloured waters. This does not require much notice. The angler may vary his operations at pleasure, without much risk of alarming the fish. To make his success the more certain, he may also employ drags, and fish the deeper pools and water, usually nearly stagnant, if there be current sufficient to cause the minnow to spin slightly. This, like worm-fishing in similar water, requires no great display of skill, but certainly more as regards the minnow than the worm. However this may be, when good trout are being captured, we never found the angler yet who did not enjoy his sport, and thought nothing the less of his fish because they were procured with comparative ease. At least this is the case as regards ourselves, and yet no one will fish with more unwearying enthusiasm the small clear streams. We have no prudery in this matter, and accept of circumstances just as we find them.

We have been thus, as some may think, unnecessarily particular regarding minnow-fishing, because, though we often find the process ably described, we have never found the principles on which that process depends sufficiently laid down ; and a young angler not fully comprehending what it is that he is attempting to do, further than to capture fish,

cannot be expected to be very successful in his efforts. We think, too, that if this style of angling were better understood, a new field of enjoyment would be opened up to many a brother of the angle.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### WORM-FISHING.

LEAVING it to the judgment and taste of the angler when to avail himself of worm-tackles, we proceed with some general directions on the use of this lure.

This has long been a favourite lure with us on account of its general applicability to nearly all sorts of streams, and at all seasons. So soon as trout are worthy of being caught, so soon may it be employed to advantage. Throughout the summer months, when the immensity of insect-life divides the attention of the 'finny tribe,' in clear or troubled waters, its deadly properties are seldom—we had almost said, in skilful hands—never at fault. Fly-fishing has its seasons; minnow, too, its conditions; but if this lure has exceptions to any extent, throughout years of pretty extensive practice, we have failed to discover them. Nor can we

find anything in nature explaining why there should be such exceptions. We fancy we can account for the fly losing its attractions at times, by connecting the circumstance with the condition of insect-life or activity. We can fancy, too, the minnow to fail in its productiveness, and almost cease to play in the nearly stagnant pools of the shrunken stream. But this lure is not governed by any accidental chill ; and if the shrivelled waters admonish the retreat of trout to stone or sheltering bank, it drops before them in the shallow stream, or finds them in their secret haunts. It is on account of this general adaptability that almost all who attempt this lure meet with some amount of success. But here for the most part they stop, and discover it is one thing always to catch a few fish when they try, and quite another thing to be really a successful angler.

WORMS.—We shall leave to the naturalist to describe the natural history of the worm. It is enough for the angler to know that there are only three kinds about which he need concern himself. These are sufficiently distinguished by their names—the black-headed worm, the marsh-worm, and the brandling. All these are equally useful in their several ways. The first, when got sufficiently small, and preserved among dry moss for a few days, is excellent, but rather tough for our taste, though this quality with most anglers is its chief recommendation. The marsh-worm is what we prefer ; it is



almost always the right size for a bait, and when kept a day or two, is of a beautiful clear pinky colour. Its toughness, when thus prepared, is just what we like, being somewhat between that of the first mentioned and the brandling—sufficient, if well managed, to stand the water, and yet not too tough, which we consider the first frequently to be, to prevent the hook penetrating at once, and clearing the barb on striking a fish. The brandling-worm should not be used in rough stony water, where it would be mangled at once, unless upon the single tackle; but for smooth runs and pools, upon a single hook, there is nothing equal to it. These few hints should be sufficient to guide the young angler in the selection of his bait.

On fishing rough water with the single hook, the hook should be entered into the worm close *at the head*, and run through it until it *all but protrude* at the other end. There is nothing to be apprehended from the attractive properties of the worm being impaired by this manner of baiting; for in such water, trout instinctively dart at their prey to seize it before it be swept from their reach. Owing to this circumstance, too, there is no necessity for delay in striking, which should therefore be as instantaneous as in fly-fishing, especially as from the manner of baiting, the presence of the hook could be so readily detected. But, for our own part, we never fish such water but with the single tackle, which

is a great deal deadlier than the single hook. With a line from ten to fifteen feet in length only, we cast the bait lightly up-stream into the various places where trout are expected to lie on the lookout for food, or sheltering themselves in fancied security, but never allow it to remain so long in the water as to be borne down into a line with ourselves. Often when the lure is neatly dropped at the proper place, we see the trout make its attack, and strike at that instant. This is the most agreeable kind of worm-fishing with which we are acquainted, as it is, we think, the most successful. Taking for granted that the angler knows where to expect his trout, the chief thing is to cast lightly to the spot, or immediately above it, allowing as little as possible of his line to get into the water, and be prepared for the attack. It will not do to lag here; he must be thoroughly alive to what he is about, and if he ever grow languid, it is better to pause and rest awhile. His every motion must be prompt, eye and hand acting in happy concert with each other. Neither should there be the unnecessary lingering by the stream, whereby trout may discover the presence of their intending captors. The point wherein we find young anglers fail the most in this kind of fishing, is in casting to the proper spot. Before they manage to do this, their repeated castings have alarmed every fish, and when they succeed at last, the expected prize is not to be deceived—it has seen too much of

them, in short. It is of the utmost importance that the casts be properly made.

On fishing the quieter parts of streams, pools formed by cascades, and the like, the hook should be completely cleared, and a fresh lively bait put on. It is safest to fish such places with a single hook ; and often on coming to a tempting spot, we have changed our tackle for the former. The baiting must be carefully attended to. The worm, perfectly uninjured, must have a considerable portion of each end floating free, that it may appear merely a living worm borne by the current, and the trout should be allowed to despatch and gorge it at its leisure. Indeed, they will not be hurried, seeming to understand perfectly there is no occasion for it, as their prey cannot escape them. It is in such circumstances that the properties of the brandling-worm shew themselves most advantageously. It is of a nice attractive colour, and is so soft that if a trout have it once fairly in its mouth, the hook, on striking, penetrates it easily, and fastens in the fish ; while a tougher worm, unless the bait be fairly gorged, is apt to prevent a ready protrusion of the barb, and thus lessen considerably the chance of capture. Anglers are well aware, that frequently on striking, the bait comes harmlessly out of the mouth of the trout. This may generally be referred to the bait being too large or too tough, probably both. So the remedy is not far to seek.

## CHAPTER V.

## LANDING OF FISH.

THE directions contained in the previous chapters should, we think, give the young angler a tolerable idea of the principles on which his art is, or ought to be, conducted, and take him nearly as far as he can go without diligence and practice. It sometimes happens that anglers, having a peculiar fancy for one of the lures, pertinaciously clings to the belief that that is the highest in the angling scale. We should like to disabuse the minds of our young friends of any such notion, as one calculated to curtail the field of their enjoyment. The simple fact is, that for anything laudatory of the one lure, something equally so may be said of another. No matter what kind be employed, a certain amount of address is necessary to insure success, the same knowledge of the habits and haunts of trout, the same skill and caution in presenting your lure, and the same decision and promptitude in securing your prize. Without these qualifications, no angler need ever expect to be more than occasionally successful. Use which of the lures he may with them, any angler will excel in all or any to which, from taste or other motive, he may chiefly address himself ;

and the exalting of one lure over the others is simply a blunder—a casual exhibition of misdirected zeal.

The capture of trout of one pound-weight and under, being chiefly contemplated in the following pages, it may appear somewhat superfluous to give any formal directions about the landing of such fish. But it is not so much the size, as the relation which they bear to the tackle employed, that constitutes the merit of landing fish, and enhances the sport attendant on their capture. We believe there may be as much of both merit and sport in the case of trout three quarters of a pound-weight, with tackle of the finest sort, as in that of those two or three times their size, and the tackle employed when such captures are contemplated. At all events, as this is a point on which the young angler must be instructed, we shall at once take him under charge, and trust we may be fortunate enough to guide him in completing the capture of his first one-pounder.

We will suppose then, our young friend, that you start fairly equipped. Having had the skill, or fortune, to hook your fish securely, endeavour to maintain complete coolness, and do nothing rashly. Rather than evince a dangerous excitement, make up your mind to lose 'the leaping prey,' and there will be less chance of your doing so, than by being over-anxious to make your victory complete. It is a too common practice for inexperienced anglers to pitch their trout from mid-water right ashore, without

having the slightest idea of their size. Now, we need not argue that to do this with a trout of four ounces would require tackle of stronger material than sufficient to land one of two pounds-weight, if sufficient precaution be observed; and experienced anglers know well what to expect with rough tackle in small clear streams. Neither need we argue that the 'hold,' which would give way under such rashness, might be quite sufficient to land the larger fish; and, having said this much, we believe we need say little more to convince our hasty friend of the folly of his conduct. He must see clearly that his practice is attended with one or two equally great evils. To carry it out, he must either use tackle of such a character as would scare all the better sort of trout; or, if fine tackle be used, all such fish will remain in mid-water, with part of his tackle in their mouth, or will be rendered somewhat more wary if the hold give way under the strain. Such a practice, then, the angler must guard himself against, and pursue this other course. He must hook his fish by a quick motion of his wrist only, without any violent heaving of his arm; and having effected his object so far, his next aim must be to obtain a knowledge of the size of the fish. If of a small size—not over four ounces—and he will soon learn to form a sufficiently correct idea on this head—he should pull it ashore at once, if the side be suitable for that purpose; but if there

be high banks, he should, on bringing it within a yard or so of them, and having his line rolled up to a convenient length, lift it gently on to the bank. If it prove one of more worthy dimensions, his first care must be to prevent it availing itself of its wonted places of shelter, by holding it firmly, yet gently, yielding somewhat with a tight line to its first violent efforts ; and, on these having partly abated, his next care must be to look out for a fit landing-place. If there be a gravel or sandy shore within reach, down-stream, he should make for it, and having gained it, and the fish shews signs of great exhaustion, he should move backwards, dragging it ashore at once. So soon as it is in sufficiently shallow water, and turns upon its side, it should be secured by the hand, without delay, or pitched right ashore ; care being taken to prevent anything whatever coming into contact with the line. Should no such facilities for landing it be found, and no net for the purpose at hand, he must continue his efforts until it be completely exhausted, then bring it aside at the most convenient spot—taking care always to keep his line tight and clear of every impediment—and, laying the best hold of it he can, pitch it high and dry. If, after all due care, the captive escape, he will yet have the negative satisfaction of having done his best to succeed, and will have nothing ridiculous to charge himself with. Moreover, he will have gained some experience to guide him in future operations.

## CHAPTER VI

## WATER SUITABLE FOR DIFFERENT LURES.

IN our opening remarks, we made reference to the importance of having a correct idea of the description of water most suitable for the various lures. We have heard it frequently remarked, that the trout, in certain streams, will not take such a lure—the statement being made as if to signify that in those streams they have a peculiar predilection for some of the lures, or rather for the description of food which those lures are made to represent, either in themselves, as in the artificial fly; or in their management, as in the worm and real minnow. This is a mistaken notion—for which there is no foundation. Any difference that is thought to exist, is entirely referrible to the water being more or less suitable for this or that lure, and not to any peculiar fancy on the part of the trout which inhabit the waters.

For good fly-fishing there should be a sufficient body of water, but not too rough, else trout in a great measure may be prevented, by the commotion, from distinguishing the lure. Full flowing rather than rough streams and pools, when ruffled by a breeze, afford the best facilities for the artificial fly. In rapid streams, of little depth, and having much



broken water—in worm-fishing so serviceable in disguising the lure, and concealing the person, while the bait is sufficiently distinguishable—the fly is apt to be swept past without being noticed. Still running streams, with a considerable depth of water, especially if a little enlarged, or when ruffled with a breeze, are therefore those which should be selected for this lure. The reason such water is not suitable for worm-fishing is, that a full flowing unbroken current is apt to give an unnatural motion to the bait, while, at the same time, any tackle, even that of the finest description, can hardly escape observation. By some parts of the tackle being more in the current than others, the bait is either dragged down by the line, or partly arrested by it, according as either is more or less in the current. Either way, the unnatural motion is produced; and this result, in the hands of the most skilful angler, cannot be completely overcome. Hence it is only when such streams are much ruffled, or somewhat discoloured, that the worm becomes a very productive bait. Of course, every stream contains more or less variety of water. Some pretty equally balanced, such as Gala; others sufficiently marked, such as the Armit Water for fly-fishing, and Ludgate for worm-fishing; but in the notices of the various streams treated of in the following pages, we have kept in view their general features, and distinguished them accordingly. Further, to illustrate our views, we will take two

well-known streams—the Whitadder and the Blackadder. The latter of these, in its ordinary condition, in clear summer weather, is in the greater portion of its lower waters perfectly unfishable with the worm ; while, with a slight breeze, excellent baskets may be got out of it with the artificial fly, and, especially in mild summer evenings, this lure may be used almost always with advantage. When slightly coloured, it is suitable for any of the lures, and we have had excellent baskets out of it with them all, but more particularly with the minnow. Then, in case of Whitadder, this is a stream having every variety of water, and is always a safe stream to angle in, unless when very much enlarged. In very clear summer weather, when its waters are low; and no breeze ruffles its pools, the worm-fisher is generally safe among its broken water, and its fine stony streams.

Another remark may be made regarding these two classes of streams, viz., that while the slower running is just enlarged to an excellent angling condition, the other has become a wild impetuous torrent, perfectly unfishable. The Blackadder Water is a good example of the former case ; but the latter, from its greater variety of water, is scarcely an example of the other. Yet, when the former of these is very much enlarged, it may be fished with ease, and in the very best condition for certain success in almost every part of it ; while the latter, proportion-

ably enlarged, though still presenting facilities for good fishing, will, in one-half at least of its waters, be perfectly worthless for any of the lures. A great variety of similar instances occurs to our recollection. Gala, like Whitadder, is rarely too much enlarged for some of the lures; but the Ludgate Water may be worthless, and even on many occasions, when we have found Gala above Fountainhall far too large for angling, we have found Armit in excellent condition. In short, it may be said that the best worm-waters are those most liable to be spoiled by overflowing; and the angler who acts on this hint will rarely have occasion to complain of angling facilities on account of the condition of the streams.

In regard to very small streams—hill-burns and the like—when they have little water in them, they are the worst of all places to angle in; and when in that condition, no matter what the season be, they should be entirely avoided, and the main stream chosen instead. It is quite a fanciful distinction, founded on mistaken notions, that of classing these streams as to be had recourse to at a particular (the latter) part of the season. At no period are they more worthy of regard than another, distinct from the condition in which they are found. There is no one circumstance connected with them to distinguish them from the larger streams, for the following cannot be considered so. *First*, from their generally higher altitudes, their trout are later

in coming into condition ; *Second*, when enlarged, trout are disposed to resort to them freely, sometimes on the rove for fresh feeding-places, at others to possess themselves of the protection afforded by their sheltering banks from the impetuosity of the larger streams ; and, in the *Third* place, when they betake themselves there for spawning operations. It will be found that the slower running of these burns, like larger streams of the same description, invariably contain the better trout, from the fact of their running through richer soils, containing more abundant supplies of food, and where they hollow out suitable shelter-places below the banks. No better illustration of this need be had than that which some of the smaller burns connected with Gala afford. For instance, Ladyside Burn, which is a rapid hill-stream, contains a great quantity of trout, few of which amount to four ounces ; while the burns which, after their junction, constitute the Armit Water, especially the eastern branch, contain, in considerable numbers, trout from four ounces to half a pound in weight ; and we think we have caught them, in the eastern burn, over even the latter size.

## CHAPTER VII.

## SUNDRY HINTS.

WE would now direct the attention of our angling friends to the following observations :

In ordinary states of the waters, trout almost invariably rise freely to the artificial fly in summer evenings, the exceptions apparently being on occasions of unusual chillness in the atmosphere. On such occasions, too, if not too dark, the minnow is a deadly lure, and by both the larger trout are generally secured. Were we asked to assign a reason for this, we would attribute it to the simple fact, that it is in the evening the larger and more attractive species of insects, night-moths, and suchlike, are on the wing, and trout instinctively look out for them at the time they are to be had in the greatest profusion. On such occasions they take the minnow freely, simply because they come across it, while the darkness helps to conceal the tackle. In the same manner, we have no doubt they would accept of a worm if they could distinguish it. This view is quite in keeping with the converse, for in cold evenings, and cold weather, at any time, insect-life is always inactive. That is the reason, we believe, that an east wind, if accompanied with cold, as it is generally, is

so inimical to the fly-fisher's sport ; while we never find it, but in an indirect manner, we think, interfere with that of the worm or minnow fisher.

Again, almost every day throughout the summer months, as is well known to practical anglers, there are times when trout take the fly freely ; hence we have, in angling phrase, 'The take.' This is just on those occasions when insects are prevalent on the stream, who tempt the trout to take advantage of the supplies, and thus afford the angler opportunities of presenting his lure without awakening suspicion. We may here refer to the well-known deadly character of the May-fly. This description of food becoming plentiful at a most acceptable time—before insect-life has got profuse—trout are quite disposed to devour it greedily ; and feeding on it largely with impunity, take the lure without suspicion. We must not, however, overlook the fact, that it is greatly to the angler's advantage that this bait occurs at a season previous to trout renewing their annual acquaintance with his deceitful lure.

The next point to which we refer is, immediately on the occurrence of rain, after streams have continued for a considerable time low and clear, the worm can be used to the greatest advantage. No doubt this is easily explained ; trout, while the waters continue low, have this description of food nearly cut off from them ; but no sooner do the waters begin to swell, and afford the necessary supplies, than

they greedily welcome the offering, and the angler's lure is then easily presented without awakening suspicion. Hence, at such times, the most active and prudent, not necessarily the most skilful angler with the worm, will prove the most successful. We would further notice, that after the second day or so of a flood, trout rarely take the worm freely. This, of course, is simply because, after a day or two of flooded waters, they get literally gorged with ground bait. Yet, even then, it is rare that a small red worm will be rejected.

Here, it may be observed, we take no account of matters during thunder-storms. We are by no means of opinion that they are prejudicial to the angler's sport. To the fly-fisher, indeed, they may, be so at times, from the effect they may have occasionally on insect-life and activity; but, as regards worm-fishing, we never found them have any bad effect, and have repeatedly caught fine trout as quickly as we could bait and land the fish, while the lightning appeared as if it would scorch the worm as we put it on the hook. From many such instances, we think thunder-storms have little influence on trout, excepting indirectly through their effect upon the supplies of food.

Knowing well how much the young angler's success depends on a variety of unimportant matters, which will only strike his attention by degrees, after much experience, we are induced to notice some of

these, without much regard to system in the arrangement, and though at the risk, to some extent, of repetition. Often, for instance, on our way to the station with a well-filled pannier, we have encountered some young friend who had, for the same time as ourselves, been beating the water, and now, at the end of the day's operations, had scarcely a fin to testify to his patience. Frequently, on being shewn the tackle he had been using, his want of success was no longer a mystery. His flies—and we generally find he prefers this lure, under the belief that worm is beneath his notice—are ill constructed, on bad, uneven gut, and attached to the cast-line by large loops, while every knot appears as clumsy as it is possible to make it. Now, this will not do if trout are to be caught. The flies must be neatly and lightly constructed, the gut fine, even, and stained; no loop can be allowed, and every knot must be as small and neat as it possibly can be made. These are the first conditions to success, and they are indispensable, unless in large and coloured waters.

The next error the young angler is apt to fall into, is the using of the different lures, without sufficient, indeed sometimes without any discrimination of their fitness to the condition of the stream and other circumstances. Without a thought to this matter, he proceeds with the intention of using a certain lure according to taste or fancy.

To fish all slow-running streams, a certain amount



of breeze, or an enlarged water, is necessary to insure success, and then the results may be very decided, as such streams generally, we had almost said invariably, contain the heaviest trout. These should be fished with minnow or fly, according to circumstances ; but if too small, or otherwise unsuitable for minnow, and trout are not rising to the fly, the worm is almost certain to prove successful, if there be sufficient breeze.

There are two things connected with the art of catching trout, which require the young angler's careful consideration. We refer to knowing when a trout is at the lure, and when and how to strike. In fly-fishing, the rule to strike is definite enough—the instant a trout is known to make its attack ; for as soon as the hook is in its mouth, it will discover the deception, and, if possible, eject it. In worm-fishing, it is somewhat different ; but scarcely so in streams, for if the water is strong, the attack is made with so much vigour, that trout often hook themselves. Sometimes it happens that the presence of a trout is not so readily determined ; and when this is the case, it is safest to strike in the hope that it is a fish. If it prove a hank on root or stone, or, what is more deceptive still, and often puzzles the most experienced angler, a water-plant, and the angler strike gently, he will do no harm to his tackle ; and if it prove a fish which has occasioned the stoppage of his bait, he cannot be too prompt in his motions.

Again, in fishing quieter portions of a stream with worm, as we have already said, there must be no hurry in striking. With this single exception, perhaps, and in the use of the creeper, the act of striking cannot be too promptly performed. It should be done with precision sufficient to hook the fish, without tearing the hook from the fish's mouth. The hooking must be kept quite distinct from the landing, else wreck and loss will be the constant result.

Before leaving this part of our subject, we should like to add these hints for the guidance of the young angler.

When engaged in the practice of your art, on no account cause unnecessary disturbance. Step lightly and quietly, and drop or throw your line with the least possible commotion, remembering that the object of your skill is in sense most acute, and of habits at once vigilant and active. When you go to your chosen stream, it is essential that you go with a certain amount of confidence, at least of resolve, and never let there be failure through want of patience or endeavour. On hearing recounted the extraordinary feats now and again effected in favourable circumstances, be not disheartened on a comparison of those with instances in your own experience. There is at least no occasion for despondency until you have enjoyed a certain amount of practice, and found opportunity to exercise

your judgment and your skill, in circumstances somewhat equal. Submit at once the contents of your basket to any brother-angler who may wish to see them. If your fish shew disadvantageously beside his, he may furnish you with some reason partly accounting for the difference, and may be both able and willing to impart some useful information, from which you may greatly profit on future occasions.

## PART II.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

#### THE WHITADDER AND BLACKADDER WATERS, WITH TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—Berwick, Allanton, Chirnside, Dunse, Ellemford,  
and (for Blackadder) Greenlaw and East Gordon.

IN treating of the angling facilities afforded by the streams in the Lowlands of Scotland, and in the Border counties, the most natural and convenient mode of arrangement that suggests itself, is that which we have adopted, of taking—

1st, Tweed and its tributaries.

2d, The streams flowing into the firth and river of the Forth.

3d, Clyde and its tributaries ; and

4th, The streams communicating with the Solway Firth.

In following out this order, then, Tweed claims our first notice. The under waters of this beautiful

river offer few facilities to the angler. But it has many attractions otherwise to render it interesting. Tweedmouth, and more particularly, Spittal, situated at the mouth of the river, on the south side, are pleasant villages, much frequented in summer for bathing purposes. Berwick, on the north side, is a town of great antiquity, and possesses much historical and traditionary interest. Its old walls are still in a tolerable state of repair, and in fine weather afford a pleasant promenade. Near to the town the river is spanned by a magnificent railway bridge; but in its construction, and that of the railway station, it was found necessary to remove the fine old ruins of the castle. About two miles above, the river receives its last tributary, the Whitadder Water, which flows in from the left bank. This is an excellent trouting stream, and much appreciated by both Scotch and English anglers.

Having passed our younger days near its banks, it is associated in our early recollections with meadows, dappled with wild-flowers, lofty wood-crowned scars, and high grassy braes, covered with cowslips and primroses. But associations are not needed to commend it to the angler's respect. Its occasional deep dark pools, where some 'monarch of the brook' poises itself on moveless fin, till tempted from its sullen watch by some incautious object of prey—its many fine full sweeps by shelving rock, and hollowed;

sheltering bank—its constant sparkling streams, now murmuring over their channel-beds, now bursting from their rocky shore—all proclaim it to the angler's eye a stream of unusual attractions.

For convenience, we shall consider the stream in these three divisions :

1st, Its under waters ; that is, from its junction with the Blackadder to its mouth.

2d, Its mid-waters ; that is, from the junction with the Blackadder up to Ellemford ; and,

3d, Its upper waters ; that is, the Dye, joined with the Watch Burn, the Fastney, the Bothwell, which is the Whitadder proper, and the St Agnes Water.

The first division, according to this plan, includes about eight miles of water. After a fresh, excellent fly and minnow fishing are always to be had, and, occasionally, splendid baskets are captured with the latter lure. There is no scarcity of broken water, suitable for worm-fishing, and when the stream is low, this is the preferable lure to use, up-stream of course. This piece of Whitadder, however, is not so much of a worm as it is a fly and minnow water. When enlarged, and the fly is used on it, they ought to be of a large size—grilse fles, in short. It is worthy of notice, as a mark of credit to the proprietors on this stream, to which they are justly entitled at the time when the grasping spirit is so greatly abroad, that an honest angler may pursue

his favourite sport to his heart's content, and meet with no interference at their hands.

Chirnside—a station on the Dunse branch of the North British Railway—is close upon the left bank of the stream, about a mile above its junction with the Blackadder Water. The sweetly situated little village of Allanton is just at the junction. Both at this place and the village of Chirnside, every necessary accommodation may be had, and both are well placed for commanding the under waters of the stream. Between the junction and Chirnside Bridge—which is close at the station, but distant about a mile from the village of Chirnside—the fishing is occasionally indifferent, in consequence of a paper-mill at the bridge. The proprietor, however, has set a noble example, which, it is to be regretted, is so little followed. He has altered the cauld in connection with the dam-head, so that salmon may not be interrupted in their progress, and has also adopted means of filtration, before returning the water to the stream, after having been used for the purposes of manufacture.

The mid-waters of the stream—say from Chirnside Bridge—is that part of it which supplies the choicest fishing, and is equally appropriate for every line. The trout now get more plentiful, are always of good, and sometimes of large dimensions. There are about two miles of water, up to Blinearn; it contains no very deep pools, but good sheltering

banks occasionally, and always water sufficient to harbour large trout. From Blinearn up to Preston Bridge, there are four miles of water of the choicest description, being full of fine pools and stony streams, and sheltering banks. The bridge at Preston is about seven miles from Grant's Station, to which there is a good hill-road all the way, but the first mile or two of it is a heavy pull up-hill; and to do himself justice, a pedestrian should allow himself little less than two and a half hours to accomplish the distance. An angler, to enjoy his sport, and be successful in it, should never be hurried in his movements from place to place. His activities should all be reserved for the immediate practice of his art.

For all this distance, the character of the stream may be described as quiet and placid, in comparison with its appearance immediately above. Angling meets with no interruption from rocks or trees, but its course is, for the most part, through vales shewing signs of frequent overflowings; also through occasional green meadows. But between the bridge at Preston and Ellemford, the character of the stream alters considerably. Its banks are often covered with brushwood and trees down to the water's-edge. Pools dark and deep—so dark and deep that, on the brightest day, no eye can penetrate their mysteries—alternate with sparkling stream—the worm-fisher's delight; and the wild



gush from some rock-bound pool, and the full, deep flow of water which the minnow-spinner loves to see—all forming such an accumulation of facilities to sport as the most enthusiastic anglers can desire.

The town of Dunse is two miles from Preston Bridge, and the best station for getting at this part of the stream. If it be intended to angle up-stream, below the bridge, a morning train can be got to Chirnside; and if angling down-stream be preferred, an evening train can be got from Chirnside to Dunse. It is also the most convenient station for fishing several miles of the water above, and which contains some of the finest water of the stream.

Abbey St Bathan's is a hamlet on the banks of the stream, about six miles above Preston Bridge. If accommodation is to be had here, it must be of a very meagre description; but there is a good inn at Ellemford, about two miles further up, and here the angler is beside some first-class water. There is a nice little stream running into the Whitadder, close at Abbey St Bathan's, called Monynut Burn. The trout in it generally—at least after the first mile or two—are small in size, and easily captured; but when it is a little enlarged, excellent baskets may be made out of it. Unless in occasional circumstances, the main stream is greatly preferable.

At Ellemford Inn, every necessary accommodation may be had, and there the angler commands some of the finest trouting water that need be desired.

The main stream contains great quantities of trout, and many of them of large size. We have known of large captures made here, with the minnow, of trout averaging half a pound each, and many of them upwards of a pound. But this introduces us to the third division, according to our plan of treating this stream.

The upper waters of the Whitadder are literally swarming with trout, and those occasionally of good size too. The first and greatest addition to its waters is that of the Dye, which joins the stream a little way above Ellemford. The village of Longformacus is on the banks of the Dye, about two miles above its mouth. This part of the stream, and for about half a mile farther up, where Dye and Watch Burn unite, contains some fine pools, where large trout are always harbouring. Watch Burn is a small stream that has wound its way through moor and morass, from the heart of the Lammermoors, and contains an immensity of small trout, few of which exceed six ounces. The Dye, above its junction with the Watch Burn, is a larger stream, and has about eight miles of good angling water. It is an excellent breeding-stream, flowing over one continuous bed of channel, and having good sheltering banks, with occasional pools, though of no great depth, tolerable trout are always to be got in it. We remember of seeing, in our young days, one caught about two miles above the junction, which

weighed nearly three pounds. It was captured after a flood, and had, no doubt, run up from the deep pools that occur after the junction.

It is unnecessary, we conceive, to describe minutely the other branches which constitute the upper waters of the Whitadder. It may be said of them, however, that, generally, they contain larger trout than Watch Burn and the Dye, before their junction. The trout in them, too, are equally numerous, and a perfect dabbler in the art could hardly fail of success.

Longformacus has a good inn, and is admirably situated for fishing the Dye and Watch Burn, and some of the other branches of the stream. It is distant about eight miles from Dunse, on the road to which, about a mile from Longformacus, a small burn will be seen, called Blacksmill Burn, which comes from a mossy district on the west, and pursues a sluggish course through damp-looking meadows for two miles or so, when it enters the Dye Water, a little above where the latter joins the Whitadder. This little burn, which looks like a ditch, has fine mossy banks, deeply hollowed out, and is celebrated in the neighbourhood for the superior size of the trout which it contains. Fished with worm or minnow, after a flood, large trout are often secured. It answers well for the dead minnow, the lure being dropped over its banks. There is no difficulty in effecting concealment, its contracted

banks rendering that an object of easy attainment.

There are two ways of approach to these localities. The one is by Dunse, a prettily situated little town, lying at the foot of the Lammermoors. Since a railway branch was completed to this place, there is no difficulty in procuring lodgings, and there are also several comfortable inns. The town in itself has not many attractions, and fewer associations and traditions than one would expect in a Border town. The town-house, as it is called, is an elegant building, and contains, in addition to a good hall, a public library, reading-room, and museum. The view from the top is very fine and extensive, comprehending a vast portion of the Merse of Berwickshire, with the Cheviot Hills in the far distance, bending towards the east, until they appear to dip into the sea at Berwick-on-Tweed ; while the range of the Lammermoors, sweeping from the north, appears to meet with those, and complete the apparent circle, in which lies one of the fairest rural scenes it is possible to imagine. The view from the top of the hill—Dunse Law—on the north of the town, is equally fine, and more extensive. In a clear day, a steeple in Berwick, and a part of the town, may be observed, with a small portion of the sea in the background.

The whole foreground of country, the Merse, is of great luxuriance and beauty ; and behind, the

range of the Lammermoors spreads far away to the north and north-west. It is an exceedingly pleasant and comfortable town in which to pass some weeks in summer. The Whitadder Water, at its nearest point, is about two miles distant on the one side, and the Blackadder Water about three miles on the other. It is conveniently reached by a branch-line from Reston, in connection with the North British Railway. Its distance from Longformacus is about eight miles ; and from Ellemford, about six.

The other way of approach is from Grant's Station. A hill-road leaves the old post-road about half a mile west from Grant's, and, after a stretch of four miles, terminates at Abbey St Bathan's. The distance from the latter place to Ellemford is not much over two miles. Longformacus is about three miles from Ellemford. It only remains to notice another road from Grant's to the Whitadder—that to which we have already referred, as leading from Dunse to Preston. At the Retreat, owing to a bend in the stream, that road is within a few hundred yards of the Whitadder, at a point distant about five miles from Grant's. An angler, therefore, who should pass the previous night at Ellemford, by starting in time in the morning, might have an excellent day's fishing with the minnow, down to that point, and reach Grant's in time for an evening train. He should allow himself rather more than

two hours to walk the distance, for these hill-miles, after a day's fishing, seem unusually long.

## THE BLACKADDER WATER.

Close by the sweet little village of Allanton, as already noticed, the Blackadder Water, after pursuing a rather sluggish course, over mossy beds and through richly cultivated districts, from the southern slopes of the Lammermoors, mingles its darker waters with the Whitadder. Its trout, as usual in such streams, attain to superior size and quality. They weigh heavily in proportion to their length, being deeply formed, with small tapering heads. As usual, too, in such streams, they are deficient in numbers; that is, when compared with the Whitadder, and others which have channelly, in place of mossy beds, the latter being less suitable for spawning purposes. No doubt it is owing to that circumstance that salmon, when they reach the point of junction, instinctively select the brighter stream for their migrations. Sea-trout, however, do not seem to be so nice in their choice, as many of them are found in the waters of the Blackadder at the season of propagation—but salmon rarely, if ever.

In our introductory pages we had occasion to notice pretty distinctly the peculiarities of this stream in an angling point of view. These we

need not repeat, for a reason shortly to be stated. It is only necessary to say that Allanton is the best station for getting at the stream on the Keloe and Blackadder grounds ; Dunse for the next few miles, and Greenlaw for the rest of the stream. The reason for not being more minute in our description, is owing to the fact of the stream being rather strictly preserved ; nor do we attempt either to justify or condemn the system. On the one hand, when the course of a stream is through policies and preserves, as is the case for the most part of the Blackadder Water, restrictions, to a certain extent, must be expected. But, on the other hand, the policy of pushing those restrictions to their full rigour, is very questionable, and is apt, we think, to excite a spirit of retaliation likely to defeat its object. Under certain circumstances, it is necessary to impose certain restrictions on angling ; but to the credit of proprietors be it said, that even in waters understood to be preserved, strangers, generally, are allowed to fish, if they ask permission, and we do not suppose that the Blackadder would be found an exception.

Greenlaw—the county town of the shire, though only second rate to Dunse—is close on the banks of the stream. There is about a mile of water below, and several miles of excellent fishing-water above, open to all legitimate anglers. As a general rule, it is much better suited for fly and minnow than for

worm fishing ; but on these upper parts of the stream, the worm is by no means an indifferent lure, and fine baskets of trout are frequently taken with it. Greenlaw is most easily reached by Dunse, but there is not now any public conveyance between the two places. It is a comfortable little town, where every needful accommodation may be had.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### TILL WATER AND TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—Coldstream, Wooler, and Yetholm.

ABOUT five miles above the mouth of the Whitadder, the ruins of Norham Castle occupy a prominent position on the south bank of the river. This is the scene of the opening lines of 'Marmion:'

'Day set on Norham's castled steep,  
And on Tweed river, broad and deep,  
And Cheviot's mountains lone.'

The scenery is beautiful and varied, and will compensate for the indifferent sport afforded. The angler, whether for trout or salmon, need look for no certain success until he reach the foot of

### THE TILL,

which joins from the right bank. This is an



English stream which, through the Bowmont Water draws part of its supplies from Scottish sources among the northern slopes of the Cheviot Hills. On the point of land formed by its junction with Tweed, the unfinished structure of Twizel Castle will be seen, thus facetiously noticed by the celebrated Dr Knox.

‘In travelling near the Till, we saw one day a vast tower “looming in the distance,” like Tadmor in the desert. Yet, somehow, it had not altogether the air of a ruin, so we made for it. It was a gigantic folly, the produce of a mind disturbed by the laws of primogeniture, baronial privileges, and feudal entail. It had ruined its unhappy proprietors. What it had already cost I will not venture to say, but it was without a roof, windows, doors, or furniture of any description. It reminded me of what Vincennes would look like in ruins. The rooks flew in and the rooks flew out, and ever as ten thousand pounds were laid out on it, other ten thousand were wanted to repair the damage of last winter’s storms. It was a sad spectacle.’ The Till is not of a high angling character, and it is much infested by pike and perch. Its trout, however, attain to a large size, and sea-trout visit it freely. Its chief tributary is

THE GLEN WATER, which partakes greatly of the same character. The stream is formed by the junction of the Bowmont and College Waters. For

two or three miles below the junction it affords splendid water, and contains excellent trout, frequently reaching a pound-weight.

The College is also a very superior angling stream. It consists of fine broken water, abundantly stored with trout, and both of its upper branches are of a like character. It may be well to mention, that in dry weather it gets very small, and is then tedious to fish.

THE BOWMONT WATER, which unites with the College about seven miles below Yetholm, is a slow-running stream in its under part; but, as it is followed up, it displays a fine variety of stream and pool. Above Yetholm the general average of the trout is small, and par are also abundant. Still, with the minnow or may-fly in season, good trout are always to be secured. In autumn it is much frequented by whitlings of a superior quality. Yetholm, which is six miles from Kelso, is the best station to get at these streams, and also at the upper waters of the Kale. Coldstream is nearer the under part of the Bowmont and the Glen Water.

The Till is partially preserved, and so also is a small part of the Glen at Copeland Castle. 'Dryden' informs us, that about twenty years ago he used to capture perfect loads of fish in these streams; and from what we learn from parties who fished them last season (1860), they do not appear to be much, if anything, less productive now.

## CHAPTER X.

## TWEED, THE LEET, AND EDEN WATERS.

*Hotels, &c.*—Coldstream, Birgham, Kelso.

REVERTING to the main river at the point where we left it—the mouth of the Till—we find miles of the finest angling water that need be desired, and varied scenery of the richest description. The salmon casts become numerous and valuable, extending up to Ashiesteel, but decreasing in importance above the mouth of Gala Water. Of course, stray fish in summer, in favourable circumstances, succeed in making their way further up the stream, and are frequently captured about Innerleithen, and, though few in number, also about Peebles. Yet it may be said of the principal salmon rod-fishings on Tweed, that they begin at Ashiesteel, and terminate at the foot of the Till Water, being a distance of upwards of thirty miles. These fishings are all in the hands of the various proprietors, or let to different parties, and those having no other right can only have access to them through favour of the legal owners. With these remarks we leave the salmon-fishings of Tweed, and consider the river in its more general, if less important, character of a trouting stream.

In that part of Tweed we have just noticed, in which it is recognised as a salmon river, the trout-

fishing is only completely open in portions. This, no doubt, is chiefly to prevent interference with its salmon-fishings; and, in general, a fair trout-fisher would not, we believe, be much hindered in his sport. As the relation of the open to that which is generally claimed as reserved water is constantly altering, we need not do more than make this general mention of the fact.

As the angler, or tourist, ascends the river, he meets with many objects of note. Among these are the fine old ruins of the three abbeys of Kelso, Dryburgh, and Melrose, on the various parts of the river indicated by their names. About three and a half miles above Melrose, Abbotsford occupies a conspicuous position on the right bank of the river. These, in addition to the natural beauties of the stream, are the chief objects of interest on its banks in this part of its course. The first tributary above the Till is

## THE LEET WATER.

This small stream, which has its origin in the accumulation of various ditches in the Merse of Berwickshire, enters Tweed from the north side, immediately above Coldstream. It is noted for the size and quality of its trout, but they are not now numerous. Its course is through a rich district, and it has fine hollow banks—important requisites in streams containing large trout. It flows through

the Hirsell grounds, near its foot, where it is preserved. Only a few miles of open water are fishable. The next tributary we meet with on ascending the river is

#### THE EDEN WATER.

This stream also joins from the left bank, and contains trout of a superior description. It is preserved about Nenthorn and Stichel, but all the rest is open water. Ednam, the birthplace of Thomson, the author of 'The Seasons,' is on its banks, about two miles from Kelso. East Gordon is the nearest station to its upper waters; and at this village the angler has also the upper waters of the Blackadder at his command.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### TEVIOT AND TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—Kelso, Morebattle (for Kale or top of Bowmont Water), Jedburgh, Ancrum, Lilliesleaf, Denholm (for Teviot and Rule Water), Hawick.

IMMEDIATELY above Kelso, the river receives one of its most important tributaries,

#### THE TEVIOT WATER.

We believe it is now necessary to get permission to fish part of the Teviot between Roxburgh and its mouth; and even up to Langton Mill dam-head, above Ancrum, occasional restrictions occur. About

Ancrum and Jedfoot, there is some open water containing excellent trout.

The **KALE**, which enters from the right bank, is its lowest tributary, and a much appreciated stream. It is about two miles distant from Roxburgh and Nisbet stations, on the Jedburgh line of rail. Morebattle, a village three miles from Yetholm, is close on the best part of the Kale. The next tributary met with is Oxnam Water, which enters from the same side. It contains a large quantity of fry, and does not rank high as a trouting stream. The nearest station is Nisbet. The next tributary of Teviot is

**THE JED WATER.**—This is a greatly superior stream, and contains excellent trout. For the worm-fisher, it has great attractions, but from being much wooded, it requires some degree of skill and care to fish it. It can be very conveniently got at from Jedburgh. The next tributary is

The **ALE WATER**, which joins Teviot from the left bank at the village of Ancrum. This, too, is a superior stream; but the fishing is considerably interfered with by mill-leads. Its trout attain to good size, and sea-trout visit it freely. It has its sources, chiefly, in a variety of lochs among the Selkirkshire hills. The best of these for trout are Headshaw, Essenside, and Shielswood lochs, all in the neighbourhood of Ashkirk. In addition to excellent trout, they also contain perch. The Ale is

joined by *Langhopeburn*, about a mile and a half above Ashkirk. This is a good little stream. Above this feeder the Ale becomes of little note. The best part of it for the angler is some miles above and below Lilliesleaf, a village about three miles from New Belses station, on the Hawick line.

The Teviot and its tributaries are, we believe, all open from Langton Mill up. This part of it is very conveniently got at from Denholm, a village on its banks, about five miles below Hawick. This part of Teviot is of a justly celebrated description. The trout are large and plentiful, and salmon frequent it freely at certain seasons. About two miles below Denholm it is joined by

**THE RULE WATER**, a capital fly stream, but considerably wooded. It is formed by the junction of two good burns—the Wool-lea and the Waughope.

The Slitrig, which joins Teviot just at Hawick, used to be a good stream; but, chiefly owing to drainage, is not so valuable. About seven miles from Hawick, where its two branches meet, the fishing is best, and these burns are of considerable repute.

A short distance above Hawick the Teviot is augmented by

**THE BORTHWICK WATER**—one of its best tributaries. The most valuable part of this stream is about eight miles from Hawick, at a small village called Deanburnhaugh. Its upper waters afford excellent fishing.

The Allan Water joins Teviot about four and a half miles above Hawick. This is also a stream well worthy of the angler's attention.

The upper waters of the stream—that is, above Teviot head, nine miles from Hawick—afford good fishing. The main stream is excellent for five miles at least. The other branch, called the Frostly, is also good, and about a mile up is joined by a very superior burn. The chief objection to these upper waters is their rather inaccessible nature. An inn at Moss-paul, Dumfriesshire, offers the best facility for fishing them. From here also the Ewes, by and by to be noticed, may be reached.

The next tributary of the Tweed we have to notice is

#### THE LEADER WATER.

This is an excellent trouting stream, and contains abundance of nice fish. The only fault to be found with it is the system of reservation carried out so rigorously by some of the proprietors upon its banks, whereby so much of it is shut to the general angler. The reserved portions are, from Earlston to its mouth, a mile and a half above Earlston and the Lauderdale policies. Formerly there was more of it came under this category.

Earlston and Lauder are the best stations for fishing the lowest of the open portions, and Carfrae for the upper water and branches of the stream.



Earlston may be reached by coach, from Melrose, in connection with the North British rail. Lauder is distant five miles from the Stow station, and Carfrae is rather more than five miles up from Lauder.

In addition to the main stream, there are several tributaries that afford good fishing, and which are not preserved. The first of these, from the bottom of the stream, is the Boon Water, formed by a junction of the Blythe and the Boondreigh, and some smaller feeders. That stream can be got at conveniently enough from Lauder—from which the foot of it is distant about three miles; and when it is got with a little extra water in it, it is well worthy of attention. Another burn joins the stream from the opposite side, about a mile below Lauder. It rises in Threepwood Moss, and contains some heavy trout. The next tributary, ascending the stream, is Earnscleuch Water, which joins the Leader in the Thirlstane preserves, in the neighbourhood of Lauder, also an excellent little stream. The remaining tributaries are Whaplaw Burn, and the other upper branches of the Leader that meet in the neighbourhood of Carfrae.

The angler, after finishing the fishing of the Leader, may easily find his way to either Fountainhall, or the Heriot station of the North British Railway, and angle several miles of his way up the Channel Kirk branch of the stream. After fishing between two and three miles of the burn, he will be

distant from Fountainhall station about four miles ; and from the Heriot station about six. In the former case there is only one range of hills to cross, but in the latter there are two, the last being that between the Armit and the Gala.

If the Leader Water be fished after rains, we would advise the fishing of it down-stream with minnow. It is an excellent stream for that lure, and contains abundance of trout of goodly dimensions. Of course, when it is small and clear, it is necessary, for better success, to fish up-stream with fly or worm.

#### THE ELVIN OR ELLWAND WATER.

This is a stream which enters Tweed immediately above Melrose Bridge, also from the left bank. It was once of good repute, but scarcely so now. Yet, when enlarged, it would still appear to be worth a visit, for, in 1860, 'Dryden,' among his other takes in it, had two trout, one of them a full pound-weight, and the other over a pound and a half.

We now come to notice the far-famed

#### GALA WATER.

To Edinburgh anglers, there is no water better known, and none, perhaps, more appreciated, than this celebrated stream. It and its chief tributaries have fine channelly bottoms, well fitted for spawning purposes ; and its course being through a rich

vale, its feeding capacities are also good. Its trout are therefore both plentiful and of fair dimensions, in spite of the numerous anglers who daily pursue their sport upon its banks. As in every other well-trying stream, the trout in Gala, in ordinary circumstances, are shy and suspicious; and we do not know where the angler's skill may be more severely tested than here.

Its under waters—that is, below Stow—are best got at from Bowland, a station on the North British Railway. From here up to Stow the best fish in the stream are to be found, and where we have caught them from one to one and a half pound. Mr Stewart, in his *Practical Angler*, gives the weight of twenty trout captured by him here at fifteen pounds. This, however, must be looked on as an extraordinary capture; and the average weight of the trout to be found here now may be set down at half a pound—rather under than over that size. This part of the stream would afford excellent fishing for one day. When small and clear, it should be fished up-stream with fly or worm, but when enlarged, it should be fished down with minnow.

**THE LUGGATE WATER.**—This stream joins the Gala about a mile below Stow. As a worm water, it maintains a high character; for minnow-fishing, it is nearly worthless; and even for fly-fishing, unless during a small flood, it is scarcely to be

recommended. The stream affords sufficient water for two days' operations. One day may be profitably employed from its mouth up to Overshiels, a farm on its left bank, where the road from Fountainhall strikes the stream. The distance from the stream to the station at Fountainhall is three miles, the road a very pleasant one, over the hills; but as it is best for an angler to avoid haste, he should allow an hour to walk the distance.

From Overshiels upwards, the fishing varies, but is always good, and we never fished it without satisfactory success. It should be fished with worm, and rapidly passed over; for the banks being completely open, if the angler linger in his operations, he can scarcely avoid being seen by the trout. About three miles up, the stream consists of two branches, the smaller one flowing in from the right bank. This branch, near its foot, appears worthless; but a few hundred yards up, some good pools will be met with; and for about three-fourths of a mile—up to a shepherd's house in the glen—there is really good fishing to be had. We have caught trout in it of nearly half a pound in weight; and on the whole, they are larger than one would expect in such a small stream. The other branch has a much longer run; indeed, it is eligible for two miles above the junction; and it contains some very good trout, many of them about six ounces. Here, however, it is a mere hill-burn, and requires no particular notice.

COCKUM BURN is the next tributary of the Gala, which it joins from the left bank, at the village of Stow. During a fresh, this small stream may be fished for several miles with great success, and a good basket of trout may be caught, many of them from four to eight ounces. In very dry weather, it would be useless to waste time on it.

In Gala, from Stow up to Fountainhall, the trout are fully more plentiful, but somewhat smaller in size. All this part of the stream is well suited for any of the lures ; and the railway stations of Stow and Fountainhall are close on the banks.

About a mile above Fountainhall, Gala is joined by

THE ARMIT BURN, a small stream which has its sources in the mossy heights of Soutra Hill. It pursues a winding course of some eight miles, receiving on its way the contributions of various little burns from the neighbouring hills, and ultimately falls into the Gala at Crookstone, about a mile above Fountainhall station. It flows through a rich mossy soil, has fine sheltering banks, and is fitted, we have no doubt, to contain trout of a pound-weight. We are not aware, however, of any of such a size having been captured in it of late years. The largest we ever secured in it was thirteen ounces ; and a beautiful trout it was. The average weight of the trout it contains is about a quarter of a pound. They are finely shaped fish, but bear

traces generally of their mossy haunts in their darker hues compared with the trout of Gala. It is an excellent stream for fly, when a little enlarged, or when a breeze disturbs its rather quiet pools. This remark refers to it between the forks and Crookstone policies. The junction of the two branches takes place about three miles from its mouth.

The next part of Gala we have to notice is that from Fountainhall up to Heriot. To those fond of worm-fishing, this is perhaps the best part of Gala. It affords every facility for the practice of that lure. The upper part of this stretch—all above 'Little Gala,' as it is called, which flows in from the left bank—is known as the Heriot Water. The whole of this up to Borthwick Hall, is excellent water for the practice of the worm; but for the most part minnow cannot be so profitably employed; and the fly is likeliest to capture a lot of small trout. The occasions, however, are rare in which a good worm-fisher might not secure a fair basket of trout, averaging two pounds to the dozen, with the chance of an occasional fish from half a pound upwards.

**THE HERIOT WATER** (the upper waters of the Gala):

Sweet Heriot, what though winter's chills  
 Have swept the heath-bell from thy hills—  
 What though thy blooming banks no more  
 Should tempt the wild-bee to thy shore?

F

Still memory fond thy charms recalls,  
No towering cliffs, no frenzied falls,  
But crystal pools of purest wave,  
Which banks of thymy verdure lave,  
And gentle streams that joyously  
Dance on their way in sparkling glee,  
Singing o'er sands of golden glow,  
And channels bright as gems below.

—Hitherto, in treating of Gala, we have been dealing with a stream flowing through a narrow luxuriant valley, hemmed in on either side with lofty mountains, which, not many years ago, were covered with the heather-bell, and afforded food and shelter to the wild moor-fowl and curlew. Now, in these upper waters, under the name of Heriot—though on both sides the hills continue, and even increase in size and wildness—the luxuriant beauty which distinguishes the lower part of the vale is not found. We have, instead, a valley of no great breadth, bearing traces, here and there, of former beds of the stream, in partly covered channels, through which a scanty herbage forces its way.

This vale continues up to Ladyside, a distance of three miles from Borthwick Hall. In the whole of this water there is tolerable fishing; occasionally it is excellent, but many large trout are not to be expected. The quantity, however, is amazingly great.

LADYSIDE BURN.—This little sparkling burn flows in from the right bank at the secluded spot of

Ladyside, from which it derives its name. This sweetly situated place consists of a thatch-covered cottage or two, and some sheep-penns, and bears a certain interest through Wilson's tale of *The Foresters*.

The Heriot, above Ladyside, is very small ; but there are good trout for some miles up, where it takes the name of Blackhope Burn. Dewar Burn and Garvald Burn are also worth an occasional visit.

Hangingshaw Inn, about a mile down from Heriot Station, is the most convenient position to get at the upper waters of the Gala. The inn is at present kept by Mr and Mrs Thomson, who are exceedingly attentive and obliging.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE ETRICK, THE YARROW, AND THE LOCHS.

*Hotels, &c.*—Selkirk, Ettrick Bridge End, and Tushielaw, for Ettrick Water, Gordon Arms, and 'Tibbie Shiels.'

THE Ettrick joins Tweed about three miles above Gala from the right bank. In its lower portions there are some favourite casts for both trout and salmon, and many a successful 'take' has encouraged the angler here. About five miles up, at the beautiful domains of Bowhill, the Ettrick and the



Yarrow join their waters. There is not, perhaps, any district in the land more celebrated in song and story than that which is traversed by these sister-streams, and pages might be filled in the attempt to notice them in connection with that species of interest. Near their junction, in the neighbourhood of Selkirk, at the place of that name, the celebrated battle of Philiphaugh took place, when the Covenanting army, under General Leslie, so signally routed the royalist troops under Montrose. Passing up the bank of the Ettrick, we come to Carterhaugh, on the left side of the stream, and thereafter, on the right bank, the tower of Oakwood, where once resided Sir Michael Scott, a man whose knowledge appears to have been sufficiently ahead of his times, at least in his own land, as to acquire him the title of *Wizard*; and many are the marvellous deeds tradition ascribes to his agency. A few miles further up the stream, and about seven miles from Selkirk, will be found a very convenient station for the angler at Ettrick Bridge Inn. There he has complete command of the lower waters of the stream above. Tushielaw Inn is the only other place of accommodation on the Ettrick, and is about fifteen miles from Selkirk, and fourteen from Hawick. The fishing in the neighbourhood is all that need be desired, both in the upper waters of the stream, and in some small lochs that lie among the hills some few miles in a

southerly direction. One of these, called Clearburn Loch, communicates with the Ettrick through the tributary of Rankleburn. It was up the vale of this burn that the Buccleuchs had one of their first possessions, and where the tradition connected with the early history of their family had its scene. The district is full of traditionary interest ; and among other objects may be mentioned Nether and Upper Deloraine, ancient possessions of the Buccleuchs, Tushielaw and Gamescleugh Towers. The old hamlet of Ettrick is a few miles up from Tushielaw, on the right bank, and in a roadside cottage near, Hogg the 'Ettrick Shepherd' was born. Thirlston Castle, the seat of Lord Napier, is on the left bank, about three miles above the inn.

Rankleburn, which joins Ettrick opposite to Tushielaw Tower, contains great quantities of fry, but its trouting is not important. The Timah, which joins about three miles above, is considerably superior ; but the main stream is greatly preferable here to any of its tributaries. It is fishable till within seven miles of Moffat ; and by crossing over two miles of hill-ground in a north-westerly direction, the Moffat Water will be found at about five miles from that town.

There are three hill-roads through the treeless 'forest,' communicating with the vales of the Ettrick and the Yarrow. The uppermost of these strikes off from Ettrick Water, a little distance above

Tushielaw Inn, and after a stretch of about six miles, joins the road to Moffat, at the top of St Mary's Loch, at Tibby Shiels'. The next is a rough hill-road of some nine miles, starting from Tushielaw Inn, and striking the Yarrow at the Gordon Arms. The last is the shortest of the three, being only five miles. It starts from Ettrick Bridge Inn, and joins the road at Yarrow Kirk, which is about seven miles below St Mary's Loch. There is, therefore, every facility for traversing these districts, and fishing their streams. The accommodation, too, on the whole, is sufficient, unless, perhaps, for a week or two after the first week in August, when some inconvenience may occasionally be experienced.

#### THE YARROW.

This is an excellent angling stream, and contains trout of a superior description. The part of it at its foot, which flows through the domains of Bowhill, is preserved; but that only extends to about three and a half miles above Selkirk. All the stream above is open. The most convenient station for fishing it is the Gordon Arms Inn, which is pleasantly situated on the left bank of the stream, about four miles below St Mary's Loch. Having reached this point, the angler is in the midst of scenes of high romance, hallowed by the pastoral and the tragic muse. In front of him the Yarrow flows, in graceful curves, over a channel-bottom, away

by Yarrow's ancient kirk. A short distance above him, on the opposite side, he may discover Altrive, for many years the residence of the 'Ettrick Shepherd,' whose muse and genius have consecrated every stream, and given a new and pleasing interest to all the locality, rendering an excursion thither one of the most delightful it is possible to undertake.

When the visitor looks upwards, he will observe that the course of the stream is through a vale of no great breadth, with intervening heights; and it may strike him as it struck us, that the hills, at least those on the northern side, are covered with the fairest verdure it was ever his fortune to observe on 'mountain-side.'

About a mile above the inn, the small stream of Douglas Burn flows into the Yarrow, after dancing its way for six miles over rocks and stones. On its banks, where are seen the remains of an ancient tower, called Blackhouse, is said to have taken place the scene celebrated in the fine old ballad of 'The Douglas Tragedy,' and seven large stones are erected on a height to mark the spot where the seven brethren fell. The farmhouse adjoining the tower was the early home of William Laidlaw, so well and admirably known from his connection with Sir Walter Scott. It was here, too, that the Ettrick Shepherd passed ten years of his life in the service of the elder Mr Laidlaw. The burn abounds with trout, chiefly of a small size.

Another small stream, called Kirkstead Burn, flows into the loch, also from the left bank, near its foot. This burn too contains a great quantity of small trout.

Immediately at the bottom of the lake stands Dryhope Tower, the birthplace of Mary Scott, the celebrated 'Flower of Yarrow.' Her burial-place is in the old burying-ground, beside the ruins of St Mary's Chapel. These relics of former days stand at a little distance from the road which winds at the foot of the hills, by the side of the loch. They are not visible from the road, on account of the eminence on which they are placed. From this spot one of the finest views of the lakes and the neighbourhood is to be obtained. And

'though, in feudal strife, a foe  
Hath laid our lady's chapel low,  
Yet still beneath the hallowed soil  
The peasant rests him from his toil,  
And, dying, bids his bones be laid  
Where, erst, his simple fathers prayed.'

The Yarrow, between the loch and the Gordon Arms, is an excellent angling stream. It contains, indeed, innumerable parr, but its trout are numerous also, and of excellent quality, and many of them of good size. It would be difficult to say for which lure it is most appropriate. It should be fished like other streams of similar character—that is, when small and clear, up-stream, with worm. It is

excellent for minnow and parrtail ; and in summer evenings, the fly is most effective. We have seen beautiful trout captured here with the fly, averaging about a half pound each.

**MEGGET WATER.**—This is the chief tributary of St Mary's Loch, and a very superior angling stream. In point of quality, the trout which it contains are not equal to the fine yellow trout of the Yarrow ; but the average size is larger, and there are plenty of them. We have caught beautiful trout, about two miles up from the loch, at a place where the water is strong and rough, from the large stones in its bed. Several of these were nearly a pound-weight, and the average over a half-pound.

At a little distance up the Megget, may be seen standing on the left bank of the stream, the remains of Henderland Castle, celebrated in Border history as the scene of summary justice, executed on the person of Henry Cockburn, the then Laird of Henderland, by James V., during his rigorous justiciary tour in 1529, among the lawless Border knights who long had set regal authority at defiance, but who, fortunately for lovers of peace, calculated without their host. The object of the king being to punish, and not to judge, the luckless Laird of Henderland was hanged, without ceremony, over the gate of his own tower. At a little distance up the vale, a small burn will be observed, called Henderland Burn, joining the Megget from the left

bank. It was to the 'Dowie Linn,' near the foot of this burn, and visible from the Megget, that the knight's terror-stricken wife, who had managed to escape by a back-window from the house, betook herself while the terrible scene of retribution was being enacted on her husband. It is to this incident the pathetic ballad refers from which we quote these verses :

' He slew my knight to me so dear,  
He slew my knight, and pained his gear,  
My servants all for life did flee,  
And left me in extremitie.

I sewed his sheet, making my mane,  
I watched his corpse myself alane,  
I watched his body night and day,  
Nae living creature came that way.

I took his body on my back,  
And whiles I gaed and whiles I satte ;  
I digged a grave and laid him in,  
And happed him wi' the sod sae green.

But think nae ye my heart was sair,  
When I laid the mould on his yellow hair ;  
O think nae ye my heart was wae,  
When I turned about away to gae.'

WINTERHOPE BURN is the chief tributary of the Megget Water, which it enters about five miles up from the lake, from the right bank. It is celebrated as a trouting stream, and justly so. The trout which it contains are both plentiful and large. It is excellent for up-stream worm-fishing, and large

baskets are frequently captured in it by anglers from Peebles, with parrtail—a deadly lure in the hands of many a Peeblean. The trout which it contains are of the same description as those of the Megget—but not equal in quality to those of the Yarrow.

THE LOCHS (St Mary's and the Loch of the Lowes).—Before proceeding to describe these sheets of water, we cannot help introducing the following beautiful lines by Scott. To those familiar with the scenes to which they refer, we believe we need offer no apology for their introduction. They are always fresh and beautiful, like a glimpse of nature; and we would just assure those who have not yet beheld them, that the picture they present is as true to nature as it is exquisitely expressed.

' Nor fen, nor sedge,  
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge ;  
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink  
At once upon the level brink ;  
And just a trace of silver sand,  
Marks where the water meets the land.  
Fair in the mirror, bright and blue,  
Each hill's huge outline you may view ;  
Shaggy with heath, but lonely, bare,  
Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is there,  
Save, where of land yon slender line,  
Bears thwart the lake the scattered pine.  
Yet even this nakedness has power,  
And aids the feeling of the hour ;  
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you spy,  
Where living thing concealed may lie.



Nor point retiring, hides a dell,  
 Where swain, or woodsman lone, might dwell.  
 There's nothing left to fancy's guess,  
 You see that all is loneliness ;  
 And silence aids, though the steep hills  
 Send to the lake a thousand rills ;  
 In summer tide, so soft they weep,  
 The sound but lulls the ear asleep.  
 Your horse's hoof tread sounds too rude,  
 So stilly is the solitude.'

We would also recommend to the visitor here the beautiful verses by Wordsworth, 'Yarrow Unvisited,' 'Yarrow Visited,' and 'Yarrow Revisited.' In these the poet writes

' The Swan on still St Mary's lake,'

But *swan* is so much associated with various artificial accessories, that one could wish he had written instead, as Scott has done,

' The *wild swan* on St Mary's lake, &c.'

The strain of sentiment, awakened among these scenes, rebels against the approach of artificial imagery ; and Wordsworth's expression seems calculated at least to suggest something of the kind.

The celebrated hostelry of Tibby Shiels (Mrs Richardson) is sweetly situated on a narrow neck of land, that 'slender line' bearing 'thwart the lake the scattered pine'—between St Mary's Loch and the Loch of the Lowes. It has long been, and is likely still to remain, a spot much frequented by

tourists and sportsmen. The traditions and associations connected with all the locality, and the quiet beauty of the valley, with the lakes reposing in its midst, are all deeply interesting ; while the superior angling facilities afforded by lake and stream, will always prove most attractive. Here the stranger will receive every attention, and meet with many courteous brothers of the angle, glad to impart any information likely to aid him in his piscatorial pursuits. This is the best position for obtaining access to Kirkstead Burn, the Megget, and the Little Yarrow, with its tributary, Chapelhope Burn. Little Yarrow is the feeder of the upper loch, the Loch of the Lowes.

In addition to the yellow trout, and migratory fish, the lochs contain both pike and perch ; but the last two are nearly, we believe, confined to the Loch of the Lowes. Any quantity of perch may, occasionally, be caught ; and English gentlemen—trained to bottom-fishing, with all the appliances of floats, sinkers, &c.—sometimes make dreadful havoc among them.

To fish the lochs successfully, a certain amount of breeze is necessary, and if it be but a moderate one, they should, of course, be fished with fly. We add a list of the three best to use, according to Stoddart, whose extensive experience, and nice powers of observation, entitle his opinion to every respect :

1st, Wings—Light mottled feather from breast of mallard.

Body and Legs—Black heckle over black silk or mohair, orange tip, silver twist.

2*d*, The Professor (too well known to need description).

3*d*, Woodcock wing—mouse fur body (Yarrow).

If the angler chance upon a stiff breeze, he may then use minnow or parrtail with good effect. Excellent baskets are sometimes caught with these baits.

No visitor to these famous scenes, if he can at all spare the time, should neglect to visit Loch Skene, if he have not already seen it. It is distant about six miles from the top of St Mary's Loch ; but, for part of the way, fishing may be had in the Little Yarrow. To fish this loch effectively, we know no plan equal to the following, and, we fear, the number of enthusiasts likely to adopt it is not great. Here it is : Leave Tibby Shiels, on a mild evening, in time enough to reach Loch Skene an hour before sunset. A few hours' excellent fishing may be had after arrival. Then, a sleep for a few hours—if you can get it—wrapt in your plaid, or what you please. It is not necessary to caution you against oversleeping yourself. The novelty, to say nothing of any other peculiarity of your situation, will be sufficient guarantee on that score. We will, therefore, take for granted you will be soon enough astir to have some hours of early-morning fishing ; and, if fortune

prove propitious, and no unlooked for accident arise, your achievement may be a memorable one, both in point of success and variety. *N.B.*—You will be none the worse of a companion.

The angler having exhausted his time, but not his enjoyments, here, we can fancy him casting many 'a longing, lingering look behind,' as he leaves these peaceful scenes. His eye rests with silent pleasure upon the lake in its soft beauty, upon which, now gently ruffled by the evening breeze, the sinking sun begins to cast the shadow of the tall mountain, and on whose margin he may have felt as if he could have dreamed away a season of long summer-days. But his mind turns to days gone by, and in fancy he beholds the transaction of some wild deed of lawless Border knight ; or, more in keeping with present quiet, some gentle apparition of loving maid. The hills, now fair and destitute of trees, regain their former aspect, when Ettrick Forest stretched from Ettrick Banks to Yarrow Braes, and the wild deer started at the sound of the hunter's horn. It is but a moment, and the dream is gone.

By sweet St Mary's Loch so fair  
 The hunter's horn is heard no more ;  
 No mailed Border knight is there—  
 No war-shout wakes her peaceful shore.

No forest blooms on Yarrow's side,  
 Nor shady beech, nor oaken bower ;

No stag bounds by her crystal tide,  
Or laps her wave at ev'ning's hour.

Where Ettrick Forest stretching wide,  
Wreathed mountain hoar, and tangled vale,  
The heath-bell blooms on mountain-side,  
The green-sward waves in evening's gale.

And by St Mary's ruffled breast  
The pensive angler loves to stray—  
There, skilful, guides his silken cast,  
And softly lands his leaping prey.

The lake still reflects the heavens in its clear depths—Yarrow murmurs over its channel-beds as in days gone by—but no longer are seen those maids, and that fairest Flower of Yarrow, who loved and lingered here, while the sound of vesper-bell fell in sweet cadence on the ear. In yon church-yard the fair and the beautiful have found their last long sleep. The stranger, as he turns away, sighs the emotions which he cannot speak, and we fancy we read his heart in his last farewell.

Yes, here, as gentle legends tell—  
The maids of Yarrow oft would roam,  
While the soft sound of vesper-bell  
Stole from my lady's chapel home.

But perished all that chapel gray,  
And holy maid and priest are gone ;  
And ne'er again may pilgrim pray  
Before that broken altar-stone.

Farewell, fair scenes ! though ne'er again  
These feet should press that tranquil shore ;  
Still on this heart, through bliss, through pain,  
Thy charms shall linger evermore.

From the Gordon Arms to Selkirk, where the Yarrow and the Ettrick mix their waters, is about twelve miles. This piece of water may be successfully fished down-stream with minnow or parrtail, and these are the best lures to use to procure good trout and get quit of parr, which are numerous and troublesome. By leaving the Gordon Arms in the morning, one could fish the best parts of the stream, and reach Selkirk in the evening, without a very great amount of exertion. If a stranger to the town, and unacquainted with its history and traditions, we will shortly inform him that, like other towns on the 'debatable ground,' it has its legends. The beautiful ballad of 'The Flowers o' the Forest'—we refer, of course, to the older words of the song—has a peculiar significance in connection with this burgh: The flowers of the forest were chiefly from it and its vicinity, and their diminished numbers, on straggling home from Flodden's fatal field, was a mournful testimony to the heroism with which they gathered round their infatuated king.

An agreeable, and, to the angler, a most convenient way of approach to these interesting scenes of the Ettrick, the Yarrow, with their lochs and tributaries, is from Peebles or Innerleithen, by

Traquair. If he leave Innerleithen in the morning, he may vary his pleasures by fishing up the small stream of the Quair, which abounds in small trout, but where an occasional good fish may be secured. This sweet little stream is open from about a mile and half from its mouth to its sources, many miles up among the hills which rise between the vales of the Yarrow and the Tweed. Just where the road begins to leave the cultivated valley of the Tweed, and winds by easy ascent over the hill, a little before coming in sight of Traquair Kirk, the larger branch of this small stream will be seen winding through green meadows from the west. About two miles up that solitary glen, Charles Tennant, Esq., has recently erected one of the most magnificent private mansions in Scotland, and is, we believe, at present constructing fishponds on the upper parts of the stream. We trust he will not interfere with the few anglers likely to find their way thither in the course of the season.

The distance from Traquair to the Gordon Arms Inn is about seven miles. The walk over the hill-road is exceedingly picturesque, and of itself well repays the trouble.

#### THE CADDON WATER.

This small stream joins Tweed about the point we have indicated as that at which its salmon-fishings and preserved waters terminate. It abounds about

its foot with small fish and fry, with an occasional trout of good size. Clevenford—formerly an inn, and, we hope, at least a place of accommodation still—is within a mile of its mouth, and three miles from Galashiels. Good fishing in this stream is not to be depended on below Windydore's farm—a place about one and a half mile distant from Bowland station, on the Hawick line. From here up to the top of both branches, good sport is generally obtainable. Between Windydore's and Caddonhead farm, there is some really good water, nicely varied with stream and pool. The junction of the two branches takes place about a mile above Caddonhead. At this point there is a herd's house, called the Scruife, from which there is a footpath to Stow, distant about three miles, by the Luggate Water. By taking up the left-hand branch, and crossing the hill in a south-west direction, a tributary of the Leithen Water will be reached at no great distance. The foot of this burn is not far above Innerleithen.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### TWEED—ITS MID-WATERS.

*Hotels, &c.*—Innerleithen, Peebles.

WE have now arrived at that point of the river where it becomes peculiarly a trouting stream, and



it would be difficult to overrate its value in this respect. It would serve little purpose to particularise stream and pool, when, speaking generally, all are so excellent; but there are some observations applicable to its fishing, which suggest themselves here, that may be made with advantage.

There are now only two towns of importance on the banks of the river that we come in contact with as we pass up the stream. These are Innerleithen, with Traquair, and Peebles, excellent stations for the angler. Now, when the river is low, unless in night-fishing with the fly, the angler should not fish within, say a couple of miles above or below those places, for in their immediate neighbourhood the fish are so greatly harassed by constant fishing, that they become unusually shy.

We would further observe, for the guidance of those who are not sufficiently acquainted with the kinds of fish found in the river, and the laws effecting them, that they must be guarded in their treatment of *parr* and *smolts* that may come into their possession. These are the young of the *salmonidæ*; the true parr or the young salmon has certain natural markings, sufficient, when once pointed out, to make it easily recognised among the river trout; but the young of the 'round-tail' fish of Tweed are a great deal more difficult to distinguish, and sometimes few even of the most experienced would venture to give a positive opinion on them.

The penalty for having any of these fish in possession, between the 1st of April and 1st of June, is only sixpence for a first offence. The second offence entails a much more serious penalty—two pounds of fine, and so much additional charge for each of such fish found in possession, and expenses beside.

Some general observations on the trout-fishing of the river may be introduced here.

It is a common idea that, because the Tweed is a large stream in comparison with its tributaries, that the flies adapted to it should be proportionately large. This, we are satisfied, is a mistake ; and we are quite of the opinion Adam Dryden has expressed to us, that the sizes of artificial trout-flies are rather to be regulated by the seasons than by the size of the water in which they are used. He argues, and we think fairly, that the same kind of insect that is found on Gala, for example, is found on Tweed, and the same on those streams when enlarged as when reduced in volume ; and—we speak of trout-fishing—why depart from this natural order of things ? The only difference that *nature* seems to warrant, is the using of a larger size in spring than at other seasons.

When the river is very much reduced in the summer months, the best way to fish it in the day-time is with worm in its broken streamy waters, unless during a good breeze, when the pools may be fished with advantage with either fly or worm. At

such times, up-stream fishing is imperative, and a light two-hand rod should be used.

The minnow and parrtail are excellent baits for the larger trout in Tweed. *Parrtail*-fishing is nearly confined to this river. As it is found, when well managed, to be equally deadly with the minnow, and stands the water even better, at least, than the fresh minnow, we may notice it more particularly.

As trout undoubtedly take this bait for some small fish, it admits of being treated like minnow to a great extent, though not completely. Not being a perfect fish, it is necessary to conceal that deception, in addition to disguising the tackle, so that more violent spinning becomes necessary than in minnow-fishing when the perfect fish is used. In other respects, the directions on minnow-fishing apply here, and these we need not repeat.

Mr Stoddart, in his *Angler's Companion*, makes the following remarks, and gives the following directions regarding this lure :

‘ And here, seeing I have classed minnow and parrtail-fishing under one head or chapter, although in truth, as branches of the art, they vary in several particulars, it will be proper to introduce some instructions as to the modelling or preparation of the bait in question, and the affixing of it to its appropriate tackle. The parrs or smolts fittest for use are those above four and under six inches in

length. If of a smaller size, they may, as occasion offers, be employed entire, like the minnow, on suitable tackle; larger, I cannot well recommend them unless as a trolling bait on lochs inhabited by pike and the *salmo ferax*. The cutting of the parrtail for stream-fishing is an operation which requires some nicety and attention. It is one, also, very imperfectly understood away from Tweedside: indeed, even there, I have encountered anglers (whose experience in the other branches of the art was beyond challenge), bungling it most effectually. The main error of all such lies in the notion, that because it is natural for fish to swim head-foremost, or with their tails in the rear, they only act with discretion when they allot the same position to their bait—that is, when appending it to the tackle with the tail lowermost; whereas in the proper, economical, and killing method of fishing, it is attached quite the reverse way. Accordingly, in shaping and cutting out the bait, let the following instructions be strictly attended to:

‘ Divide the parr or smolt with a sharp penknife, in the direction of A B. Cut off all the fins, closely and carefully, not excepting the caudal or tail ones. These, indeed, should be neatly rounded off, and caution used not to break the contiguous skin. This process of shaping the parrtail may be performed, in the course of a few seconds, either at the water-side, or by the wader on the lid of his creel.

No. 2 of the illustrations exhibits the figure of the parrtail, as ready for use. In No 3, it is represented as affixed to the tackle, C forming the head or foremost portion, and D the other extremity of the bait. Now, the advantages of this mode of attaching it are very evident. To satisfy himself with respect to them, let the angler, by way of experiment, adopt what is seemingly the more natural method of baiting; let him retain the finny portions of the tail, and place the end denoted by the letter D, foremost. The first cast taken by him may not improbably, as regards the spinning of his lure, prove pretty satisfactory; and should the stream run strong, those immediately succeeding it may still meet his expectations. In a short time, however, he begins to find all going wrong—the bait refusing, in spite of two or more box-swivels, to spin at all, or spinning only by fits and starts, awkwardly and inefficiently; its appearance, moreover, totally altered, the skin loosened, the fleshy parts flabby and worn away by the action of the water, which they come into violent contact with, and, in fact, the possibility of a trout seizing it utterly at an end. Let him, however, by way of change, adopt the mode of baiting above recommended. The advantages derived from it will quickly discover themselves. Not only, indeed, will the parrtail spin with more freedom and regularity, its heavier portion being lowermost, but it will last, to boot, for a much

greater length of time, and frequently subserve to capture two or three fish. All this is owing to the narrow and protected part being attached foremost; consequently the opposing current is confined in its action upon the bait to the lower and expanding extremity—a circumstance greatly favouring the spinning, while, at the same time, in conjunction with the natural toughness of the advanced end, it prevents that other portion of the parrtail from becoming worn and fretted.'

We suspect a Peebles or Innerleithen angler would not be inclined to accept of this conclusion as correct; and it would seem, however much Mr Stoddart may have seen the operation of preparing the bait bungled down Tweedside, he has never witnessed it performed in these upper parts.

From the manner, as at Peebles, of preparing the bait and attaching it to the tackle, there is no danger of it easily getting worn and fretted; while its near approximation in appearance to the living fish is so complete, that when slightly spun, it is no easy matter to distinguish the difference.

The angler will at first find it rather awkward to prepare this bait and fix it to the tackle; but a very little practice and assistance, which is easily obtained, will soon make him sufficiently expert.

We shall now notice the tributaries that flow into Tweed at this point of its course.

## CHAPTER XV.

## LEITHEN, EDDLESTON, MANOR, AND LYNE WATERS.

*Hotels, &c.*—Innerleithen, Peebles—and for Lyne Water, Romano Bridge, and West Linton.

**THE LEITHEN WATER.**—This stream enters Tweed at Innerleithen, the St Ronan's Well of Scott's novel of that name, and a watering-place much frequented still. Excellent accommodation of course may be had here; and in addition to its commanding the lower waters of the Leithen and tributaries, it is close by Tweed and the foot of the Quair, to which we have already referred in connection with the Yarrow. The upper waters of the Leithen are fully more accessible from Peebles, though the fishing it from that point is attended with a considerable amount of exertion. The most practicable route to it is up the vale of Soonhope Burn a certain distance, when a 'kirk and market' road will be found leading to the right over the hills, and which has its termination a little distance above Leithen Lodge, at the sweet secluded spot of Woodlands Lee, or Willan's Lee—the latter being possibly a contraction of the former, but which we will adopt as that by which the place is locally best known. This is an excellent stream for worm-fishing, possessing a fine stony bed, and a great deal

of broken water. Unless when flooded, when all such streams, from their rough impetuous character, are totally unfit for angling purposes, the worm-fisher will rarely fail of success here, in the main stream, when the waters are low, and in some of the tributaries when a little enlarged. It is characteristic of the Leithen, as of other streams of like size, that often in summer and autumn, fishing is nearly impracticable till a flood clear the bottom of weeds. These grow very luxuriantly in the stream.

The last of the tributaries of the Leithen, but the first which we notice on angling up-stream, is Glentress Burn, which flows into the main stream from the left bank, about a mile below Willan's Lee, and three miles above Innerleithen. This, also, is an excellent little stream for worm-fishing, and contains trout averaging about four ounces each. The next tributary above is Willan's Lee Burn, which joins likewise from the left bank, and is a nice little stream, abounding with trout, but which average considerably under those of Glentress Burn, being barely out two pounds to the dozen caught in most favourable circumstances. The main stream between these two burns we consider the best of all the Leithen Water. For worm-fishing it is all one need desire, and contains abundance of trout reaching half a pound in weight. This part would frequently repay the minnow-fisher for his pains.

At Craighope, about two and a half miles above



Willan's Lee, the Leithen proper may be said to begin, as it is here the three branches constituting the upper waters of the stream unite. This part contains a great quantity of trout averaging about three ounces each, and a fair proportion reaching half a pound. About midway between Craighope and Willan's Lee, a friend of the writer caught, in August 1855, with worm, a trout reaching 1 lb. 13 ounces, a most exceptionable occurrence in this piece of water, we should suppose. The northern branch of the three occurring at Craighope, is called Craighope Burn, and contains trout superior in size and quality to any of the other two. This branch also contains some good pools; narrow, indeed, being hemmed in on either side by rock-edged banks, but of considerable depth, where the artificial fly may be used with good effect. With a favourable breeze blowing up-stream, or a slightly enlarged water, capital baskets may be got out of it by times, with either worm or fly—the trout running about three pounds to the dozen. The other larger (mid) branch is considered the Leithen proper, but it has not an equal claim on the angler's regard as that just noticed. Its trout may be more numerous, but they are inferior in quality, and considerably so in size. The other branch is a small hill-burn, consisting of a series of short runs, and falls of inconsiderable height, with a clear pool of water at the foot of each, and in which we have caught many

trout of six and seven ounces. It may be observed, that in all these branches, trout may be caught up to their very sources, and these sometimes of good size too. In the Craighope branch, we have caught them within a short distance of the 'well eye,' and some of them nearly half a pound in weight.

The distance from Peebles to Willan's Lee, by the route we have indicated, is about five miles, the part of it, after leaving the vale of the Soonhope, a toilsome tread up-hill, and little less than two hours' time will be consumed on the way. Still, this route is the most practicable one for getting at the stream from Glentress Burn upwards. Innerleithen is preferable for commanding the lower part of the stream—that is, from Glentress downwards.

It may be noticed, that if the angler, after fishing the Leithen, wish to find his way to Eddleston, the distance from Craighope, by the Leithen (mid) branch, is about four miles. For a mile and a half of this distance he can fish up the stream, then strike west over the hill—which he will nearly have mounted by this time—and after another mile or so down the other side, he will come upon a small hill-burn called Longcote Burn, which flows into the Eddleston Water, at the village of that name. It is, at Eddleston, called the 'Minister's Burn,' we presume, in consequence of flowing past the manse. The angler, on his way down this little stream, may secure some good trout. It is a nice

little burn for its size, and will well repay an occasional visit. If it should suit the angler's convenience more, he could reverse this mode of procedure by taking up the Minister's Burn, crossing the hill by the 'peat-path' to Leithenhead, and fishing down to Willan's Lee. He can then strike over the hill to the right, and reach Peebles by the Soonhope.

**HAYSTON BURN.**—This is a small stream which flows into Tweed from the left bank, about a mile and a half below Peebles. Being uninterrupted, from its mouth upwards, till 1856, it used to contain a great quantity of salmon-fry in its lower parts, but there was still tolerable fishing above for about five miles. It was not, however, ever a favourite with us, on account of the great proportion of trout under, to those above, four ounces which it contained. We think, in this respect, it even excelled the Manor, about its bottom, with its abundance of small fish and fry. Near the foot of the burn, Sir Adam Hay has recently constructed a fishpond, the works in connection with which prevent salmon getting further up; and thus the character of the stream, so far as its fishing is concerned, will be greatly altered. The probable result will be, as in parallel circumstances, that the trout peculiar to the burn, being left in undisturbed possession, with all its supplies and resources at their command, will greatly improve in size and quality—the stream

being by no means deficient in tolerable pools and sheltering banks. In the meantime, angling in it is prohibited; but we should hope only in the meantime—till the pond gets sufficiently stocked. When this is attained, we trust that the proprietor will, with the usual liberality characteristic of the landlords in the neighbourhood, again throw it open to the angler—if under some simple conditions, possibly, so much the better.

Of the many beautiful towns and villages in the south of Scotland, there is no one more prettily situated, and none more abundantly possessing the means of real enjoyment within itself, than Peebles. Placed in a luxuriant valley of the Tweed, at the point where Eddleston Water mingles with the river, and with its surrounding heights adorned with far-spreading woods, generally arrayed in tasteful devices, according to the configuration and extent of the hills, it would be difficult to conceive anything more pleasing than the peculiar description of beauty prevailing at this part of the course of the Tweed.

It is in the neighbourhood of Peebles that the river, dear in its varied beauties and associations, having fairly forsaken its Highland glens, and, after a course of fully fourteen miles, through lovely valleys, in which it has gathered the contributions of many an upland stream and tiny rill, breaks from Neidpath's rock-bound pools, and sweeps in graceful

curves away by rich domain and ruined border tower.

Such is the favoured position by nature of this delightful town, just where the high lands lose themselves in the luxuriant vale. It has a neat, dry, and cleanly appearance ; and its suburbs, now rapidly improving, are quite charming. In point of literary attractions, we presume it stands alone among the towns in the south of Scotland, since it was honoured with the noble favour recently bestowed on it by William Chambers, Esq. of Glenormiston. But, in addition to those, it has peculiar attractions on account of its proximity to the Scottish metropolis, its easy access from that city, and the choice angling facilities it affords. In this latter view we shall proceed to notice it, leaving to be examined and enjoyed at leisure its traditionary and other interests.

SOONHOPE BURN.—At the distance of a few hundred yards below Peebles, by the Innerleithen road, this little stream finds its way into the Tweed. It has its source about three miles up among the heights which rise between the vales of the Leithen and the Eddleston Waters. We fished it only on one occasion, but in favourable circumstances, being on the forenoon of a day after a small flood in August 1855, and caught rather over four dozen trout, some of which were nearly half a pound—the gross a little more than nine pounds. It is only to

be recommended, we should suppose, in similar circumstances.

**THE EDDLESTON WATER.**—The stream flows into the Tweed, from the left bank, close at Peebles, as already intimated, and is of considerable merit, in an angling point of view. For the first mile or so above the dam-head at Peebles, it flows over a sandy bed, contains a good deal of still, deepish water, within narrow banks, is rather deficient in streams and broken water, and in the main is much better adapted, in its ordinary condition, for fly, and, when enlarged, for minnow, than for worm fishing. Somewhat about the distance indicated begins water where the worm may be used to advantage, and this description continues up to Earlyvale, where the fishing may be considered to terminate. It may be stated generally of this stream, that from the village of Eddleston downwards, when small and clear, it should be fished in its best parts up-stream with small red worms; but if there be a breeze ruffling its pools, the day mild, and insects on the stream, the fly may generally be used to advantage. If trout will not rise to the fly, the angler has always a pretty safe resource in the worm. When the stream is enlarged, the same remarks apply, if minnow be substituted for worm. For three miles below Eddleston, and up to Earlyvale, about other three miles, the worm will be found the most appropriate lure, and often the only practicable one.

There is some excellent water immediately below Eddleston, and from there to Earlyvale, and about the latter place, we have caught trout eight and ten ounces, but none over the latter weight.

The Eddleston is uninterruptedly connected with Tweed, and has in all about eight miles of fishing water. Salmon do not greatly frequent it, possibly on account of its under portions consisting so much of sand-bottomed pools, not suitable for spawning operations, the only object which would attract them thither, and consequently no great proportion of salmon-fry perplexes the angler here. But in regard to the trout peculiar to the stream, there being excellent spawning facilities, after the first mile or so above Peebles, there is no scarcity of small fish in its waters. Of course, large Tweed trout may occasionally visit it, but the greatest size of those peculiar to the stream we consider not much over one pound in weight. In July 1855, we took, with worm, out of its lower division—that is, between Peebles and Eddleston—several dozen trout averaging five ounces each, and only one of which was out half a pound. On any other occasion we never made a capture in Eddleston averaging over  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. to the dozen, but generally less, though we have occasionally secured trout about ten ounces. It is worthy of being noticed, that its trout are of an excellent quality, and those from five ounces upwards are of a high colour in their flesh.

THE MANOR WATER.—This stream, from the quantities of fish which it contains in the portions of it most accessible from Peebles, though chiefly parr, and trout of a small size, is more generally appreciated than any other in the locality. In addition to its being easily reached, its fishing is nearly uninterrupted by bush or tree—a point of value in the estimation of many anglers, though not in ours. But while it abounds with small fish, especially up to Hall Manor—about five miles from its mouth—large trout are occasionally secured in its pools, and always some good ones—but for each good trout about a dozen of small ones may be expected. It is an excellent stream for worm-fishing, and when reduced, should be fished, up-stream, with that lure. When enlarged, good baskets are often secured with minnow or parrtail, as there are always some large specimens lying about its hollow banks, and in its rougher streams. This description applies to the Manor up to Glenwrath—a farm on the right bank of the stream, about six miles from Peebles. The burn of Glenwrath joins it at this place, a small stream, but which contains a fair quantity of trout, averaging about four ounces, with an occasional fish from a half to a pound-weight. We have heard of trout being caught in it as large as three pounds, but think there must be a mistake, as such a size is far beyond the capacity of the burn to support. We



should say that a pound-weight is the very utmost to which its trout now ever attain. We have caught them from ten to thirteen ounces, but never larger.

Glenwrath being so far from Peebles, the angler, if he start afoot, must be early astir. Yet, by leaving Peebles betimes in the morning, and avoiding haste—a point of great importance, if one wish to make a day of it without hurt to himself—we have passed many happy hours among these upland glens, returning in the evening, with pannier well filled, without experiencing any particular effects from over-fatigue. A great inducement to reach these upper waters is the superior quality of the trout that inhabit them. There are few parr in the Manor above Glenwrath, those, in all probability, keeping near the places where they are bred; and the spawning-beds are chiefly below this point.

The last farm up the vale of Manor is Manorhead, about four miles above Glenwrath. It stands on the left bank of the stream, in a lonely situation about a mile below the top of the valley, with immense hills rising on every side. Close at the farm, Dollar Burn joins the Manor from the left—a small stream containing a great quantity of small trout among its stones and beneath its hollow banks. It is too shallow for large trout to frequent it much. The main stream from where this burn joins it, down to Glenwrath, has some excellent

pools, and fine hollow banks, and here the best trout in all the stream are to be secured. We mean, that though individual specimens may not be so large, their general size and quality are greatly superior to those in any other part of Manor. We think that the general average is fully a quarter of a pound, and numbers may be caught from that size up to a pound-weight. They have been secured here, we believe, up to two pounds, but are inclined to think that that size in these days is of rare occurrence. We never had the luck to secure any larger than about three quarters of a pound, but plenty about seven and eight ounces.

No notice of the Manor Water would be complete without a reference to the wholesale practice of leistering to which its migratory fish are, season after season, subjected. This stream, on account of its fine channel-bottom, is admirably fitted for spawning operations, and is, therefore, greatly frequented by salmon during close time. It is then that the midnight poacher, lighted by flaming torch, and armed with deadly spear, betakes himself to the scene of death, making fearful havoc among his hapless prey. It must be confessed that there is a degree of romance connected with leistering—the hour, the scene, the quick eye, and the unerring hand; but there is at the same time something so thoroughly revolting in the cruel practice of mercilessly slaughtering the almost helpless fish while

engaged in their natural operations, that we never could behold this process of destruction without sickening sensations. The recent Tweed Fishery Act is proving quite inoperative in preventing this wholesale system of destruction. Leistering and netting are as much persisted in as ever, and are certain to be so until some really equitable adjustment of the various rights and interests in connection with the river is effected. As it is, at the season when salmon are worth having, it is a rare occurrence for one of them to effect its escape through the dangers that beset its progress, and reach these upper waters in safety. While the present state of things continues, Parliament may legislate as it may, but either the same destructive process will continue, or the machinery of protection will be so expensively extended as to overbalance the value of its results. We have no hesitation whatever in making this statement; and the sooner selfish parties view things in the same light, and act accordingly, the better will it be for all interested in the matter.

**THE LYNE WATER.**—The Lyne joins the Tweed three miles above Peebles. It is of a high angling character, superior to any other in the neighbourhood, excepting the main river, of course, and is generally allowed to take its place among Border streams, after Whitadder, along with the Leader and the Gala. It possesses abundance of deep

water, where large fish shade themselves securely, and affords, in its fine runs and pools, great variety for the practice of all the lures ; it is also equally appropriate for all, both as regards its description of water and the trout which it contains. At the distance of about four and a half miles from its mouth, it is joined by the Tarth Water. This much of the stream can be conveniently enough fished from Peebles. The best way to take it is to fish up-stream with fly or worm, and down with minnow or parrtail—excellent lures here, and which effectually get rid of parr, so troublesome in this part of the Lyne to the worm-fisher, and more particularly to the fly-fisher. Romanno Bridge Inn is the most convenient station for getting at the mid-waters of the Lyne, and the lower portions of the Tarth. That between Tarthfoot and Romanno is an excellent piece of water, but in which parr, though not to so great an extent, still sufficiently abound to perplex the angler ; and it is only when he reaches Romanno that he escapes, comparatively, from these pests.

There are two burns running into the Lyne, both from the left bank below Romanno, worthy of passing notice. The lower of these enters the stream near its foot, shortly after passing below the bridge on the Peebles road. This is called Meldon Burn. We fished it only on one occasion, and had some good trout out of the under mile and half of it,

along with a great quantity of small fry. We have no doubt that occasionally, after rains, good baskets may be got with worm, for it has some good runs and sheltering banks. The other, called Flemington Burn, runs into the stream between Romanno and Tarthfoot, and is an excellent little stream, containing good trout, but to fish it successfully, a certain amount of water is necessary. It is a dead-running burn, with fine sheltering banks, but little or no broken water; one of those streams improved, but rarely spoiled, by overflowing. It will be found, generally, in its very best condition when the main stream is too large to be of much use.

To return to the Lyne. Immediately above Romanno, a mill-lead diverts the water partly from its ordinary bed for nearly half a mile. The water between the dam-head, in connection with the lead and West Linton, is that which we prefer for worm-fishing, when small and clear. It contains excellent trout, about four ounces each, a fair proportion being about half a pound, while the parr nearly disappear. It consists of nice runs and a good deal of broken water, with convenient pools, some of them overheaded with drooping boughs.

About midway between Romanno and West Linton the stream is joined by a small burn flowing in from the right bank, called West Water. The last two miles of this little stream are worthless,

unless when enlarged, but as the burn is traced upwards to its sources among the hills, its angling character improves. It then assumes the usual characteristics of hill-burns—rapid runs, cascades, and pools becoming pretty frequent. The trout here, in general, are of fair size, and the burn will frequently well repay a visit.

The main stream above West Linton is very small, but there is tolerable fishing for two or three miles up.

**THE TARTH WATER.**—This is a stream differing greatly from the Lyne, and resembles Biggar Water more than any other of which we recollect. It contains beautiful trout from a half to a full pound in weight, and is excellent for minnow-fishing, the deadliest lure among such trout. It is a good fly stream, also, when a little enlarged, or ruffled by a breeze, but it is no easy matter to land the fish without a net, owing to its high green banks; while the weeds and water-plants that beset the side, make the landing of heavy trout all the more difficult. The bridge at Blyth is about four miles from Romanno; and there are about four miles of water from thence down to the junction with the Lyne. This is a stream well known for the quality of the trout which it contains. At the top of one of its branches it is connected, by a mill-lead in connection with a saw-work on Medwin Burn, with that latter stream. The water is taken off from Medwin Burn and given to the Tarth.

## CHAPTER XVI

## BIGGAR WATER, SMALL BURNS, TALLA

*Hotels, &c.*—Broughton, Crook Inn, Tweedsmuir.

ABOVE the foot of Lyne Water the fishing in the river improves ; possibly owing to its distance from populous localities, whereby its fish are less harassed. The water above the Lyne, too, is nearly all staked, to prevent netting. About Stobo there are some noted pools which always contain large trout. Stobo Burn joins here, but it is scarcely worth noticing. Some little distance up, and about two miles below Biggar Water-foot, *Bell's Pool*, a favourite cast is met with. This is just at the beautiful grounds of Dalwick, the property of Sir John Naysmith.

BIGGAR WATER, already referred to, flows past Broughton, within a few hundred yards of the village, in an almost straight artificially formed course, until it nearly reaches Rachan Bridge, about a mile down the stream. Up to the bridge at Broughton, however, there are good trout, the water being of considerable depth, and full of water-plants and weeds, which, however much they may interfere with the pleasure of the angler, afford excellent shelter for trout. These weeds render fly-fishing a

precarious undertaking ; and we would recommend the use of no more than two flies, as, on hooking a trout, loose hooks would be almost certain to get entangled, and a breakage be the probable result. Neither do we much like this piece of water for worm-fishing—the currents between the beds of weeds being so rapid, that the bait is apt to be carried away before the fish have an opportunity of seizing it. But for minnow it is all that need be desired. It possesses every requisite for this lure—depth of water, and force of current—while it contains excellent trout. This piece of water, especially the upper part of it, contains also a large quantity of small trout and parr. It is, however, below Rachan Bridge that the best fishing is to be had. This is a choice piece of water ; but there is little of it, barely half a mile. It offers both fine shelter and feeding, and must often tempt large Tweed trout to forsake their native stream. Here they soon lose certain characteristics, assuming superior value in point of weight and quality.

We may notice a small tributary flowing into Biggar Water from the right bank, immediately above Rachan Bridge, called Holmes Water. The lower portion of it contains a large quantity of small trout, with a very occasional good one, excepting, of course, after rains, when superior fish, from Biggar Water, will often, no doubt, diversify their enjoyments by an occasional excursion up this little



stream. A considerable portion of the water is generally taken from the stream near its foot, by a mill-lead—the dam-head in connection with which is about half a mile up. Above the mill there are some miles of good fishing water, containing tolerable trout, with very few parr. We do not suppose that any very large ones are to be got; still, an angler might spend a day there very pleasantly, and profitably.

There is no other stream of note falling into the Tweed from the left bank, in this part of its course; but there are various fine rattling burns, excellent for worm-fishing, joining it from the other side. The first of these is Drumelzier or Powsail Burn—which is joined by Scrape Burn—both streams of considerable excellence, and which will well repay an occasional visit. It makes its entrance into the Tweed a little above the mouth of Biggar Water. The next of these streams is Hopecarton Burn, which enters Tweed about two and a half miles further up. This is also a nice little burn, but not equal to Powsail. The next is Stanhope Burn, a stream of much greater reputation, which flows into the Tweed about four miles above Biggar Water-foot, and rather more than that distance below Tweedsmuir. Regarding the Stanhope, we copy the following from the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, under date September 1858.

‘STOBO.—FISHING EXCURSION.—Three gentle-

men, keen disciples of Izaak Walton, started on Saturday, the 7th ultimo (*i.e.* August), to practise for the day their favourite sport in Stanhope Burn, each boasting how he would outstrip his neighbour ere the day was finished; but at night all three were found to be nearly equal, both in regard to number and weight—thirteen dozen having been taken amongst them, which, they believed, would weigh over three stones. Not a bad day's work in one burn.'

Now, though the number is greatly under what we would have expected, in another respect the paragraph contains, we cannot but think, a serious blunder; and if any one proceed to fish the burn on the strength of the above statement, we do not hesitate to say he will be grievously disappointed. Even allowing for a considerable quantity of small trout being returned to the stream (which, however, we do not read of), we believe the very utmost size of the trout which Stanhope Burn contains, will rarely exceed two pounds to the dozen; so that eight pounds, instead of upwards of fourteen each, would have been found nearer the mark, *had the produce been weighed*. Such has been our own experience of the burn, and that of friends on whose statements we can depend.

The other burns flowing into Tweed here, are Polmood Burn (scene of Hogg's 'Bridal of Polmood'), about two miles above Stanhope Burn; Harestanes

Burn, about one and a half miles below Tweedsmuir ; and Glenisco, about half a mile below Tweedsmuir. These all contain trout of a like character ; and the nature of the streams is much of a class. They have all the usual qualities of hill-burns—stony beds, rapid runs, cascades, and pools. Our favourite of these three, is Harestanes Burn, which is nearly opposite to the Crook Inn—a little up the stream. It is the largest and the best, and affords fine shelter to trout, among the large, irregular stones that it contains. Of course none of them possess trout to be compared with those of Tweed itself ; nor is the fishing in this part of the main stream much more precarious than in the tributaries, not like what it is about Peebles and further down the river.

THE TALLA, to which we have already referred, is a good angling stream, and, in the last three miles of its course, affords good worm-fishing. The trout here, numerous, as are the parr, are small, though it contains specimens of tolerable size, and many pounders traverse its deeper streams and pools. When the angler is yet three miles from the top of the valley, through which it traces the last four miles of its way, and his eye rests with pleasure on the quiet, tall green hills on the left, and with awe on the wild scar-edged mountain, towering in lofty grandeur on the right, he will shortly observe before him the celebrated Talla linns, like a broad belt of silver, hung down the green mountain's side—a

mountain rising like a stupendous rampart at the top of the vale, and seeming to bar all progress in that direction. As he proceeds still further up the valley, his ear catches the sound of distant waters, and he observes that silvery belt resolve itself into a series of breaks, as the stream rolls and leaps down the rugged gap of the high mountain, into its rocky bed below. Still nearer, and the mystery is entirely gone, but the pleasure, if possible, increased. For ourselves, on a closer inspection, we were too much charmed with what we saw, to note the height, and number of breaks that occur, far less to tell the aggregate height of the falls. But, for the angler's satisfaction, we will state, that at the foot of every particular fall there is a fine deep pool, containing good trout. These, indeed, are difficult, sometimes dangerous, to get at; yet we have scrambled up from linn to linn, angle in hand—now holding on by the corner of some crumbling rock, now clutching at some treacherous root, or the thin branch of an occasional alder tree, scarcely more secure, and thus, through toils and dangers, cleared the heights at last. Should any choose to make the like experiment, we would recommend him to leave his basket, and every encumbrance, at the foot of the linns, for he will find it a trying enough undertaking without these. We should always like him to understand, that the proceeds of his rod will not be in proportion to his toils and the time consumed; and if he

have no object in view, other than the filling of his basket, we would recommend him to leave the scaling of the Talla linns untried.

After the stream accomplishes its freaks among the linns, it dances merrily over a stony bed, for a few hundred yards, where a great quantity of small trout may be secured, and, at choice places—such as a hollow bank, or large stone—an occasional one of from four to six ounces. At this part of its course it receives from the left bank, Gameshope Burn, and shortly thereafter settles into the quiet run and pool. Here we should like to cast our lure upon it, as it winds through a mossy meadow, affording a superior supply of both food and shelter, and where the trout, as may be expected, are more worthy of attention—averaging about four ounces. Here, for about a mile and a half, the stream is famous for the general size and excellence of the trout which it contains.

There is good angling in Talla for two miles above the linns—where it is a mere hill-burn, but having good shelter-places among large stones, and beneath banks, it contains some good trout. At this point the angler is little more than two miles from 'Dark Loch Skene,' a visit to whose wild and desolate shores will well repay the labour bestowed upon the somewhat toilsome journey thither. We may also mention that fine trout abound in the loch, and that it is accessible to the pedestrian from

Moffat, from St Mary's Loch, or from the Crook. An angler, leaving the shepherd's house at the foot of the linns, or even Tweedsmuir, by times in the morning, might well enough take Loch Skene on his way to St Mary's Loch. The only toilsome part of his journey, is from the Talla linns to Loch Skene; and up to this point he should not think of fishing by the way. The remainder of his way is easy—down by the 'Gray Mare's Tail'—then by the Little Yarrow, to St Mary's Loch.

As already intimated, the Talla is joined a little below the linns by Gameshope Burn. This, though small, is a fair trouting-stream—a sort of mountain-torrent, which has its rise on the top of the hills in Gameshope Loch, some three miles from its junction with Talla—a spot bleak and lonely, on the confines of Dumfriesshire. This loch is also worthy of a visit from the angler.

These upper waters, and sources of Tweed, may be conveniently reached by rail to Broughton.

## PART III.

### STREAMS FLOWING INTO THE RIVER AND FIRTH OF FORTH, &c.

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#### CHAPTER XVII.

##### THE EYE WATER, THE TYNE.

*Hotels, &c.*—Ayton, Reston, Grant's, and West Linton  
and Haddington, for Tyne.

**THE EYE WATER.**—This stream, below Ayton, being partially preserved, we need merely say in regard to it, that it contains trout excellent both in quality and size, and is a piece of water where worm may be used to great advantage among the fine mossy stones numerous in the stream. A fall, not very far above Eyemouth, prevents salmon and other migratory sea-fish from getting to the higher parts of the stream, and no parr, therefore, are found above the fall at Netherbyres. From Ayton to Grant's House, there are about ten miles of excellent fishing water. It is well stocked with beautiful trout—those from six ounces upwards being of high colour and superior flavour. All that

water—with the exception, perhaps, of a mile from Grant's downwards—is much alike in character, being greatly buried up by alder and other trees, hazel-bushes, and the like. A mile and a half of the stream immediately above Ayton, though greatly wooded, is not so difficult to get at as that further up. It is about two and a half miles below Reston that the tangled wilderness begins ; but as a set-off, it contains an endless series of pools, and fine sheltering-places, below deeply-hollowed banks, and among old tree-roots. It has no rocky cliff and wooded heights ; but its whole course is between low banks, through meadow-looking plains. Though its trout are of a superior quality, they are of a smaller general size than one would expect to find in such a promising stream. They average about two and a half pounds to the dozen, and are very plentiful. A fair proportion may be caught up to a half pound in weight, but not many over that size. In June 1858, a trout was caught with worm, in a dam-head near Reston, which was said to weigh four and a half pounds, but it is very rarely that one a pound-weight is secured. Owing to the obstructions in fishing the Eye—to which we have referred, whereby a deal of time is consumed in forcing one's way, with rod and tackle, through the almost impenetrable brushwood, and manœuvring past trees and bushes, to get the trout out after they are hooked—though success may always be pretty



certain, progress must necessarily be always slow. Haste will not do here—'the more haste the less speed.'

The stream above Grant's is quite open and easy to command, there being neither trees nor brushwood fringing its side. There are about four miles of it fishable, but after the first mile the trout are very small. But it is exceedingly pleasant fishing the stream, on a fine summer day, in the quiet upland glens, where it begins its wanderings, and forms an agreeable change from fighting with the difficulties that occur below. An angler stationed at Grant's might have a good day's angling, by taking down-stream in the morning, and up these pleasant vales in the after-part of the day.

At all the railway stations on the stream, Grant's, Reston, and Ayton, excellent accommodation can be had; but if Grant's be made the place of stay, it is necessary to communicate with the landlady, Mrs Shearlaw, a day or two previously, to make the accommodation certain. Sometimes the house is filled to overflowing by travellers, and particularly by sporting-gentlemen.

There are various other small streams flowing into the sea, on the east coast; but, being either preserved, or rendered nearly useless by local depredators, we consider it of no advantage to particularise them.

**THE TYNE WATER.**—The Tyne is greatly cele-

brated for the superior quality of the trout which it contains, and is an excellent stream for all the lures. It is, however, so much preserved, that we scarcely know how to advise the fishing it. If the angler can make it convenient to visit its tributaries, about their sources, where they are open, and the main stream above Path-head, up by Tyne Castle, after rains, he may secure some trout, which will only cause him to regret the more that his opportunities of capturing them are so limited.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE ESK.

*Hotels, &c.*—Musselburgh, Gorebridge, Pennycuick, for North Branch.

THIS rivulet is formed by two branches—North and South Esks—which meet in the grounds of Dalkeith Palace, about four miles from the sea. The under part, along with various migratory fish of the salmon kind, contains yellow trout; but none in great numbers. The stream is so much polluted by factories—chiefly paper-mills—that trout have long forsaken its waters to a great extent, and it is not until he ascends the north branch above Pennycuick, and the

south branch above Dalhousie, that any success repays the angler's labours. The north branch, above Pennycuick, contains great numbers of small trout, but very few of any size. It is easily enough reached from Pennycuick; but West Linton is more suitable for the upper waters, where the trout are best. The south branch, which is formed by two burns, is a much superior trouting stream.

Previous to 19th August 1856, we frequently had our attention turned to it, but as often abandoned our purpose of fishing it, on account of unfavourable reports from those who had, in some measure, tested its angling capabilities, and it was not till the above date that we finally determined to prove the matter for ourselves. We found it a stream well stocked with trout of a good quality, but we also found that its course from Temple up to Yorkstone—a distance of fully three miles—is through a wild wooded glen, with many overhanging cliffs and rocky heights, often blooming with deadly nightshade, and various wild-flowers and creepers. Occasionally it is fairly buried up by brushwood and trees. For the greater part of this distance, the angler will need to make his way up the bed of the stream, and will require to cast with the greatest nicety, to avoid hooking on branches and other impediments. If he persevere against these difficulties, he will find this a burn abounding in sheltering stones, beautiful runs, and fine pools, at the foot of small cascades.

altogether forming an excellent accumulation of angling capabilities. It is a fine stream for worm-fishing ; the whole of it may be fished to advantage with that lure, but with fly considerable portions of it would need to be passed over, and it does not contain trout large enough in sufficient numbers to make minnow-fishing profitable. Among all the trout we have captured in this stream, we have had few over a half-pound, but many about six ounces.

We have already hinted that the character of the stream alters considerably at Yorkstone. From there upwards, it is known by the local name of Moorfoot Burn, and flows, for the most part, through open glades ; at all events, there is not now any impediment to cause trouble to the most fastidious angler—if he will cross occasionally from side to side—while the fishing still continues excellent. The chief objection to this piece of the stream lies in its distance from any railway station, the starting-point being nearly six miles from Gore Bridge.

Regarding the stream below Temple Bridge, it is only necessary to say—this being forbidden ground—that from there down to Shanks it flows through a perfect wilderness of tangled brushwood, rocks, and trees, in Arniston estate. We have reason to believe that if liberty to angle here were respectfully asked, it would be granted ; and if the privilege be thought worth having, it is certainly worth asking. The only advantage which this piece of water

possesses over that further up, so far as we are aware, consists in its nearer proximity to the railway stations. As regards its angling capabilities, we do not consider it much, if at all, superior to the upper part of the stream.

THE SOUTH ESK—ROSEBERRY BURN.—Somewhere about a half mile below Temple Bridge, the north branch of the stream—called indifferently Roseberry Burn and West Loch Burn—joins Temple Burn from the left bank; after which they take the name of the South Esk Water. The north branch has its source two miles over the hills, east from the village of Eddleston, in the sheet of water there called West Loch, and sometimes Eddleston Loch. In its lower parts, it greatly resembles the other branch, but above the woods at Roseberry, it flows in fine winding streams and pools through a mossy district, and contains good trout in numbers.

From the rough nature of the under part of this stream, the angler should avoid it when large, as it is then of much too wild and impetuous a character to afford suitable return for his exertions. Moreover, fishing it in such circumstances is attended with some amount of danger; for, on account of the brushwood and trees that border its rugged banks, he will find it impossible to angle from the banks, and must therefore take his chance in the bed of the stream. It is, we think, the roughest piece of water to angle in we ever encountered; and if

one be at all fastidious in his notions about comfort in his sport, this is about the last place to which we would recommend him.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE LEITH, THE ALMOND, AND THE LINHOUSE WATER.

*Hotels, &c.*—Balermo, Leith Water, and for Almond Water, Cramond Brig, Kirkliston, Mid-Calder.

THIS, from Balermo upwards, is now a good angling stream. Since the Water Company, in 1858, constructed a pond on the upper waters of the stream, the fishing below the pond has very much improved, and a larger general average of trout may now be captured than for many years past. In the season of 1860, out of a basket of several dozen trout, Adam Dryden had one 1 lb. 2 ounces, and another 10 ounces weight, while a good proportion were upwards of a quarter pound. The best trout are near the pond. Currie station is the most convenient for getting at the stream immediately above Balermo; but here the trout, though by no means scarce, are shy. We would recommend Mid-Calder as the preferable station. The water

above Leith-head Mill—three miles from the station—is free of trees and all impediments, and is excellent for up-stream fly or worm fishing. From the mill downwards there is some good minnow water, and the trout are quite disposed to take this lure. The pond, we believe, is strictly preserved, and there is not now any fishing above, as the springs have been engrossed by the Water Company. Causeway End, near the pond, is little more than a mile south from the Linhouse Water, and the angler at this point is some miles nearer to Harburn than to Mid-Calder station. We have often crossed from the one stream to the other.

**THE ALMOND WATER**—Regarding the lower portion of this stream—that is, from Cramond Bridge to its mouth—it is only necessary to remark, that below the ironworks there is occasionally tolerable sea-trout fishing to be had, and that the trout peculiar to the stream, between those works and the bridge referred to, are of superior size and quality. This part of the water is not certainly of a nature to tempt spawning-fish to seek the pools; still, it may be supposed that many of them will find their way thither, as there is no other stream near to which they can resort. Sea-trout especially, we should suppose, will be found pretty numerous in these muddy-bottomed stretches, as they do not appear to have the same decided preference that salmon have for the clear stream and channel-bed.

From Cramond Bridge up to the place where the small burn of Gogar joins the Almond, the stream requires no particular notice at our hands, as, from certain restrictions, it is placed beyond the reach of the general angler. From Gogar Burn we find free access to all the water above. That burn itself contains excellent trout, in tolerable quantity; but it is so much preserved, that the unprivileged are never safe in fishing it. Moreover, unless considerably enlarged, or when a breeze ruffles its stilly reaches, it has few attractions for the angler. Between Gogar Burn and Newbridge, there are about two and a half miles of water, consisting chiefly of deep pools and sluggish streams, where large trout are always to be found in numbers, but which, for the most part, are only to be caught with fly, during a breeze, or with the minnow, when the water is large; but this portion of the Almond is not, to our taste, so well fitted for worm-fishing as the water immediately above and up to Mid-Calder. We would just notice here a small stream called Broxburn, which joins the Almond from the left bank, a little below Newbridge. This burn we fished only on one occasion, when it was considerably enlarged, and in a very little time captured, within a mile from its mouth, eight trouts running from 6 to 13½ oz. We notice this, because when, on some occasion, the main stream may be too large for the fancy of some angler, this burn may be



in its best condition. The Almond at Newbridge is within a mile of the Ratho station, Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway.

From Newbridge up to Almondell, in addition to excellent fly and minnow water, streams constantly occur where worm-fishing may be practised to advantage. When the stream is very small, the fishing of it is attended with this inconvenience, the necessity, on hooking a trout, of having often to bring it ashore through a mass of boulders and nearly stagnant pools, which, sometimes, even for the distance of twenty yards, lie between the current and the shore. The general size of the fish renders it dangerous to attempt securing them in mid-water, and the angler has to run the other risk of leading them ashore, whereby many an excellent prize is lost, his attention being so much divided between his own safety and the securing of his captive.

From Almondell up to Mid-Calder, there is rather more than a mile of beautiful angling water, but it is partially, though we do not think very strictly, preserved. It contains some excellent pools, and fine full streams, and runs through large stones and rocks, offering as good facilities for minnow-fishing as may be desired, among trout running from a half to one and a half pound in weight. This piece of water is also most appropriate for worm and fly fishing, and may be fished to advantage with the former, when small and clear. Close at Mid-Calder

it is joined by the small stream of Linhouse, shortly to be noticed.

Between Mid-Calder and Livingstone there is some excellent-looking water, but, unfortunately, seldom containing many trout, in consequence of poisonous matter being introduced by the Breich Water, which makes its junction with the Almond about a mile and a half above Livingstone. But we are glad to learn that for the last year or two this objection has not existed. Above the junction the angling again improves, and continues good for many miles ; but being rather inaccessible, it has no peculiar attractions, unless to the local angler. We may with advantage, then, leave it at Mid-Calder, and turn to the small stream of Linhouse, which joins the Almond there.

THE LINHOUSE WATER.—This small stream, as already stated, joins the Almond Water just at Mid-Calder. For at least the first two miles above its mouth it flows through a rocky wooded dell, wild and picturesque—the wooded cliffs above, the dancing stream below. The bed of the stream here is rocky and stony—excellent for worm-fishing, but the brushwood, creeper-covered rocks, and overhanging boughs, in many places render it difficult to cast the line with precision. Yet, to an expert angler, these will not be found insurmountable ; while the trout are in general superior to those in other parts of the stream, averaging three pounds to the dozen.

At the distance of about half a mile from where it is crossed by a railway bridge, on the Caledonian line, it alters considerably. The rocky heights diminish or disappear, though brushwood continues to fringe its banks ; and in place of frequent turns through shelving rocks, and currents settling into pools of tolerable depth, it flows in easy curves over channel-beds, affording good shelter to trout, averaging rather under four ounces, but occasionally reaching half a pound in weight. Beneath the arch of the railway bridge there is a fine pool, where we have caught trout over half a pound. Again, immediately above the bridge, occurs some water, difficult to command from the rocky and wooded nature of the banks, and the large ledges that have got detached, and interrupt the passage up the side, but which at the same time afford excellent shelter to trout, and where, we have no doubt, there are occasional visitors upwards of a pound-weight. On clearing this rough piece of water—which may continue for about a mile—all is easy work ; but additional precaution is necessary to keep out of sight of the fish, the banks being open and exposed. This description of water continues, with slight variation, up to the linn, a distance of about two miles, where the fishing is agreeable, and the trout are good. Some excellent pools occur at the linn, where we have caught trout half a pound in weight, but which, we are satisfied, contain them of greater

dimensions. From the linn upwards for about four miles, there is no water requiring particular notice. It differs from that below, chiefly, in having fewer large stones, but more channel and gravel beds, suitable for spawning operations, and consequently presents a greater proportion of smaller fish. At the distance of about a couple of miles above the linn, an old stone bridge spans the stream, at the point where anglers, from West-Calder station, usually commence operations. A short distance below there is a meal-mill, on the side of the stream. In the seasons of 1857 and 1858 the mill was out of use, and the dam-head in connection with it was partly swept away. Previous to that occurrence we captured some excellent trout about this spot—they being attracted thither by the two-fold motive of food and shelter, for, in addition to the food which such mills always supply to fish, there are good shelter-places.

The dam-head was reconstructed in 1859, and now forms an excellent harbour for trout. In the season of 1860 it contained many averaging six ounces.

About two miles up, the Lanark road crosses the stream by another bridge, and, almost a hundred yards further, the angler finds one of the best pools in all this stream, which is never without a quantity of good trout, and a great number of small ones. About three-fourths of a mile above that pool, two

burns, which have chiefly constituted the water described, will be found. The largest of these, called Crosswood Burn, constitutes the upper part of Linhouse. In the smaller of these, which joins the other as it makes an abrupt turn from the south, on occasion of floods, which rendered other parts of the stream unavailable, we have taken out small trout as quickly as we could bait our hook, but out of many dozens, rarely getting one over four ounces. On the larger branch, a few gunshots above their junction, there is some wooded water, where there are several cascades and pools, containing tolerably good trout, and where we have frequently caught them of the weight of six and seven ounces. Above this point, for some two miles, we have caught many dozens of trout, but never, in our recollection, any over five ounces; and we even doubt if one over that size exists in this part of the stream. The head of the burn is a basin of tolerable size, supplied, whenever we have chanced to visit it, by a mere thread of water, falling over a rock several feet in height, on the top of which stands a solitary mountain-ash of dwarfed dimensions. To this lonely spot the angler may often pursue his silent occupation, and meet with none, save some chance shepherd, to remind him of the existence of his kind.

We may state generally of this little stream, that it is well stocked with trout of moderate dimensions.

As a worm water, in ordinary circumstances, it is excellent; but every division of it also affords tolerable facilities for fly-fishing, excepting when very much reduced, when it becomes unpleasant from the flies coming in contact with the stones which so plentifully stud its bed. It does not contain large trout in sufficient quantities to repay the minnow-fisher's skill. Possibly, if the under part of the Almond were completely opened up, he, too, may find encouragement to practise his lure.

Mid-Calder station is the most convenient for getting to the under and part of the mid-waters of the stream; Harburn for all above.

In connection with the Linhouse Water, we would notice a small burn which has its origin in Cobinshaw reservoir, flows past Harburn, some two or three hundred yards north from the station—about two miles from where it issues from the pond—and ultimately falls into the Linhouse a hundred yards above where the latter stream joins the Almond, being immediately above the bridge over the Linhouse at Mid-Calder. This burn is very much beset with trees and bushes, from its mouth up to half a mile above Harburn station; but not so much as to impede the operations of the careful angler. Having good shelter-places beneath banks, bushes, and tree-roots, with occasional pools, it is tolerably stocked with trout, a fair proportion of which are from four to six ounces. In the autumn of 1858.

we captured, in it, between Harburn and the loch, in less than four hours, upwards of five dozen trout, weighing about eight pounds, the largest being seven ounces. A friend with us, on the same occasion, killed several trout from four to six ounces.

Since the above was written, we find this little stream well worth an occasional visit. It contains many good trout, some exceeding a half pound ; and also perch in some of its pools.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### THE AVON, THE CARRON, THE ENDRICK.

*Hotels, &c.*—Linlithgow, Kilsyth, Denny, Campsie, Balfron, Fintry.

**THE AVON.**—This stream flows into the Forth about two miles below Grangemouth. There is some good water between its mouth and Linlithgow for about three miles. The yellow trout attain to a large size, and are of excellent quality ; and, in the proper season, salmon, and others of the *salmondice*, frequent it in considerable numbers. It stands pretty high, as an angling stream, in local estimation, and even many Edinburgh anglers are very fond of fishing it, attracted by its superior trout.

**THE CARRON WATER.**—This stream, which figures

so much in Scottish history, rises among the Campsie Hills, and, flowing eastward by Falkirk, ultimately falls into the Forth at Grangemouth. It is not worth the angler's notice, until he reaches a mile above the village of Denny, where it flows through a rocky wooded dell, and contains good trout. The best fishing is from a mile and half below Carron Bridge, on the old Glasgow and Stirling road, to about two miles above. The lower part is rather rough and broken; and Dryden informs us, it is here one of the best creeper and may-fly waters he ever angled in. The insects are very plentiful on its side. A little above this point, it flows in slow windings through Carron Bog, where, unless when enlarged or when a good breeze strikes upon it, it cannot be fished with advantage. When this sluggish piece of water—which may extend for upwards of two miles—is past, the stream again becomes of a rough streamy character, and may be fished to where the Campsie and Fintry road crosses. The best stations for fishing it are Kilsyth (an hour's walk distant) for the under, and Campsie for the upper waters. There is no certain accommodation to be had on the banks of the stream, unless there still be a roadside inn at Carron Bridge. There is a small tributary joins from the left bank about a mile above Carron Bridge, which is well worth visiting by times. It originates in an old reservoir, and contains some excellent trout.



**THE ENDRICK WATER.**—About two miles north from the upper waters of the Carron, among the Fintry Hills, this beautiful stream begins its wanderings. Shortly it performs the ‘Loup of Fintry’ over a precipice, upwards of fifty feet in height. Its course is now through a beautiful vale, the ‘Sweet Innerdale’ of song, where it forms two more falls; and having received the accessions of Blane Water, and some smaller tributaries, on its progress, it flows into Loch Lomond on its eastern shore. Its junction with Blane Water takes place about five miles from its mouth, and the undermost fall of the stream is a little above. Fish from the Loch being unable to surmount this height, there are often found, congregated in a large deep pool below the fall, an immense number of fish of various kinds, among which may be discovered the lordly salmon, along with large trout, pike, perch, and other ‘inferior game.’ Although salmon visit this part of the stream in considerable numbers, and occasionally clear the lower barriers, the Endrick is by no means a salmon stream, on account of its deficiency in that peculiarity of water expressed by the phrase of ‘salmon cast.’ The only good cast for salmon is that at the foot of Blane Water. This tributary presents no obstacle to the progress of fish; but it is not sufficiently large to tempt the ‘Monarch of the Flood,’ unless at spawning-time, to frequent its pools. Neither is this stream of value as a trouting water.

The Endrick, above the lower falls, is a splendid trouting stream, abounding in trout of a good quality, many of which attain to a pound-weight and upwards. An excellent day's fishing may be had from these falls up to Balfron, and a second day's from Balfron up to the small village of Fintry. Above Fintry, the stream is considerably increased by the contributions it receives from a reservoir, which lies on the hills a little to the north. Above this point, the trout diminish in size, but not in quantity, and the fishing is good up to the higher fall, and several miles above.

This stream is very conveniently approached from Glasgow and Stirling by train to Gartness and Balfron.

## PART IV.

### CLYDE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.

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#### CHAPTER XXI.

##### THE MOUSE AND DIPPOOL WATERS.

*Hotels, &c.*—Lanark, Carstairs, Carnwath.

**THE CLYDE.**—The Clyde and its tributaries are not apparently so highly esteemed by Edinburgh anglers as we think they are entitled to be. No doubt, that is partly owing to the comparatively smaller number of trout contained in the rather stilly reaches of its nearer waters, and the distance of its best fishing portions from the city. Against the first of these objections we would place the fact of the superior size and quality of the fish which inhabit its waters; and as regards the other, it is something to reply, that though the distance be great, the liberality of the Caledonian Railway Company in their rates of conveyance, which are more moderate perhaps than those of any other Scotch line, and which contrast favourably in this respect with some others, even to the extent of 35

per cent., lays anglers under a sort of obligation, in duty to themselves, to patronise this rail.

Hitherto we have not found it necessary to notice particularly the angling facilities afforded by the various lines of rail, but those of the Caledonian line seem to be so imperfectly understood as to call for some passing remarks. These observations are peculiarly applicable since the branch-line to Broughton was completed, whereby anglers from the west of Scotland, and from England, may with the greatest facility reach, what we do not hesitate to describe as the best part of all the Tweed for the trout fisher.

Those who have only beheld the Clyde at Glasgow, can form but an inadequate conception of the beauties of this fine river in its mid and upper waters, before it receives the pollutions of a great city, and bears upon its turbid tide the commerce of busy and extensive districts. It draws its first supplies partly from the same range of hills among which Tweed has its highest sources, and partly from a range on the west, called the Leadhills, where also some of the branches of the Nith begin their first wanderings. It is at Elvanfoot, or, at least, where Clyde Burn joins the Deer, or Daar Water, that indications of a *river* begin to manifest themselves. From here down to Symington, a distance by rail of eleven miles, the stream consists of fine runs and deep pools. Afterwards, unlike

Tweed, for many miles it makes a slow and winding course, through low, meadow-looking plains, as if reserving all its energies for Bonnington, the Coralinn, and Stonebyres. It has not the clear sparkling streams, and the charming variety of scenery upon its banks, which render Tweed so attractive and picturesque. Its banks, in general, are marshy, possessing no bold features, and the beds of its currents are dull and muddy. But the districts which it adorns and enriches are pleasingly varied with luxuriant woods; and Tweed, in its whole course, has nothing to compare in grandeur with the magnificent Falls of Clyde. In another point of view, and one of importance to the angler, the trout which inhabit its waters are, in excellence and general size, far beyond those peculiar to its rival stream. And it is in this respect we have chiefly to do with it, and now address ourselves to our readers. This fine river, below its well-known falls at Lanark, and many miles above—up, indeed, to Thankerton, whatever other attractions it has, and they are many and important—does not bear a high character as a trouting stream. Between Thankerton and Lanark, it consists mainly of sluggish streams and deep pools, where, indeed, its trout attain to a large size, and are of an excellent quality; but where they are not, comparatively speaking, numerous. We shall therefore proceed to notice at once the chief tributaries it receives at this part of its course.

## THE MOUSE AND DIPPOOL WATERS.

THE DIPPOOL WATER.—About three hundred yards west from Auchingray station, on the road to Wilsontown, a small burn may be observed flowing down from the moorlands on the north, and winding away in easy sweeps through the lower grounds below, towards the vale of Clyde. This is the Dippool Water; an open stream, winding slowly through rich meadows—possessing many deep pools, quiet runs, and fine sheltering banks, and containing trout of an excellent quality, from a half to a full pound in weight. Above the small bridge, which crosses it at Auchingray station, there are two miles of fishing water; and from the same point to the junction with the Mouse Water, almost six miles more. It is one of those streams which we consider peculiarly adapted for fly or minnow fishing, but not so appropriate for worm-fishing; inasmuch as while it is full of fine full-flowing streams and pools, it has no broken water in all its course. There is, however, this drawback to its attractions—it has few places where its trout can be landed, and the risk of loss is therefore great. Of course a landing-net would obviate this; but without some such contrivance it is often necessary completely to exhaust the trout, and, especially when using fly, this incurs both time and risk. However, its fish are well worthy of some extra time and trouble.

This stream, we think, should either be fished down with minnow, or up or down with fly, according as the wind may be suitable.

**THE MOUSE WATER.**—About two miles north-west from Carnwath station, the junction of the Dippool with the Mouse Water takes place. This latter stream, above their junction, is considerably larger than the other—has more long reaches of still water, and fewer streams. It resembles the Dippool in having little or no broken water, excepting near its head, at Wilsontown. This, the main branch of the Mouse, however, is not well stocked with trout, in consequence, it is thought, of some poisonous matter, from old pits, finding its way into the stream. But the truth is, it is not a good breeding stream, having comparatively little channel-bottom, but is excellently fitted for harbouring large trout, and many such are found in its deep pools. We speak of the stream, in the meantime, as it is between its junction with the Dippool, and for the distance of about three and a half miles upwards—at which point three branches unite. It is at this point where the effects of any deleterious matter, thought to be, carried down by the eastern branch—which winds by Wilsontown, is neutralised by the addition of purer water contributed by the other branches.

In former times, when Wilsontown was a place of note, full of a busy population in connection with

coal and other pits in its neighbourhood, in all probability the poacher would have as much to do with the decrease of trout in the Mouse as any poisonous matter. At all events, now that that population is gone, and the village fallen into decay, the angling qualities of the stream are worthy of attention.

After the junction of the two streams, the united waters bend towards the west, winding for about two miles through the same sort of mossy meadows through which they flowed before they met, then gradually break upon other description of ground, which increases in rocky wildness until the acme of grandeur is reached in the far-famed Cartland Crag. This under portion of the Mouse, of which there are about ten miles, is, with the exception of the upper branches, the only part on which worm may be best employed; but is indeed suitable for all the lures. The trout are excellent, and by no means scarce; and the scenery about the under part of the stream is quite magnificent. It enters the Clyde about a mile below Lanark, and the water between Cleghorn and its mouth would afford an excellent day's fishing.

Cleghorn station is close on the banks of the Mouse, and the best part of it for the angler. In calm weather, with a small water, the only safe fishing is between its mouth and a mile and half above this station.



## CHAPTER XXII

## THE MEDWIN WATER.

*Hotel.*—Carnwath.

THE MEDWIN WATER consists of two branches—the north and the south. The former of these has its sources among the moorland grounds, about six miles north from Carnwath. That cold mossy district it by and by forsakes, finding its way by slow winding movements to the low rich slopes which constitute the Strath of Clyde. At the distance of about two miles from the river, the junction of the two branches takes place; and from this point the enlarged stream follows a sluggish winding course, with occasional runs, until its waters are lost in Clyde. During dry, calm weather, this last portion of the Medwin is a critical piece of water for an occasional angler to venture upon. There is little broken water to afford good worm-fishing; it is not streamy enough for spinning the minnow; and unless a chance breeze favour the angler, his prospects of success are precarious indeed. But with a breeze or an enlarged water, fly or minnow may be employed with excellent results, among trout running from a quarter to a full pound in weight, the average being about eight ounces. Two dozen

trout caught here in favourable circumstances would make no mean basket, while the quality of the fish would be found of a very superior description. On the north branch, between the junction and the Carnwath road, there is about a mile of water having numerous mossy stones, and containing some good runs, altogether an excellent piece of water for worm-fishing, where we have caught fine trout with this lure, few being under six ounces. Just at the road there is a mill, the cauld in connection with which prevents trout from the Clyde penetrating further up this branch ; but those alone peculiar to the stream are of the same superior description, though individual specimens equal to those below are not to be expected. The general character of this branch is that of a slow-running stream, with fine sheltering banks, and numbers of good pools, and altogether much better adapted for fly or minnow, than for worm-fishing. When small and clear, little will be done in it without a favouring breeze. It has the advantage of being very accessible by rail, and can be conveniently reached near its sources from Auchingray station, or about its junction with its sister-stream from that of Carnwath, from both of which it is distant about two miles. There is a good road to it from Auchingray across the moor. Two small burns adjoin from the left bank, which, after rains, are worthy of attention.

Turning to the other branch of the stream, we find it flowing in easy curves, for somewhere about six miles from its junction with Clyde ; and here it is crossed by the Biggar road, a mile beyond the village of Newbigging, and four from the station at Carnwath. All this water contains excellent trout, and affords good fly and minnow fishing, but it is too unbroken for the very effective use of the worm. From a short way above the bridge here to three miles above the small village of Dunsyre, within late years, the angling character of the stream has been greatly impaired in consequence of its fine natural turns having been made to give place to long artificial cuts, while constantly occurring mill-leads make great portions of its bed in dry weather a bare channel, and leave the angler only the dam-heads and a very occasional pool wherein to pursue his sport. Yet in these places there is no scarcity of excellent trout ; and should the angler be favoured by a breeze, or have a sufficiency of water, his chances of success are by no means small. A great part of the stream, about Dunsyre particularly, more resembles a ditch than anything else ; but about three miles further up, at a point where a saw-work has been erected on its bank, a quite different description of water will be found, the stream becoming a mere hill-burn. All above this place—some three miles of water—is shallow and stony, possessing few or no pools, but containing a

great quantity of trout of very diminutive dimensions.

There are two burns which empty themselves into the stream in this locality worthy of a little notice. These spring from one common channel, about two and a half miles up among the heights which rise north of Dunsyre. On parting, they assume very distinct characteristics ; the one choosing a lower richer ground on which to trace its quiet course, and finding its way in a mere ditch through a flat meadow to the stream, after having, at Dunsyre, been put to the purpose of turning a mill ; the other, after a sparkling race over stones and linns, joining its clear waters with the Medwin, just when the latter has finished its mountain course, and flows a limpid stream over a bright channel, a small distance below the saw-works, at the foot of the hill to which reference has been made. Both of these contain trout superior to those in Medwin Burn—that is, in the hilly part of its course. Dunsyre Burn, which we think contains the best trout, cannot be fished with much success unless when enlarged ; but the other, consisting of broken water, with occasional linns and pools, is much safer. But now comes the question, How to get at these waters ? There is no accommodation to be had nearer than Newbigging on the one hand, and West Linton on the other ; for he who calculates on having his wishes satisfied at Dunsyre, had

need form very moderate expectations indeed. We should like to say a few words about this little place. It consists of a manse, sweetly buried among trees; a churchyard; an old church, in the walls of which we observed fixed an iron collar, used in olden times for reclaiming or punishing erring dames; a mill, a smithy, a farmhouse, *the* shop, as the villagers call it, and some dozen humble cottages, chiefly roofed with thatch. We presume it also contains a school-house, but had not the pleasure of having our attention directed to it. These various buildings are stuck down in most picturesque defiance of all order and uniformity, about the hollows and the braes, while the trees, some of which are fine specimens of plane and ash, scattered among them, impart a pleasing tone to this rare picture of rusticity. The burn, it is true, is no great ornament at this part of its course, its bed apparently forming a common receptacle for various kinds of refuse. Such was the place we stumbled on one lovely night in June 1858, after a weary day's wandering. Soon a circle of rosy-cheeked villagers gathered round, and, for a while, it was a matter of consideration what they would make of their erratic visitant for the night, he having put his case entirely in their hands. Having indicated the difficulty, and thus put the reader into possession of the truth, we shall not be too curious in stating *how* the matter was

solved at last. We found shelter, such as it was; but were by no means displeased when 3.30 A.M. gave us excuse for quitting the humble roof, where we were at least treated with unpretending kindness. Experience being a most instructive teacher, we shall impart another of her lessons, picked up on this same occasion. As already indicated, we left our quarters at an early hour—too early for breakfast; but, like sensible travellers, as we thought ourselves, who do not expect a table spread in desert places, we had tea and sugar with us, intending to provide ourselves with ‘the cup which cheers,’ &c., at the first convenient dwelling among the hills we could discover, but, very untraveller-like, neglecting to inquire if such a place existed. Long and anxiously did we look as the day wore on, but the coveted pleasure was not found. Once, indeed, on turning an angle of the stream, fortune seemed propitious; as we beheld a modest-looking cottage, pleasantly situated on the sweet hillside among a few ash-trees! It was a delusive joy, which a closer inspection dispelled; for Medwin Head, as we afterwards learned the place was called, was a mere winter sheep-station, and now—tenantless! Thus had we to wander from early morn to night, making the most of a solitary biscuit, and water from the stream. Still, with our knowledge now, we could go over the same ground and enjoy ourselves to perfection; and, by adopting some of the following courses, an

angler, we believe, would have both enjoyment and success among these rather inaccessible waters.

1st. A good day's fishing in the under portion of the south branch may be had by the angler leaving with the morning train at Carnwath, and fishing up to the bridge at the Biggar road, whence he may return by Newbigging, and get an evening train home.

2d. If he wish to fish the stream, from where it is crossed by the Biggar road up to Garwaldfoot, that is, to the saw-work already noticed, we should stay at Newbigging—where he *can* have accommodation—the previous night, start early enough to enable him to reach Dunsyre (we hope he will not miss it on the way), in time to get something in the shape of breakfast; after which, he can renew his operations until he reach the saw-work, where he will find a very pleasant hill-road conducting at last to agreeable quarters in West Linton, distant about four miles.

3d. To one stationed at West Linton, a good day's angling in these streams may be had by fishing up the hill-burn which enters the Medwin a short way west of Garwaldfoot, up to the point of junction, or, we should rather say, of severance, from Dunsyre Burn, and down the latter to Dunsyre, whence he can return to West Linton, a distance of about seven miles; or he can reverse this method, if more agreeable.

4th. He may leave West Linton in the morning, after an early breakfast, fish from the saw-work up Medwin Burn, cross the hills to the vale of the Linhouse Water, at its source, and proceed thence to Harburn. From the top of Medwin Burn to the top of the Linhouse is about a mile and a half. A good guide in a clear day for crossing these hills, is the road from Crosswood (a farm on the Linhouse, two miles from its top) leading to Harburn station. This he will see in the distance, stretching away in the west like a white line over the moors, until lost in the woods of Harburn, within a mile of the station. This road he will easily recognise by its fore and back grounds of woods, and some tile-sheds at the point nearest to him. This is his road, and he should make directly towards it.

We shall now state a little more particularly what we know of the angling character of Medwin Burn. We have said that between Dunsyre and the saw-works the water is so much led off by mill-leads, that in dry weather there is very little of it to fish, and, without a breeze, it is a mere waste of time. This we fished one morning (June 30, 1858) in such circumstances, from four to eight o'clock, and captured only fourteen trouts, averaging rather over four ounces each. From eight till twelve noon, we fished the Medwin Burn, and captured a great quantity of small trout as quickly as we could take them out and bait afresh; nine dozen remaining in our



possession after some dozen of smaller fry had been returned to the stream. Our whole basket—that is including those caught in the morning in the pools below—was about seventeen pounds, which shews a very small average size of trout. Indeed, there were very few over five ounces, and certainly none over six. A friend of the writer's, however, and a first-rate angler, who has seen this sketch, and who has been familiar with these streams for thirty years, assures us that this does not give quite a fair account of the stream as regards the size of its trout. In the summer of 1856, he fished with fly, after a small flood, between Medwin Head and the saw-mill, and killed three and a half dozen of beautiful trout, weighing fully nine pounds. He admits, however, that when reduced to the state in which we found it, only small trout are to be had in consequence of their falling back into the pools below, where they must remain until the water, getting enlarged, tempts them again to run upwards, or affords them an opportunity of doing so, for in very dry weather there is often not so much water between the pools as would enable a minnow to pass from one to another. We can readily understand this: when the trout have been long confined to these occasional pools, they will naturally leave them on the rove for fresh feeding-grounds as soon as a sufficiency of water enables them to do so. In every stream we believe this is the case to a certain

extent ; but, for the reason stated regarding the Medwin, we believe it is so to a much greater extent than usual. Another reason which the same friend gives for the occasional small size of the trout to be got out of it, is the fact of its being sometimes swept with the net in course of the season.

Near Thankerton, there is a small stream flows into Clyde from the left bank, on which we have often looked with admiring eyes, but never had an opportunity of fishing.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### MID AND UPPER WATERS OF CLYDE AND TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—At all the Stations, and at Crawford John (Duneaton).

THE CULTER WATER, when got in condition, is a fair angling stream. It runs into the river near the station to which it gives its name, on the Broughton branch of the Caledonian Railway. It is fishable for a few miles up, to a point where it divides into two small branches.

From here upwards Clyde presents splendid facilities for angling, both in respect to its description of water, and the trout which it contains. Its

tributaries, also, now get more numerous, and of a superior angling character. The first of these is

**THE GARF WATER**, which flows in from the left bank, some distance below Lamington. This is an excellent trouting stream, and has many miles of beautiful fishing water. About the same distance above Lamington, there is another small stream, also worthy of a visit; and about midway between this station and the next above Abington, a much superior tributary still.

**THE DUNEATON** joins also from the same side. The next tributary from the left bank is

**THE GLENGONAR**, which enters the river at Abington, and is much and justly appreciated. About this part of Clyde, there are a few smaller feeders entering from the opposite bank, but which, when compared with those on the other side, are of much inferior angling note. They are chiefly the Wandel, Camps, and Midlock Waters. These, however, with a little extra water in them, are not to be despised, and excellent baskets may then be secured.

**THE ELVAN WATER** joins Clyde at Elvanfoot station. This is a well-known and greatly appreciated stream, as it well deserves to be.

We now reach the upper waters of the river, which we shall next proceed to notice.

In a desolate region, on the northern slope of a range of hills rising between the counties of Lanark and Dumfries, a small stream begins to trace its

course towards the lower grounds, gathering, on its way, the contribution of various mountain-rills, and which, after a short rapid run, is joined, from the left bank, by another of similar size and character. The first of these is called the Crook Water, the other Deer Burn; and, united, they form the stream called indifferently the Deer and Daar Water. After the junction of these two streams, the Deer Water has a course of about six miles without any but insignificant additions to its volume. At this point, which is about two and a half miles from Elvanfoot station, on the Caledonian line, it receives a considerable accession to its waters in the Powtrail, which joins it from the west after a course of upwards of five miles. About a mile and a half below the junction with the Powtrail, an insignificant stream, but one which custom has allowed to give a name to the noble river we are considering, joins the Deer Water from the right bank, and from this point downwards, the stream is known by the name of Clyde.

The angling in all these waters is of a very high character indeed. There is every variety of water, and the trout are both plentiful and of superior size and quality, particularly after the junction of the Deer Water and the Powtrail. These are two excellent trouting streams, especially for worm, possessing good sheltering banks, and a fair proportion of broken streamy water. Immediately after

their junction, there is a well-known pool of considerable length, containing a great quantity of excellent trout, and where great execution is frequently done with the minnow and the fly. In this locality, an angler is always pretty certain of success. Should he fall upon enlarged waters, the minnow is likely to prove a deadly lure ; and when the streams are found in a low condition, the worm may be employed with excellent results among the broken water ; and, with a breeze, the fly may be productive upon the pools. There is excellent water for every lure, and plenty of fish worthy of them all. This is the best part of Clyde on which to use the worm. From here down to near Thankerton, it is very much alike in character ; and, for fly and minnow fishing, comes quite up to what our idea of such water ought to be—full of excellent streams and pools.

These waters are better known, and more justly appreciated by Glasgow than by Edinburgh anglers ; possibly because the latter have many other excellent streams more accessible than this. The Caledonian line of rail affords, it is true, every necessary facility for reaching the various parts of the stream ; but the accommodation to be had about the upper waters, if an angler wish to stay overnight, is of the most meagre and precarious description ; being only what an insignificant roadside inn, or rather toll-house, at Elvanfoot supplies, and it may be, in the higher parts of the streams, such as a stray angler

may receive at some shepherd's lonely dwelling in the valleys through which the various streamlets trace their way, or at some of the farms lying nearer the bottom of the vales. About the Deer Water there are three of these farms—one on the north bank of the Powtrail, near its junction with the other stream; another, a mile or so above, on the opposite bank; and the last on the right bank of the Deer Water, three or four miles above the junction. We do not know how a traveller might fare at these places, but would hope that ordinary Scotch hospitality might be met with in times of extremity.

One favourable feature in connection with the fishing of Clyde, is the early period of the season at which its trout get into edible condition. This is the case in regard to all those streams which wend slowly through rich soils, and possess a sufficiency of deep water, in consequence, no doubt, of the protection they afford from cold in the winter months, and their always supplying a certain amount of food. In the shallower, swiftly-running streams, the trout are invariably later in getting into condition, and the simple statement of this fact is sufficient to guide one in his early fishing without particularising individual streams. It is only necessary to know that the streams most appropriate for worm-fishing are those in which trout are latest in getting into condition.

We should like to notice here an attempt made in 1855-56 to introduce the grayling into some of our Scotch rivers. The Clyde, about Abington, was selected for a first trial ; and, from the natural adaptation of this water to the nature and habits of the fish, we never doubted the favourable results. For the information of some, it may be well to state that this fish, so well known and appreciated in England, has hitherto been a complete stranger to our northern rivers. In appearance it considerably resembles the trout ; but is rather longer and more slender in shape, and has a small head and prominent eyes. In colour it is of a beautiful silvery-gray, with numerous dark stripes of a longitudinal shape. In an edible point of view it takes precedence, in general estimation, of the trout, and is in best condition in the winter months, when the trout is all but worthless. It is angled for in the same manner and with the same lure as the trout. From 'Walton' we take the following very characteristic notes upon this fish :

'*Piscator*. Why, then, from what you say, I dare venture to assure you it is a grayling, who is one of the deadest-hearted fish in the world, and the bigger he is the more easily taken. Look you, now you see him plain, I told you what he was ; bring hither that landing-net, boy ; and now, sir, he is your own : and, believe me, a good one, sixteen inches long, I warrant him ; I have taken none such this year.

*Viat.* I never saw a grayling before look so black.

*Pisc.* Did you not? Why, then, let me tell you that you never saw one before in right season; for then a grayling is very black about his head, gills, and down his back, and has his belly of a dark gray, dappled with very black spots, as you see this is; and I am apt to conclude that from thence he derives his name of Umber, though I must tell you, this fish is past his prime, and begins to decline, and was in better season at Christmas than he is now. But, move on, for it grows towards dinner-time; and there is a very great and fine stream below, where we are almost sure of a good fish.

*Viat.* Let him come, I'll try a pull with him; but I had thought that the grayling had been always in season with the trout, and had come in and gone out with him.

*Pisc.* Oh, no! assure yourselves; a grayling is a winter fish, but such a one as would deceive any but such as do know him very well indeed; for his flesh, even in his worst season, is so firm, and will so easily carve, that, in plain truth, he is very good meat at all times; but in his perfect season, which, by the way, none but an overgrown grayling will ever be, I think him so good a fish as to be little inferior to the best trout that I ever tasted in my life.'

The following paragraph is taken from the



*Scotsman* newspaper of July 1858. We look upon the experiment as one of great interest to the angling brotherhood :

‘INTRODUCTION OF THE GRAYLING INTO SCOTLAND.—G. A., Glasgow, writes to the *Field*:—The scheme for the introduction of the grayling into Scotland commenced in 1855, on the 5th December that year. Through the kind assistance of our Derby friends, three dozen healthy fish were conveyed from Rowsley to Abington, and committed to the Clyde. I judge, from remembrance of their size, that most of them were fish in their second year, and then twenty months old, though a very few might be a year older than that. The chances, therefore, are, that few would be breeders in the following spring. That was the first branch of the experiment, and it was much desired to reinforce it by the importation of impregnated ova. In the spring of 1857 there were brought to Abington about 20,000 impregnated ova, of which about 2000 were given to Mr Shaw, of Drumlanrig, to make a beginning in the Nith, on behalf of Lord John Scott, who, I may mention in passing, has manifested great interest in the scheme, and has this spring imported breeding fish to further it in the Nith. The remaining 18,000 ova were placed in a small stream prepared for their reception, by shutting off a portion of it with zinc gauze sluices, and running it with quicklime to destroy predatory

fish and insects. The zinc gauze was as fine as could be conveniently used, owing to its liability to slit up; but it proved too wide to imprison the young fish, of which a very considerable number was found to have passed upwards, and thus got into the main stream, from which the preserved stream was drawn, and which runs into the Clyde. I mention the circumstance because it has been the means of throwing doubt on the success of the first branch of the experiment. During last summer, the little stream and pond which it supplies were alive with young grayling; but towards winter they had mostly dropped down into the pond, and after the severe weather, were very little seen. This state of matters continued through March and the beginning of April, and great fears were entertained that they had not survived the winter, the shallow pond having been closed with thick ice for some weeks. In order to ascertain the real state of the case, the pond was run down, and it then appeared that the fish were unwilling to leave some friendly weed-banks that had hitherto screened them; but when forced to do so, they came out in goodly shoals, very pleasant to look upon, and too numerous to leave us anything beyond a vague idea of their number—"hundreds," "thousands," "myriads," being the various exclamations, according to the temperament of the spectator; but by the lowest estimate, sufficient to make a fair beginning for the

Clyde, and perhaps even to give off a few to friends in other districts who may have places fitted for their due protection and increase. To return to the original colonists placed in the river in 1855. It was hoped that some of them might have bred in the spring of 1856; but, as already shewn, the chance was a small one, and during that summer no young fish was seen in the river, although we occasionally heard of old ones being captured, and generally by greedy fishers who preferred a fish in the basket to any prospective number in the river, or the success of any public scheme whatever. All through 1857, also, we heard of no young fish in the river, though there was still occasional news of an old one; and only last month we heard of one being taken weighing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  pounds; but the weight is unauthenticated, and angler's weight is not always strict "avoirdupois." During this spring, young fish have appeared in the river, though not in quantity. They have been caught by so many different fishers as to place the fact beyond doubt; but we have no means of knowing whether they are river-bred, and, therefore, the progeny of the original stock, or if they are merely some of those fry that passed through our zinc grating a year ago. Our hopes point to the former solution; but a good deal can be said in favour of either hypothesis.

We are glad to add to these statements, that the success of these experiments is now placed beyond

doubt. These fish are gradually spreading themselves throughout the mid and upper waters of the river and its tributaries ; and many were caught in 1860 of good size and quality.

It remains to be added, that at all the stations on the river, with the exception of that at Elvanfoot, suitable accommodation may be had—particularly at Abington. The Caledonian Railway offers every facility for fishing the stream and its tributaries, in so far as conveyance goes.

## PART V.

### STREAMS COMMUNICATING WITH THE SOLWAY FIRTH.

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#### CHAPTER XXIV.

##### THE ESK AND TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—Castleton ; Longtown ; Cross-Keys Inn, Canoby ;  
Langholm ; Westerkirk ; Eskdalemuir.

A LARGE amount of the angler's enjoyment is undoubtedly derived from the freedom with which he moves from stream to pool, and pool to stream, and from that ever-changing series of natural panorama which discloses itself to him while in pursuit of his sport. This, along with associations of varied, often of romantic interest, he may fully enjoy among the streams we have already attempted to describe. Yet, when he comes to seek his pleasures by the sides of those lovely streams we come next to notice, he will discover that, for beautiful natural scenery, the Esk and its tributaries are almost unrivalled.

The Esk, in its under portions, flows a clear winding stream over a gravel-channel, and displays

a good variety of stream and pool. Its trout-fishing, however, until the mouth of the Liddle is reached, is not of a very encouraging nature.

THE LIDDLE, its first tributary of angling note, is not greatly less in volume than the main stream at their junction. From Castleton upwards, it is a splendid water for the angler. Some distance above Castleton, the Hermitage joins its waters to the Liddle. This tributary consists, near its mouth, of roughish water, considerably wooded, and contains abundance of good trout, along with sea-trout, and herlings at the proper seasons. In this stream, even a moderately good angler might with safety calculate on taking a good basket of fish. The Liddle itself, and its other tributaries, even to their sources, are fully equal to the Hermitage; and an angler could scarcely find better sport anywhere than among these inviting scenes. The old Castle of Hermitage, the property of his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, has been repaired, and may be seen on the left bank of the stream, a little west from the Hawick road. The Carlisle and Jedburgh road runs up the right bank of the Liddle.

THE TARRAS WATER joins the Esk fully three miles below Langholm. It abounds with excellent trout, which are by no means shy, and is a fine stream for any lure, but particularly for may-fly and worm. It may be well to notice, that in dry weather it very quickly gets reduced, and then

becomes tedious to fish. About the junction of this tributary, the Esk presents some favourite salmon casts; and it is here the best trout-fishing in the river begins, and continues many miles up, if we except some water in the immediate neighbourhood of Langholm. A small stream, locally known as *West Water*, enters the river at Langholm. It was, at one time, of value to the angler; but, owing to drainage chiefly, is not now of importance to him. A little above Langholm, the river is joined by an excellent stream.

**THE EWES WATER.**—This tributary has a number of excellent feeders, all of which abound with trout. Though many of those trout are found verging on a pound-weight each, they are, in general, of a rather small average size. This tributary has the advantage over the Tarras, of being always fishable; at least, for the distance of seven miles up. At this point, its waters entirely disappear, having sunk into the gravel. They reappear about a mile and a half above, where good fishing water again is found. The Carlisle and Hawick road runs up the right bank of the Ewes, and down the right bank of the Teviot. About seven miles above Langholm, the Esk receives

**THE MEGGAT WATER.**—This is a good angling stream, which, about a mile up, is joined by the nice little water Stenhouse. By following up this burn, the tops of the Teviot and Borthwick Waters

may be reached. The best fishing on the upper waters of the Esk, is from about a mile above the mouth of the Meggat, and upwards. Some ten miles above Langholm, the two branches of the stream—the White Esk and the Black Esk—meet. At their junction there is a famed salmon cast, called King's Pool, where, tradition says, perished a Pictish king.

THE BLACK ESK, though much inferior to its sister-stream, is, when enlarged, of good note. The Water of Milk, a tributary of the Annan, may be reached from its banks, at a point about three miles above the junction at King's Pool.

THE WHITE ESK is a much larger stream than the Black Esk, and of greatly more value as an angling stream. It affords excellent fishing to its very sources, and, in addition, has several fine feeders. The Timah Water, a tributary of Ettrick, may be conveniently reached from this branch by the ordinary turnpike road.

Salmon and other migratory fish have free access to the Esk, the Liddel, and other tributaries, but do not appear particularly partial to their waters. Sea-trout and herling are the most frequent visitors—the former of which are always found in their pools from June, and the latter two months later. The average weight of the sea-trout is about two pounds; that of the herling, half a pound. Later in the season, a fish, here called *bills*, which resembles



the round-tail fish of Tweed, and runs from two to four and a half pounds-weight, makes its appearance. It is scarcely ever found in good condition in these waters, and seems to frequent them solely for spawning purposes. These streams are also frequented by chub, called 'skellies,' in considerable numbers. It is generally found from one to three and four pounds-weight. It is caught with the ordinary trouting lures, and affords capital sport on the line, but in an edible point of view, is nearly worthless.

The best stations for fishing these waters are—Castleton for the Liddel, and for the main river and its upper tributaries, Longtown, near its mouth; Cross-Keys Inn, Canoby; and Langholm for its mid-waters; and Westerkirk and Eskdalemuir for its upper waters and tributaries. We may also mention again here the Inn at Moss-paul, on the Hawick road, at the top of the hill, in which the Frostly and Moss-paul burns have their sources.

The nearest railway station to these waters is, in the meantime, that of Floriston, on the Caledonian rail. When the line is fully completed between Hawick and Carlisle, the Liddle Water and the lower part of the Esk will be sufficiently opened up, when it will only remain to complete the facilities of conveyance, and open up the upper waters of the Esk, that a branch-line be made to Langholm. This, no doubt, will also be accomplished, as the

district seems to demand such an extension of locomotion.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE ANNAN AND TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—Annan, Lockerbie, Ecclefechan, Lochmaben,  
Moffat.

**THE ANNAN.**—This is a river of a particularly pure and limpid character, having, with the exception of the lower portion, a clear channelly bottom. It enters the Solway near the town of Annan, to which place, or nearly, the tide flows. Compared with the Esk, as a merely trouting stream, it is considerably inferior. Between its mouth, and where the last tributary joins, there are about three miles of rather rough-bottomed water, a good deal angled in with largish flies for herling and sea-trout, which are very plentiful. There are also pike, but not to the same extent, there being evidently too much of the rapid for that still-water loving fish.

**THE MIEN WATER** is a small stream of little note which flows near to Ecclefechan, and joins from the left bank. The Annan partakes of the same character, as below from this to the next tributary, which joins from the same side, called

**THE MILK WATER.**—This is a splendid stream for trout and herling, and affords many miles of excellent fishing. It is considerably wooded for about two miles from its mouth, but not so much as greatly to effect its angling. Lockerbie and Ecclefechan are equidistant, about a mile from different parts of the stream. From the Milk up to the Dryfe Water, the Annan affords most superior angling, presenting a series of splendid stream and pool, containing abundance of excellent trout. The good yellow trout, however, can only be secured with the minnow, and, in spring, with ordinary trout flies, for fry are so plentiful that any lure they can make anything of is seized on at once, to the annoyance of the angler, and often to the destruction of his sport.

**THE DRYFE WATER** is a smaller stream than the Milk, and also inferior for angling, but still well capable of repaying care and skill. Immediately above, the river is joined from the opposite—right—bank by

**THE KENNEL WATER**, which, about two miles up, receives the Ae. This is a fair trouting stream, greatly frequented in season by salmon, and swarming with fry. This tributary is nearly as large as the Annan at their junction. The Ae Water is much of a class with the Kennel, which receives it. Above the road leading between Dumfries and Moffat, the fry are less plentiful, and this is the

best part of the Ae for securing a basket of fair trout.

Returning to the main stream—from the Kennel, and about six miles up, no other feeder joins. This part of the Annan is fully superior for trout-fishing. It is joined here by the Wamphray Water, a stream of no great repute. About other three miles up, it receives the Evan and Moffat Waters, one from either side, and the latter larger than itself.

THE MOFFAT WATER has its source in 'Dark Loch Skene,' but soon belies its origin; for it is a stream beautifully clear, greatly frequented by salmon at close time, and swarming in summer with fry as well as good trout. The minnow and may-fly are the best lures for escaping the fry and securing better prey.

THE EVAN WATER is superior to the Moffat in regard to trout-fishing. It comes from the hill, from the opposite side of which Little Clyde takes its rise, and consists of rough streamy water. It contains excellent trout, with few fry, and affords about ten miles of good fishing.

Above the junction of these two last-mentioned tributaries, the Annan is not of much value to the angler. It is greatly infested with fry; and, having few sheltering places for good trout, it is not much frequented with them.

The Beattock station, on the Caledonian rail, a mile from Moffat, is the best point for getting at the

upper waters of the Annan ; and, for the lower parts of the stream, there are very suitable quarters at Lochmaben, Lockerbie, &c. At Lochmaben there are nine lochs full of fish, such as bream, pike, perch, and others, none of which are much cared for by Scotch anglers.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE NITH AND TRIBUTARIES.

*Hotels, &c.*—At all the Railway Stations.

**THE NITH.**—This river enters the Solway about ten miles below Dumfries. There is a little fishing below Dumfries—where the tide flows up to—for salmon and herling ; but none for yellow trout, excepting in a small tributary, commonly called the Glen. An occasional basket may be secured in this small stream, particularly in one of its upper branches.

The best part of the Nith for good trout-fishing—for which, indeed, it does not rank high—is some distance below and above Sanquhar. It has, however, various excellent tributaries, the best of which is

**THE CLUDEN WATER,** or—as it is named above its junction with the old water, a good stream—the

Cairn Water. It joins the river a little above Dumfries, from the right bank, and is the largest feeder of the Nith. Up to a small village, Minnihive, there are at least ten miles of excellent water, containing a fair quantity of good trout, with not many fry. The under part of the stream contains numbers of pike of rather small size.

There are two tributaries running in from the left bank, the last of which joins the Nith below Thornhill; the other about two miles above the former, is an excellent stream for trout, and offers several miles of good angling water. The latter, which runs past the village of Durisdeer, is of inferior note.

The next tributary of the Nith, which joins from the right or west bank, is

**THE SCAUR WATER.**—This stream consists of two nearly equal-sized branches, which unite about three miles up from its junction with the river, a little distance below Thornhill. This is an excellent stream, but the trout, in general, run of a rather small size.

The river is joined a little distance below Sanguhar by

**THE EUCHAN WATER,** and above by

**THE KILLO WATER,** both from the right bank; and in the immediate neighbourhood by

**THE CRAWICK,** from the left bank. These are all good streams; the last named, in particular,

contains excellent trout, and is otherwise a good stream for the angler.

From Sanquhar up to New Cumnock, the Nith offers really good fishing, with the exception of a small piece, infested by pike, below New Cumnock—a bit of dead-running water. It is here joined from the south by

THE AFTON WATER, a stream rendered interesting by other than angling associations, and well worth a visit by tourist or angler.

The Nith and its tributaries are conveniently approached by the Glasgow and South-Western rail from one direction, and from another by the Caledonian rail to Gretna, thence per above line; or rail to Beattock, and coach to Dumfries. There is abundance of accommodation to be had at all stations on the stream.

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## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE WATERS OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT AND WIGTONSHIRES.

To the west of the streams we have noticed, there is another class of excellent waters—those of Galloway and Wigtonshires. These are chiefly the Urr, the Ken, the Dee, the Fleet, the Cree, the

Bladenoch, and the Luce, and many others of lesser note, along with their fine accessories of loch and tributary. These, chiefly from want of railway accommodation, have hitherto been little visited by anglers from a distance. That want now will be speedily supplied by the line of rail in course of rapid progress, continuing that from Dumfries to Castle-Douglas, from the latter point to Port-Patrick. This line will intersect the various streams at convenient places, and entirely open up the districts to tourist and angler, while better accommodation otherwise will assuredly follow. It is necessary to observe, that many of the streams and lochs, particularly those visited by salmon and sea-trout, are reserved by the proprietors; but we would here append a remark already made, that it is very rarely indeed that a stranger is refused permission to pursue his sport, if he proceed about it in a proper manner. Yet these considerations render unnecessary, or rather impossible, any very satisfactory notice of these waters in the meantime, and we mean to defer a more particular description of them until the changes and advantages that will certainly follow on a completion of the line of rail, manifest themselves.

**THE URR.**—This river is very conveniently reached by rail from Dumfries. Dalbeattie station is near the point where the tributary of that name contributes its supplies. This stream consists



of two branches, one of which issues from Loch Milton, and joins the other near Kirkgunzean, another station on the line. In addition to the Dalbeattie, the river has many feeders of less importance. Its source, however, may be said to be in Loch Urr, distant in a nearly due north direction, twenty-six miles from its mouth. This loch is celebrated for the large size of its pike, as well as for the superior size and quality of the trout which it contains. Its situation is bleak and lonely, and renders it very inaccessible. The river is frequented by sea-trout in considerable numbers, and occasionally by salmon; but like many other streams, it is apt to get very much reduced in dry weather, by which its fishing becomes uncertain.

**THE KEN.**—This river draws its first supplies from the same group of hills from which the Nith receives a large proportion of its waters. After a course of several miles, it is increased by contributions from various lochs and numerous streams, the chief of which is the Deugh Water. Some few miles below Dalry, a good angling station, and near to New Galloway, it expands into a lake several miles in length, but of contracted breadth. The pike in the loch are celebrated for their very large size; and the head of a monster one, captured in it with the fly, is still preserved in Kenmore Castle. The fish was said to weigh seventy-two pounds, and we believe those who have beheld its head, find

no difficulty in realizing its otherwise gigantic proportions.

The various lochs and tributaries communicating with the Ken, contain excellent trout in great quantities, and pike and perch are generally plentiful, particularly in the lochs.

Loch Ken merges into Loch Dee at the point where the river Dee joins its waters. The combined waters, on issuing from the under lake, bear the name of the river Dee. There are about twenty miles between Loch Dee and the mouth of the river, and this water is much visited by salmon and sea-trout. Above the lochs, the Dee is of inferior size to the Ken, but it affords about twenty-five miles of excellent fishing-water. It has also communications with several good lochs, the chief of which are Loch Greenock, near the foot; and Loch Grannock and Loch Dee on the upper part of the stream. The railway in construction passes between Loch Ken and Loch Dee.

THE FLEET is a stream much inferior to those just noticed. It consists of two branches, the eastmost of which has Loch Fleet at its head. Both branches receive various feeders, and the main streams, with these tributaries, are well stocked with trout, though chiefly of a small size. The railway crosses the upper part of the stream, and the village of Gate House is near its foot. Migratory sea-fish cannot now ascend the stream above this village.

**THE CREE.**—This is a greatly superior river to the preceding, and as a salmon stream, is of considerable value. It possesses a great variety of excellent feeders, and communicates with many lochs. The chief tributary is the Monnick, which is larger than the Cree at their junction, and an excellent trouting stream. This tributary receives the contributions of Loch Neldrichen, through Loch Trool. Both of these lochs form each a fine sheet of water, and contain some large trout of excellent quality. The Cree above its junction with the Minnick has several fine feeders, and several lochs contribute their waters to it. Loch Mean is at the top of the stream, and Loch Cree occurs immediately after the junction with the Minnock. Newton-Stewart, a projected railway station, is a few miles up from where the river discharges itself into Wigton Bay, and is an excellent station for commanding the lower waters of the river. Salmon and sea-trout ascend the streams in considerable numbers up to this point, and occasionally penetrate many miles higher. In the upper streams and tributaries the trout, peculiar to the streams, are very plentiful, and are sometimes caught of superior size.

**THE BLADENOCK.**—This is altogether a stream in Wigtonshire. It affords many miles of good fishing water, and has also a number of lochs contributing to its volume. Malzie Water, which proceeds out of various lochs about Mochrum, joins the stream

about five miles from its mouth. About other five miles up, it receives the Tarff Water at Kirkrowan, another projected railway station. The Bladenock, like many others of the streams in this district, originates in a loch—that of Loch Maberry. The other stream remaining to be noticed is

**THE LUCE WATER.**—This stream is formed chiefly by the junction of two branches, which takes place about six miles up from its mouth at the village of New Luce. The last branch is called Cross Water; the other—which, about four miles up, consists of two pretty equally sized branches—is designated Main Water. This stream is much frequented by sea-trout. It also contains good yellow trout in quantities. Its lower fishing is easily commanded from Glenluce, a railway station in prospect; and its upper waters and tributaries are conveniently got at from New Luce, which, as already stated, is placed at the point of junction of the Cross and Main Waters, on the left bank of the stream.

We regret that the notice of these streams should be so meagre, and, it may be, so unsatisfactory; the more so, that in pursuing his pleasures among them, the angler is conducted to scenes of great historical, and often of romantic interest. But it is better to defer descriptions which are liable to almost certain and immediate change or modification, and to withhold statements which may be of only very temporary

utility, and afterwards positively calculated to mislead, than to venture on a more detailed description in doubtful circumstances. Scrupulous exactness must ever be the first condition of such a book as the present ; and this it is better to observe than be tempted by any inducement into what might prove deceptive.

And, now, having wandered together over many a mountain-height, by many a sparkling stream, it comes at last that we say adieu ! Yet it may be that we shall meet oncè more, by other lakes and streams, yet unvisited by us, and there renew our friendship. Till then, if ever we meet again, farewell !

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