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Parts of some pages were photographed from the Manuscript Book, and others, where the handwriting was difficult to read, have been typewritten

The Manchester Anglers Association

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Contents

"On the top of the hills at a far off station in Norway [where] there is one poor house and nothing more. It is from three to four thousand feet above the sea, up among hills that are seldom without snow, and as godforsaken place as you might wish to see.

Twenty years ago I fished the stream that flows by it, for a day, and since that time, I have had a casual half hour once or twice there, but that is all. Last year however, as I was staying near to it as it is possible easily to stay, I determined to renew my acquaintance with a place associated in my memory with one of the best day's fishing I ever experienced.

How familiar has the way up to Breistolen become! For, for if I had not fished it often during the last 20 years I have ascended its height frequently enough to be as familiar with every object on the road as with the shops on Market Street.

On the day I about to try to recall I have with me one companion my brother who has not been to Breistolen before, and we started off by 8 o'clock in our cart, attended by our faithful henchman Knut and with all the anglers' paraphernalia, including a pocket lunch. Were it not for this impedimentum we might just as well walk, for the road is a hill-side, and we shall be obliged, whether we like it or not, to tramp three fourths of the way, while the pony slowly trudges upwards, bearing all the weight of the empty "kerra" on his shoulders—But I am anticipating.

We are not yet at the brat bake as the Norwegians call it. We have two miles of fine flat road to drive before the ascent begins, and right well do both of us know that those two miles.

There is the first pool above the great foss, which is the first part of the river we pass, it is divided by a little stony island into two parts, and on one side there is a fine deep river that will turn something out for us on any of our evenings which we usually spend up the water here. A little further on is another long river with a rough stone wall by one side of it where there must be trout if anywhere, and so on. Every hole, every river, has its story to tell, and as we pass, we point out **that** as being the place where I lost the big one, or **the other** the spot where I was broken to smithereens, or even sometimes it is "where I landed that fish last night." Still further on the road gives a sudden twist to the left and the rocks with it, for the rocks follow the road, or the road the rocks and the river sticks to both. Just at this corner there is a very poor cabin, backed up against the rocks, as many of the poorest places are in this country, just as we find them in the poorest districts of Ireland. In that cabin there live an old woman and her old man, with whom I have scraped an acquaintance. Once I was out here looking for pictures with my camera, and asked the old woman if she

would allow me to take the photograph of the most beautiful object I could see thereabouts—herself. She consented—Norwegian peasants are delightfully polite to cheeky insolent Englishmen as we are, and I photographed her. I may say the photograph did not turn out well, it didn't deserve to, but the good old lady when it was taken asked me if I would like to hear her play "Davy's Harpe", which above all things in the world I would, of course, I would. So out she brought a most wonderful and fearful instrument which it passeth my wit to describe. Suffice it, that it had about ten metal strings which were stretched on a long straight ant and narrow board and they were adjusted not only by pegs as violin strings are, but by moveable frets, which made the instrument so complicated as to put it quite beyond my comprehension. However, with a quill bound on one finger, she picked out an air by drawing the finger towards her, and put in a resonant base by passing the smooth side of the quill over the whole of the strings by a backward stroke of the same finger.

Of course I remembered the Harp, so on first passing the cot last summer I called to see the old lady and to ask how Davy was. She was very proud to be remembered and muttering many things I could not understand a word of, brought out the harp again and treated me to another time. Then one night (and now I think of it, it was the evening after my visit to Breistolen, which place we are slowly making our way to) just as it was getting dark, at about 8-30, I took the old lady a basket of trout. I knocked at the door and soon found that the ancient pair had retired to rest, but the old woman got up, showing me that she slept in a pair of dirty drawers, a shirt tucked into them and a night cap, and when I told her I had brought her "nogle faa fiske" she smiled sweetly, took the basket and soon returned with the empty pannier and gave me thanks and god nat.

From that time when ever I came in sight the old lady waved her hand to me and wished me "good fishing"

But we must get on, though the thought of the river whose banks rise before my eyes, as I write, tempt me to tell of the triumphs here and the disasters there.

Now we are among the birch trees, quite a plantation of which we have to pass through before reaching the bridge. "But what is the mater with them Knut? they are usually beautiful with their delicate foliage now there is not a leaf on them". "See" said Knut "they have cut all the twigs off and tied them up in bundles there in the trees." "So they have. What is that for?" "It is to feed the goats and sheep with in winter" was the reply and that is the sort of provender those animals get when all this glorious valley is under snow. "Is there much snow in the winter Knut?" I said one day. "Oh dear yes from November to March we cannot see the river at all, it is all snow and ice." That would seem incredible to any one who has seen this glorious torrent of a river, but it is unquestionably true.

But here we are at Borlo Bro where is a quiet collection of farms and where our road turns sharp to the right and over the bridge, begins immediately to ascend a hill at an angle of about 40 degrees. This we must slowly crawl up and look well after our boots, our nets and our creels, or we shall miss some of them by we get to our journey's end. On and on and up and up for half an hour or so, through birch woods and rich fields of grass.

As we are reaching the end of the wood we hear the boom of falling water, and if we will take the trouble, which we do not always do, to climb the fence and go forward a hundred yards or so, we come in sight of a foss of great magnificence but in this country one comes to care nothing for such things they are so frequent.

Now we can ride for a few hundred yards, then we must walk again, always going upwards. The river, the one we are to fish, a good deal higher up still, is far away to our right, a mere streak of tumbling water, among rocks and boulders and fosses. So we go on and on, higher and higher, until instead of looking up at the mountains and their snows, we begin to look down on them. All trees have disappeared now, and we seem to have reached the last slope. It is so, by we top that hill, Breistolen will be before and close to us.

It is a wild weary waste now, rough coarse grass mixed with the innumerable berry bearing shrubs which are so curious a featured of Norway mountains, are in the foreground, half grassed low hills confine the distance, and streaks of snow run down into the crevices which the sun does not catch. It has taken us two and a half hours, doing the best we could to get there and it is not much to look at now we are here.

The station is a little black painted house, containing, apparently, not more than 4 or 5 rooms, but a larger house here, as everywhere, is in course of construction, and the next time I am up there it will no doubt be ready for half a score visitors. There is no one about so we enter the tiny hall from which the rooms of the house open, and take the one to the left which we remember to be the right one if such a contradictory statement may be allowed, soon the woman of the house comes in and promises that she will have coffee and what else she has, ready for use at 4 o'clock.

We wished to go on about two miles before commencing to fish, so that we might fish down and always be getting nearer the point at which we should have to meet in the afternoon, but as Knut wanted the horse to rest for half an hour, we put on our waders, sitting on the steps of the new house to do it and then walked down to the two or three magnificent pools there are at the rear of the house some 200 or 300 yards away. Here I have caught a good many beautiful fish before, and I knew there was a good chance of our making a fair start there. I knew wrongly however. I remembered the lie of each pool perfectly well, and covered every part of them with the fly, but not a touch did I get, nor did my brother. This was a dreadful start and I began to regret bringing a stranger up to this wild dreary place, in the somewhat wild dreary weather we were experiencing.

It was with slackened step and blunted expectation that we commenced to mount the rough turf that lay between us and the house, but Knut was ready for us and after selecting the things, including mackintoshes, to take with us, we set off to the foot of the first hill and after walking up it we were able we were able to keep our seats till we got to the appointed spot at which fishing was to start.

There were several soeters passed on the way and large flocks of sheep and goats, tinkling all about, with the hoarser bell of the cows putting in their discord bass with every movement of the animals. After the soeters were passed we were really in the wilderness with nothing but rough moorland and snowy hills around us the latter now very low for we were nearly at the waters head indeed. I fancy the lakes from which the river proceeds must be one of those Geographical curiosities which are said to exist in Norway where a river flows from each end.

Our two or three miles drive brought us to a little bridge, and here I took one side and my brother the other. It was a dull windy day, and as my brother could not throw against the wind at all, I took the lee side of the stream which was the one over the bridge.

Our rods were, of course, ready having been used already for the fishing lower down, and my brother was at the water side in a moment while I was crossing the bridge and getting down the rough ground to the water's edge. When I got there I found that his rod was up and the point vibrating and he gave me a shout as I came down the other side of the first pool.

I fished three flies all hackles, a red for the point, a speckled fly made from the back of a pheasant for the first dropper, and a black hackle with a wee bit of tinsel on it for the top dropper. To my first throw I had a rise which I missed, but the fish came again and was caught to the second. Then I had one or two out of the same pool, and through the roar of the stream I was just able to shout congratulations to my brother who had been engaged in the same way on his side. The fish were not large though, how could they be coming at this speed! They were about three to the pound, and that size as you will hear, if we keep on to the end and they continue to be.*(Sic)*

The stream here is a very fine one for fishing; there is a good deal of rough water but more than half of it is fishable. It is not very large, varying from perhaps 30 to 50 yards wide, but there is no place where it can be waded across, with stockings at any rate. This is really the perfection of size, there are some places out of reach, that you would no doubt be glad to get at, but the other man can fish them, so each side has its own advantages. It was about 11 o'clock by we began, and we had to meet again at Breistoler again at 2-30 and by now my basket was beginning to exert an unpleasant amount of pressure on my shoulder, so that I was glad whenever a pool came that I thought would take a few minutes to fish, to take off the basket with its depending mackintoshes and fish free of its weight.

A high up stream like this, is in some respects very easy to fish. There are no trees. There is not one within miles indeed of this---and no weeds. Unless you stick on a stone you never get fast, but the wind in your face will certainly tie you all in a knot now and then, and the shortest way out of it is to sit down on the grass and take your time about the unravelling. It is better perhaps never to have a tangle and I have heard of men who never do, but those men I take to be what the Scotchmen call leers.

By this time I did not know how far down the stream I had got nor what has become of my brother, for I lost him pretty early. The fish did not keep coming every minute, as they started, but they came quite often, enough for reasonable people and at one o'clock I sat on a tuft to eat my lunch. How crowded every tuft and every hollow is with shrubs and plants, most of the latter now (it is August) bearing berries. There is a pretty little berry like a tiny apple called in England cow-berry or wortleberry, in Norway tyteboer, growing in thousands or millions all about, then there is a tiny berry perfectly black the size of a small currant, growing here and there in patches and bearing fruit in the greatest profusion. This is called treklingboer and is Crow-berry here. Either of them you may pull by the hand full and I hope they were not unhealthy eating, for I ate quarts of them. Then there is the Cranberry and the Wimberry the latter of great size and quality and last of all the moelteboer that we call Cloud Berry, but unfortunately this year the

summer has been too sunless to ripen them and Knut told me there would be none this season. There are any quantity of the plants up at Breistolen

There are not many flowers, a few Bog Aspodels an occasional tuft of the Tuffted Pink, but not much more. Wild animals there are none, but a stray ermine or two and there are next to no birds.

These observations are taken during the eating of lunch, and that finished I resume fishing by a very fine pool that I cannot reach unless I wade out to an island bank of stones, which I proceed to do leaving my basket etc. on this side. I soon have a fish and then two at once and one or two more odd ones and I might have stayed an hour here, had I had time to do it, but the meeting time is fast approaching and I do not know quite how far I am from the place, so I go on rapidly downward, taking a fish here and there with my basket on my nearly broken back, for including basket and mackintosh I have at least 14 pounds on my back now, and am thinking what a fool I was not to ask at the station if they could find me a boy. But thank goodness here comes Knut, to see how I have done. "Oh pretty well Knut but my back's broken" "Let me feel the weight, he says and I gladly take the thing off, "I think I had better carry it for you" he adds and the reply is that I should be much obliged if he will. I had to lie on back in the grass for a few minutes to rest, and then I started again to the great delight of the good natured Knut and after adding two or three to his burden, we come in sight of the station, a mile or so away and on fishing the last run and it looks like the best, I soon have a fish evidently heavier than I have touched today and Knut prepared to net it. He is below me on a stone well out in the stream, and I let the fish drop down to him. In goes the net, he misses and then oh horror the fish goes past him, turns round by the stone and the cast enfolds him! Was ever such a mess! I shout to him to hold himself still and getting down to him and break off the two droppers which are fast in his clothes and then take hold of the line to pull it from under the stone, very soon finding that the fish is still on. it was a cowardly thing to do, but we caught that fish and put him in the creel, and he was the biggest of the day weighing just a pound.

That finished us and we slowly walked back to the station one of us at any rate full of content and the delightful weariness of a hard day. When we count out I have 29 fish weighing over ten pounds nett, and my brother has 27 weighing eight pounds.

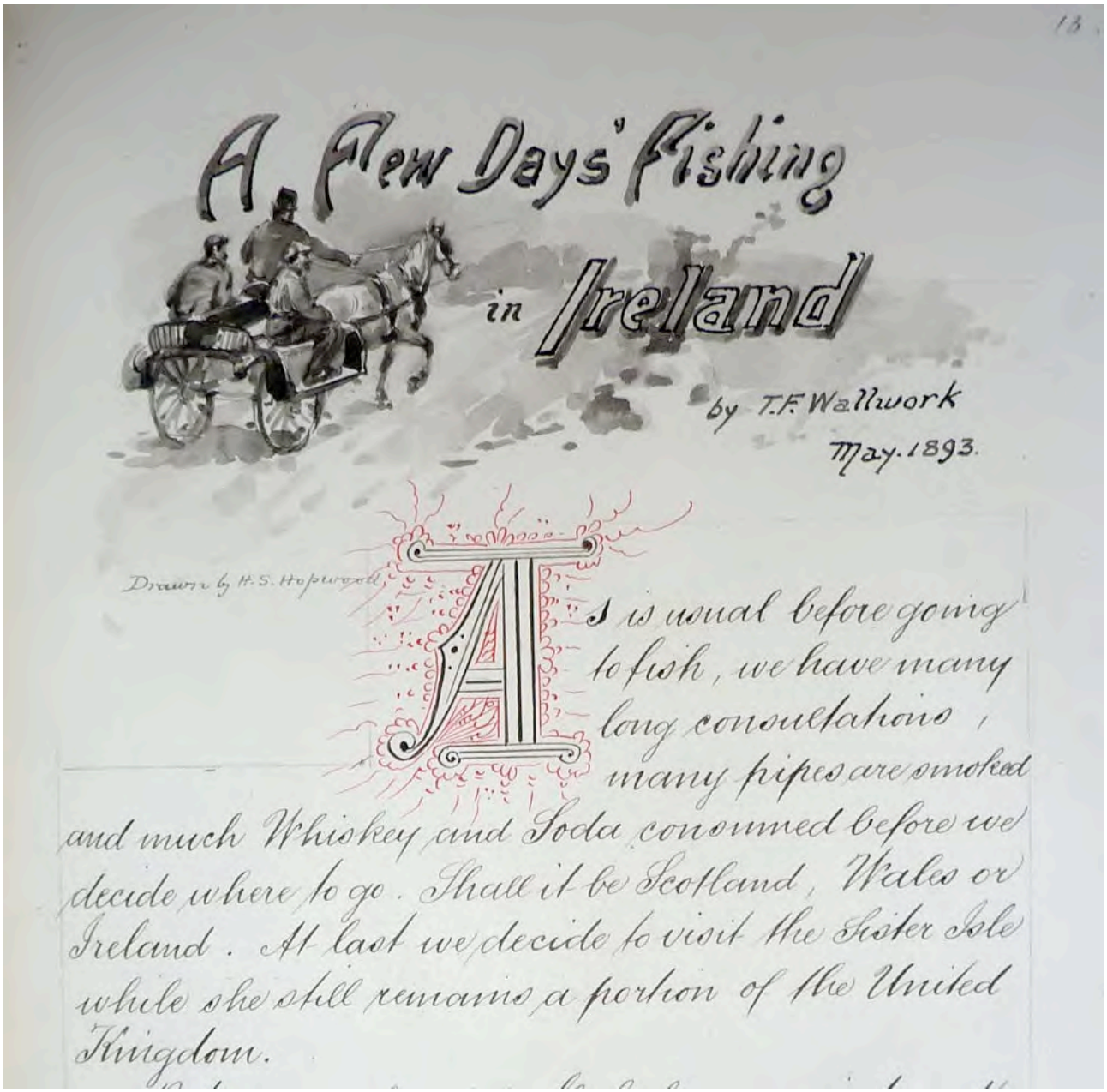
The good woman of the house brings us our coffee with a big Gruyere cheese, brown bread and biscuits charging us a Krone for the lot, which she explains is 40 ore for each of us and 20 for Knut.

The horse is put to in a jiffy, for there is only a peg to put through in each shaft, and we set off home going at about twice the speed we came. Knut's a boy to drive down hill, as I know from old experience, so I gave him the reins which the horse at once found out.

Well, we have had fishing enough for one day, but after dinner Knut persuaded me to go down to the main stream with him for an hour or two, which I did from 7 to 9. I was not very anxious about it, but we got a fish now and then coming when I thought we had walked far enough, to a fine pool, which Knut asked me to wade out to and try. It was as much as I could do to reach the island, at the foot of which was a fine spit of sand, that one could wade along for some distance, when it became so sharp and so steep that I thought it unsafe to trust it.

I have not said anything about the colour of the water of the two streams we have fished today but the thought of this pool reminds me of it strongly. It is the most delightful green or blue. I don't know which probably both, like the gleam of the neck of a peacock. However it is a colour where the water is deep, that is worth going to see, and it was to one of these deeps that Knut had guided me. I got two smallish fish here as the darkness began to come down and then had a better rise for (from) a fish as brave as these Haeg fish are. Out spun the line like lightening, for I was on the sandy ridge, throwing right down the pool and I soon saw that I should lose the fish. I had walked out as far I dare and the barrel of my reel was getting uncovered in places. I could not swear that the line was fastened and even if it were it must be smashed. I might as well pull him up as that, so I gave him as much butt as I had (it was only a little slender cane rod) and the very last inch of the line paid out. It was a near touch, but the fish began to give way, I recovered enough line to make matters safe and had to back along my sand ridge to keep my line taut. The subsequent rushes were not of any importance, but while they were going on Knut called out asking if he should come through the water to use the net. I told him I should manage easily enough myself and bye and bye got my prize into the net, not a monster, but like Mercutio I felt that it was enough. The fish weighed a pound and three quarters when we got him home and I had eight others weighing three pounds and a half.

This finished the day. There is nothing stupendous about it. In the same place you might have had three days a week like it and the other three a good deal better, but I confess it is a day good enough for me. I have not recorded the doings of the best day I had but have selected this one because before this Association I have not touched on this upper Breistolen one before, while the other and greater stream I have told you about until I am as tired of the telling as you can be of the hearing."



"As is usual before going to fish, we have many long consultations, many pipes are smoked and much Whiskey and Soda consumed before we decide where to go. Shall it be Scotland, Wales or Ireland. At last we decide to visit the Sister Isle while she still remains a portion of the United Kingdom

Rods are overhauled, fly books examined, and last though not least, our waders tried to see they are water tight. A day is fixed and we arrange to meet at Fleetwood to sail by the good ship the Duke of Connaught at 8-30 for Belfast, our destination being Randalstown .

When the day arrives we book return tickets from Bolton to Belfast fare 28/9 having previously secured a State Cabin, for which there is no extra charge. This enables you to have a good rest, if you are a good sailor, if you are not, you have still the advantage of being ill in the privacy of your own cabin.

Our train is up to time and we are off. Now there is always a great satisfaction in feeling the train move out of the Station when you are taking a holiday. I once remember a note being put into my hand at the last moment which read “Return at once wanted at the Works.”, but nothing of this kind happened and as Mr Slater remarked nothing of the sort could catch us, except a telegram on board the boat.

We find at Fleetwood we have an hour before the Steamer sails, so order a steak and Chip Potatoes at the New Dining Room at the Station in preference to tea and toast on board the boat. At 8-30 there is water enough to sail. We are off on time, this is important as we know there is only just time in the morning to catch the first train.

The night is clear, the moon nearly at the full and not a breath of wind to disturb the pleasure of our evening or digestion, after a Cigar and Whiskey and Soda with the Captain in his Cabin, we turn in for the

night just as we are passing the point of Ayre. At 5-30 we are in Belfast Lough, landing in time to catch the early train. We arrive at Randalstown at 9 o'clock where at the O'Neil Arms we find a hearty welcome from Mrs Kerr and a good breakfast ready.

As we are impatient to try our luck in the Mainwater, we put on waders and sally forth for our first day.

The view of the River from the Bridge just twenty yards from the Hotel, and a more lovely view it would be hard to find, on one side is Chiens Park, and as far as you can see streams and pools, with a high bank to the right, where overhanging trees give welcome shade, never in the memory of any one has a tree been felled, and many a stately one had fallen across the river and their remains forming barriers round which it is difficult to wade, but where the finest fish are found.

But there is one duty we must not forget, and that is to leave the Card giving us permission at the entrance lodge, where an elderly dame lives. Now you will be lucky if you get away in less than half an hour, first she points to the crest of the tower above the great oak gates and tells you the tale of the Red Hand of Ulster, the crest of the O'Neil, which is that in olden time one Shamus O'Neil afterwards King of Ulster disputed the right to the title and estates with his Cousin, the case was laid before the King of England at London who gave the award to the one who first laid his hand on the Small Island in Loch Neagh just opposite Chiens Castle. The Claimants raced from London to Ireland and both arrived at the Castle at the same time, their boats ran a neck and neck race for the Island and when they neared the Shore Shamus O'Neil seeing he was going to loose by a couple of yards took his battle axe and with one stroke cut off his hand and threw it on the land before his cousin could jump ashore thus claiming the fulfilment of the Kings condition, and then the good old dame will start on some other legend of the place, but a half crown dropped quietly into her not unwilling palm, gives you release and then you are free of the Park and all the fishing down to the Loch a couple of miles away. Our first attempt is in the Majors Pool but as the morning is bright and the sun high we try in vain to rise the wily trout. Next we try the shady side of the river and find the fish rise well under the trees, this is difficult fishing as you have not only the trees above you but a high bank behind. After a couple of hours we meet at the broken weir a relic of old Monastrie times, and one of the best streams in the whole of the Park length. Here we lunch and over a pipe compare notes. Our take is 17 trout to two rods, but they do not weigh to our satisfaction being only three to the pound. Again we try in the open water but with little success as the sun is still shining and as we feel the effects of the previous night at Sea, we decide to reel up for the day and quickly stroll back to our Inn to enjoy a good dinner and sundry pipes before turning in.

The next morning we walk to the first bridge and find a couple of Constables on guard. We enquire the reason and regret to hear that Lord O'Neil died at six o'clock suddenly. We had seen him in the Park the day before. We could not think of fishing the private water and as the day was promising we determined to fish the open water above the town. The wind was upstream, and the fish rising well. I fished the flat above the big weir, and was rewarded with 23 trout by one o'clock weighing seventeen and a half pounds.

W. S. came along with only six he then fished the big stream in front of the Flax Mill, and at three o'clock returned with 27 trout weighing 25 pounds. This is the best basket of fish I have ever seen killed in these waters with a fly.

The next day is Sunday—the question is shall we fish or shall we walk as far as Chiens Castle---we decide on the latter and as the distance is only five miles through the Park we wander along the river side as far as the second bridge where the Water Keeper lives. Although the grounds are not open to visitors until two o'clock on Sundays, we gain admission by a little persuasion, and a hand full of tobacco, from the Water Keeper's house to the Castle is a very lovely walk along the shore of Loch Neagh. First we pass the giant oak, supposed to be the largest tree in Ireland but now far past its prime, then through Lady O'Neil's Rock Garden. This was once the quarry from which the stone that the Castle is built of was hewn, but now enclosed by hedges of Arbutus Juniper and other evergreen shrubs, an old man once the head gardener but now too old for active work has charge and spends his time in keeping this charming little garden in perfect order. Anyone visiting Chiens Castle should be careful not to miss the Rock Garden from here to the Castle there is a narrow path along the margin of the lake, and sundry rustic seats under the welcome shelter of overhanging trees tempts one to rest and enjoy the beauty of the scene. The Old Castle or rather the remains of the Old Castle for it has never been rebuilt since the fire in 1815, is very fine, but I must leave the description to others who can do it justice. One of the features of the place is the sloping banks around the Castle entirely covered with Snowdrops and trumpet daffodils. The Snowdrops were over when we were there but the five acres of Lenten lilies were in all their glory and it almost seemed a pity to tread them down. When we approached the Castle the old Gardener told us you could see them on a clear day from the other side of the Loch some 14 miles away. But the sun had passed the meridian and we have ordered an early

dinner, we return by the Drive in preference to the lake side path and reach our Inn in time for our 4 o'clock Sundays' dinner.

We leave for Toome Bridge next day after lunch. W. Slater says he will not fish so I determine to have an hour in the Majors Pool just a hundred yards from our Hotel. I get two the first time down and as I am fishing the tail of the stream I pick up another. Mr Shackleton a gentleman staying at the Inn wades in and starts at the head, he is soon into a good fish which I net for him three and three quarters pounds, he fishes the whole length of the Pool and I lie on the bank smoking and watch him land 7 more. This makes 11 brown trout out of the Pool for the two of us in under two hours. When we weigh in the scales turn at twenty three and a half pounds these are the largest lot of brown trout I have ever seen taken out of a river and I think would be bad to beat being an average of over two pounds per fish.

After Lunch we take Car for Toome Bridge a drive of five Irish miles in the hopes of getting one or two of the famous Toome Bridge trout. Mr S had spent a couple of days or rather nights there the year before and had the luck to kill two trout one five pounds and the other six and a half pounds. We looked forward with great hopes to doing the same. Alas for such anticipation we were doomed to disappointment our only catch being eight or ten trout for two days fishing. The opinion of the professional fishermen Pat Mc Kinlas, his brother John and Mc Inroy is that although the Bann is as full of trout as ever, it is almost impossible to take them with the fly, this they account for by the Nets on Loch Neagh having killed down the trout leaving an abundance of natural food to wash over the bar to wash into the River. However that may be we determined to leave for Newtown Stewart and never try our luck again at Toome Bridge.

As we left in the morning we noticed on the Station platform a number of boxes filled with trout and pullen the proceeds of the previous nights fishing labelled Muirhead and Wilcox Manchester. This was enough to convince us that the glory had departed from the Bann at Toome Bridge as far as angling was concerned.

After a two hours run we arrive at Omagh and change for Newtown Stewart getting there at about 11 o'clock. We find a couple of Cars and a hearty welcome from Mr George Fulton, of the Abercorn Arms awaiting us.

After partaking of a dish of Chops and bottled Stout, we get into our waders, not stockings, but trousers, well up under our arms for the river Mourne is very treacherous wading and to try and cross the river in anything but trousers is to get a ducking. The Car is ready and after a three mile drive we are on the bank of the loveliest trout stream one can imagine (that is from a fisherman's point of view). Stream after stream with sloping shingle beds, with banks of sand and gravel telling of rare hatching beds for all the aquatic flies, as well as spawning ground for trout and salmon, but alas for the hopes so long entertained of glorious sport, we find the water very low and fine, and a steady wind blowing from the east, a cloudless sky and bright sunshine. Now as there are very few trees on the upper reaches of the Mourne to give us welcome shade we feel the brilliant sunshine is any thing but in our favour. Nothing daunted we put our rods together and with a cast made of a March Brown, Partridge and Orange and Olive Dun for tail fly we get to work at 2-30. W. S. fishing upstream and myself fishing down, with an arrangement to meet at the same place at 5-30. after a couple of hours steady fishing the wind falls to a dead calm and as it is our first day we rest and are thankful for a nice basket of fish each. When we empty them on the bank we count 16 each weighing fourteen and a half pounds. Our Car is up to time and we return to enjoy a good dinner and cigar finishing our first half-day with great hopes for the morrow.

Thursday

Breakfast at 8-30 and a white frost on the ground. We decide to take train to Victoria Bridge some 6 miles down stream so that we may have the advantage of a bigger water and some shade from the trees that grow down to the water edge.

We arrange to fish upstream to the meeting of the waters of the Deig and the Mourne, this is three and a half miles, the best salmon pools in the river are in this length, but only a few spring fish run, as the nets below are constantly at work, but white trout are plentiful after the first flood in May.

One takes the right bank the other the left as you cannot wade across until you reach the Derg unless the water is very low.

Here we lunch having ordered an Irish Stew to be sent by car.

The Keepers Cottage is in the angle where the two rivers meet and old Alec is in the garden tending his patch of potatoes, which are just showing above the ground. He soon joins us and accepts a plateful of the savoury dish, and many a tale he tells of salmon taken in the Duke's Pool—how Major Millar killed five and lost three others just opposite to where we sit.

After lunch we lie on the bank watching for a rise. W. S. takes first turn down the pool and I fish the junction of the waters. The trout are on the rise and I am soon rewarded with four brace of nice half pounders. Presently I hear a shout and run to see what has happened. I find W. S. in difficulty with a big fish which is sulking behind a huge piece of rock, my advice is to lift his head and make him run but all the strain a Hardy's eleven foot steel centred rod will give, is not enough, so I wade in as near as I can and throw a big stone over where he is, with a mighty rush he crosses to the other side of the pool and he takes some forty yards of line, working his way on the far side to the head of the Pool, now he takes the stream and the Angler who is well up on the bank has to run his best to keep him in hand. Again he makes the shelter of the rock and again we drive him into the open, then the real fight begins first on one side then on the other with many a sharp turn down stream which is only stopped with the last ten yards of line, but pace must tell and after some 35 minutes of as good a fight as one needs see, he is drawn to the still water at the side of the Pool.

I volunteer to net him but find the net too small so take him by the tail as he rolls over. He is soon on the grass, but not a trout at all, a nice bright salmon seven and a half pounds in weight.

Now the question is what shall we do with him, we have not taken out a salmon licence and old Alec stands grinning on the bank. He soon solves our difficulty by knocking him on the head remarking he's been too much trouble to catch to let him go again.

This is Mr Slater's first salmon so we take a drink all round for luck. After the excitement trout fishing is out of the question for that day so we reel up and walk to Deig Bridge where our car is to meet us.

When we return we find a friend from Londonderry waiting at our Inn he has run over by the 5 o'clock train to dine with us. In honour of the occasion we try the quality of the Champagne provided by the house and find it very good in fact so good we try it a second and a third time. Before leaving our friend invites us to have a day on his length of the River Finn at the Shooting Lodge five miles from Stranold—this we accept for the morrow.

Friday

Up at 5-30 to drive Strabane. Before leaving we take a cup of Coffee kindly provided by Miss Fulton who must have risen with the lark to get it ready

The morning air is sharp and there is a slight frost showing on the grass, but heavy clouds to the west give promise of a good fishing day.

As we have to drive 14 Irish miles to catch the 7-30 train at Strabane there is no time to waste. John our driver has the grey mare in the cart so we know we have the best horse in the stable.

When we arrive at Barons Court the Seat of the Duke of Abercorn we find the Lodge Gates closed. After repeated calls an old woman appears wrapped in a woollen shawl, from her looks her age must be in the centuries. Good morning Miss says John. Good morning your honours says the old dame is it to Strabane you want to go. Tis Miss and open the gate please for we want to catch the train. Not so fast, not so fast says the old body his Honour would perhaps like a pinch of snuff this cold morning offering a box of very black Lundyfoot. No thank you says Mr Slater I do not take it. Well that's a pity says she for you have rare accommodation for it referring to the size of Mr S's nose. A shilling has the right effect and the gate flies open. Good bye Miss from John. Good bye Pat and may the Devil never **miss** you is his parting benediction.

We arrive at Strabane with a quarter of an hour to spare. The run from Strabane to Stranold is along the bank of the river Finn from here we take Car to the lodge which is situated amongst the Donegal Mountains. Here we breakfast for which we are quite ready after our morning journey.

The Finn is famous for salmon and white trout rather than brown trout. We commence fishing during a shower of rain, the trout rise well and we soon fill our panniers, although the fish are small, only running three to the pound, they are in excellent condition.

The sugar loaf mountain

(dinner)

We return by the 6-30 train arriving at Newton Stewart a little before midnight thoroughly tired out.

Saturday

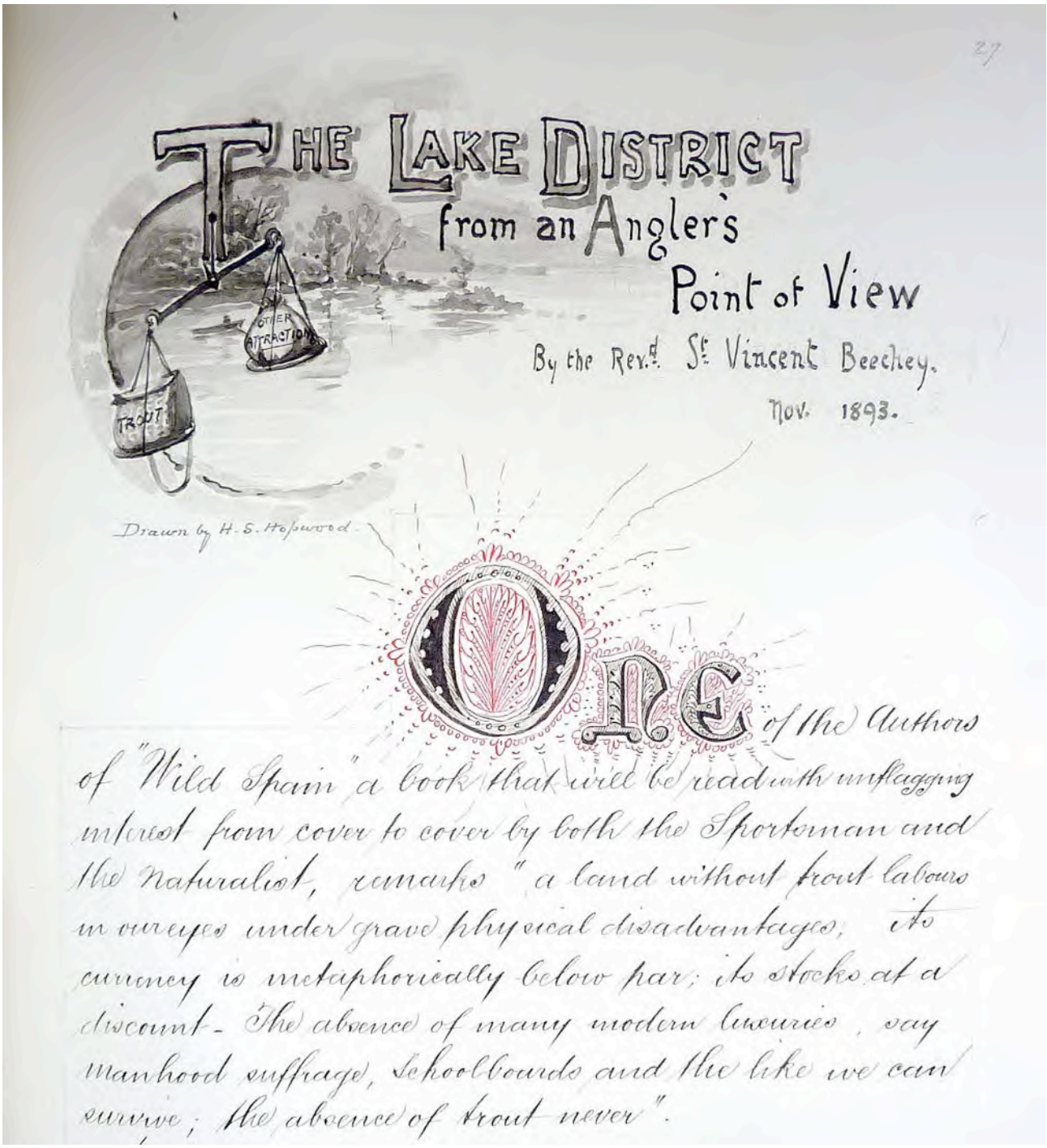
and our last day.

After the exertions of yesterday we decide not to fish so take Car as far as Barrons Court. This time we have no difficulty with the old lady at the Lodge. We leave our Car and walk some four miles through the Grounds. The views are very fine especially the upper and lower Lakes, also a visit to the Conservatories and Spring Gardens which are open to visitors. Our time is short as we leave by the 2-30 for Belfast.

We dine at the Royal Avenue Hotel and spend a couple of hours rambling through the streets and admiring the splendid buildings of this Manchester of Ireland.

At 8-0 we go on board the New Steamer, the Duke of Clarence, completing a very pleasant visit of ten days.

I see by my note book the cost has been £6-9-0 each and £2-13-0 for travelling make £9-2-0 the total cost of our visit.



"One of the Authors of "Wild Spain" a book that will be read with unflagging interest from cover to cover by both the Sportsman and the Naturalist, remarks, "a land without trout labours in our eyes under grave physical disadvantages, its currency is metaphysically below par; its stocks at a discount. The absence of many modern luxuries, say manhood suffrage, school boards and the like we can survive; the absence of trout never."

He is writing, of course, of the Iberian Peninsular but how strongly this sentiment must express the feelings of the trout angler as he passes through our English Lake District. Its fascinations are in many respects unrivalled, but it creates in the mind of Piscator a feeling of bitter disappointment, first because where by its appearance it promises most, it is painfully deficient—It is to the outward eye an eldorado of trouty treasures. Its numerous Lakes, Tarns, rivers and becks, which appear in close and constant succession as the traveller moves through it in any direction suggest a field of operation for thousands of anglers of all sorts and conditions without unduly crowding upon one another; and yet if trout still survive here and there, the stranger who visits the District for the purpose of trout fishing is invariably disappointed as far as his particular quest is concerned. It is not merely that the many square miles of water in the larger Lakes which

might be readily available for those who from infirmity or advancing years prefer to peruse their sport in an easy and placid fashion, are almost depopulated of trout. But those who love to breast the fell and wander over Crag and moorland waste to some solitary Tarn; as well as those who delight in tracing up the mountain beck from wee poolie to fern clad cascade, deftly insinuating the worm or fly, are equally disappointed. The great questions, of course, arise, what are the causes of this regrettable state of affairs, and how can it be remedied. The latter query will, I take it, will have been answered by the paper of the last month read before our Members by Mr Burn, the former may have some light thrown upon it in the present paper.

When our Secretary wrote to ask me for a contribution to our Anglers Evenings I replied with my tongue in my cheek that I should be happy to oblige. The reason for this facile compliance and wily reservation was that I thought I saw an easy way out of the difficulty. I had recently become a member of the English Lake district Angling Association and like the fox thought that other brethren might be persuaded to go and do like wise. I had also read several articles in the papers notably Fishing Gazette which led appropriately up to the subject and I thought that by making use of some judicious extracts there from, together with the aims and objects of the said Association my task would entail little trouble. Imagine then my consternation when I found that a similar idea had taken possession of another member and that his paper immediately preceded mine. My sails flapped at once, the breeze of inspiration had been anticipated and my tongue assumed a different position, obtrusive and elongated, and it was small consolations to be told by the secretary and Mr Burn that the title of my proposed effort would do very well if I confined myself to personal reminiscences of angling in the Lake District and so provided a sort of Supplement to the previous paper, for it seems to me to be a personal reflection on my prowess as an angler to be so confidently cited as a witness to prove from my own experiences what a scarcity of trout there is in the Lakeland. Well I will proceed; though if the first person singular seems too prominent in the following remarks it is clearly the fault of the aforesaid Gentlemen.

It is exactly 30 years ago this autumn since I first made a raid upon the trout among the Cumberland Mountains. I knew very little of the art of fly fishing and if I recollect rightly after a few lessons on the Eden went on my own hook to the primitive village of Thelkeld under Saddleback. There I fished the Vale of St. John in the stream that flows past the Castle Rock rendered classical in Scott's---------- and which issues from the now celebrated Thirlmere. In spite of my inexperience I generally managed to get a few trout into the basket which added to the samlets in my pockets made a satisfactory fry. Off and on during the years but chiefly in the sixties I have whipped or wormed or bracken clocked most of the Lakes Tarns Rivers and becks with the exception of those in the Coniston district. Twelve years ago armed with a permit from the Manchester Corporation I took up my quarters at Wythburn near Thirlmere and tried to make off to Municipal Rates by value received in trout. I caught a lot but as they only weighed about ten to the pound they did not go very far in attaining my object. However I got one day a dish of eight very respectable trout up to nine ounces in Harriet *(Harrop?)* Tarn which is situated on the fell above Wythburn. The streams in the district were very tempting to the angler's eye but were evidently badly poached. The date of the aforesaid ticket or rather the letter of leave (1882) reminds one of how long it takes the water to come down from Thirlmere to Manchester, but I still retain it for other reasons. It was given to me when I was a Citizen and rate payer of this illustrious town and as I am so no longer so it is a valuable relic more especially as it contains no sort of intimation as to the date when it expires. A favourite haunt of mine was Borrowdale the chosen camps being chiefly Rosthwaite and Seatoller the latter close to the foot of Honister Pass. Any number of becks and not a few tarns in the widest and most unfrequented parts can be commanded from this point. From here I have climbed the heights of Glaramara.---------- to set night lines in Tarn at Leases and of course again in the morning to see the result which you will be glad to hear was only one trout of three quarters of a pound. I have (remember it was in my salad days) plied the lath or otter on Stye Head and Sprinkling Tarns and wandered far over the fells with my boat weighing sixteen pounds on my back in order to launch it on waters hitherto innocent of such a burden. How the enormities just referred to will give you an idea of the way in which the fish have been almost exterminated for I was put up to these bad practices by the locals who were adepts at such black arts. But those mentioned were not the worst, not to be compared with the following device. In the late Autumn the large fish from the lakes taking advantage of a fresh, run far up the becks among the hills for the purpose of spawning. Although quite out of season they were first poached with the worm and afterwards when the water ran down ladled out of the narrow stream by the hundred weight, another more recent instant of destruction by a different method which came under my observation shall be mentioned presently. Do not think and I hope the Committee of the Lake District Association will not imagine that the further the waters are from the more populous centres the safer the fishy inhabitants. The contrary is the case. If these distant parts could be watched and the netting on the lakes removed good results could at once be apparent, and of course these would be considerably improved by

artificial breeding. There are fish hatcheries, but I am convinced that the produce is in a great measure absorbed by the local cobbler, Tailor or Blacksmith of the remote hamlet, men with plenty of leisure time on their hands and of commendable sporting instincts but with consciences rendered elastic by time honoured custom.

As regards the Lakes themselves I have had fair sport in Buttermere, Crummock Water and Haweswater not much in Derwent Water or Windermere, though the trout in these are finer and specimens I have taken of late on the last mentioned are as perfect as trout can be like bars of silver without and pink fleshed within. The largest that came under my notice was one of three pounds caught with a Scotch lake fly, probably bigger still are waiting to be caught.

I will conclude with a few notes of a visit up to date, that is in the Spring of the present year. It will serve to indicate to the Committee of the English Lake District Angling Association a quarter which is not included, I believe, as yet in their sphere of operations and which would be immensely improved thereby; also it will serve to illustrate the wholesale destruction caused by the want of proper supervision as well as the excellent results that can be obtained where due care is exercised, results that might be extended over the whole of Lakeland.

The district to which I refer is Patterdale. We were a large party of friends who were gathered together there as a rendezvous not for fishing purposes, but mainly for scholastic reasons, the only outward evidence of which I may say in passing was a grand Football Match in which the Shrewsbury boys gained a decisive victory over a combined team of natives and Eton Harrow and Rossall Masters. One member of the party, however, being a member of our fraternity (Manchester Anglers' Association) had like myself brought his rod. The weather was as hopeless as possible. The Colliers, bad as they have been this year have not been in it with the trout. The former have been on strike for sixteen weeks but the fish, in our experience, have been on strike the whole season through. Old Sol playing the role of Sam Woods kept his bright eye skinned continuously and on no account allow the trout to do any business if he could help it.

As the strike had already lasted several weeks we could do little or nothing in the Lake during the day and were not disposed to go out in the evening. But we saw a fine dish of fish caught with the fly between 9 and 12 at night. Let the young and enthusiastic note the tip. When the aforesaid delegate's eye was sleeping the trout took advantage of the opportunity. Pleasant rambles are had up the streams and the becks which lead the angler still into the most wild and unfrequented parts far apart from the tourist throng.

The Goldrill Grisedale and Deepdale becks are of easy access, while the Martindale streams are also within reach. Small fish can be caught in all these in any weather. On occasion we noticed that a length of the Goldrill below the Bridge which is near the foot of the Brothers water (just the place where the fish were certain to congregate when the stream was nearly dry) and where a few days before hundreds could be seen was completely depopulated. A native told us they had all been destroyed by dynamite or some similar exterminator.

There you have another sample of the way wholesale destruction is carried on.

Now for the converse---- We had one glorious day on Angle Tarn which is carefully preserved by William Little esq. Of Hatton Hall Penrith. I say carefully but not selfishly as I believe he never refuses a day to a courteously worded request.

The way up is a stiffish climb and you must get careful directions ere you start or you may find yourself as a friend did wandering about hopelessly in the wilds of Martindale.

Now this sort of long steep and rough ascent is all very well for a man who retains the attenuated figure of youth in middle age; but it is a different matter for one who very properly, as nature teaches in the case of the trout, puts on flesh with advancing years. But I grieve to record that a speculum of the former in the shape of my companion took a mean advantage of a specimen of the latter in the shape of myself. He was leading the way; he was also possessed of a Kodak, an instrument that in my opinion ought to be heavily taxed or least the results of which should be liable to action of libel.

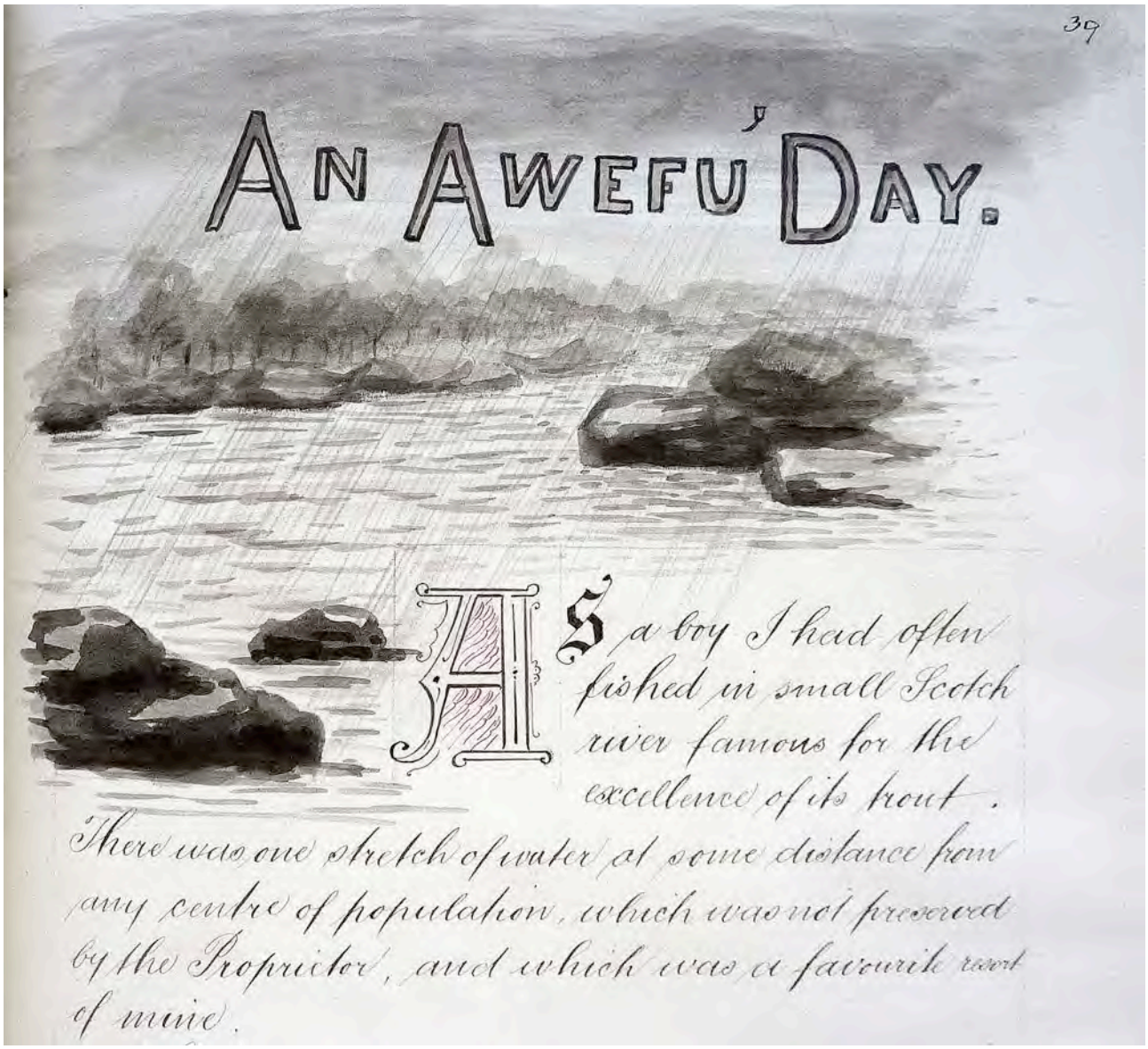
Well the contemptible man suddenly turned round and took a shot of me. I produce the result as I am sure I shall have your sympathy and probably a vote for his expulsion from our staid and correct fraternity. The next photo shows equanimity restored. The next represents the delinquent and the rest are different views of that delightful spot Angle Tarn.

During the greater time we fished five stags stood on skyline of the ridge shown. These were specimens of the celebrated Martindale deer only found wild here and in the Devon and Somerset hills. The poor beast were no doubt waiting until we had done with the Tarn to slake their thirst, their other sources of supply on the high ground being completely dried up.

Angle Tarn is full of free rising well conditioned fish of a rich yellow hue. It was of course early in the season for so lofty an elevation our fishing hours limited but we got a basket of 18 trout averaging from four to six ounces.

` Hayes water also contains numerous well-fed fish but it is later in the season. It is remarkable how the trout differ in condition in these preserved Tarns from those on the other side of the valley on the slopes of Helvellyn eg. Grisedale and Red Tarns. The trout in these latter are I believe larger but they are very indifferent eating. Some fresh strain or better provision for producing suitable food would probably remedy this defect and add to what might be made the splendid capacities for sport in this lovely district. Go there

brother angler before the Steamers and Coaches are running i. e. Whitsuntide, you will then have plenty of elbow room, plenty of choice of accommodation in Hotel and Lodging House at moderate prices, plenty of variety in your sphere of operations and if the English Lake District Angling Association will only extend its beneficent a(e)gis over its waters plenty of piscatorial trophies."

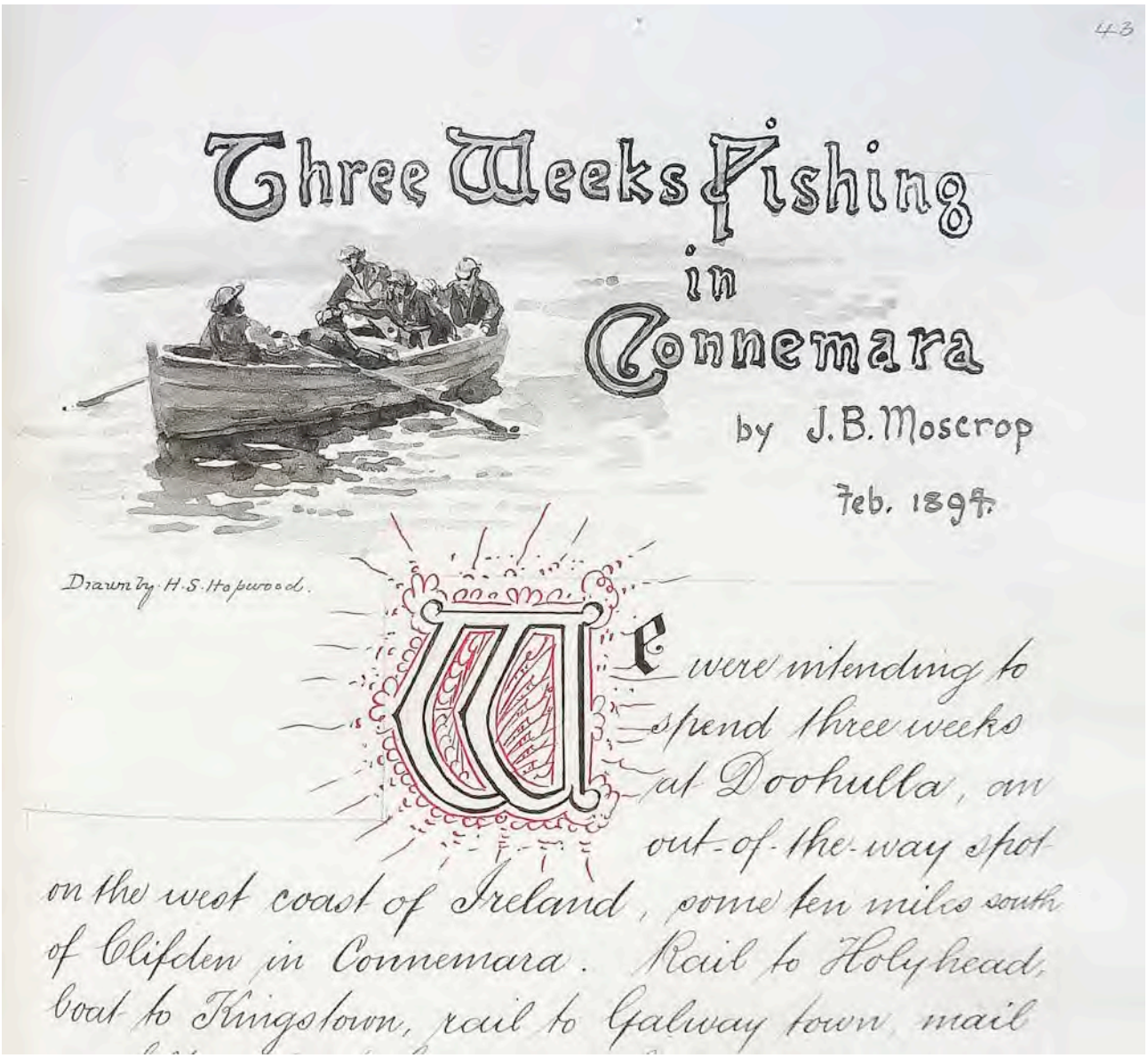


"As a boy I had often fished in a small Scotch river famous for the excellence of its trout. There was one stretch of water at some distance from any centre of population, which was preserved by the Proprietor, and which was a favourite resort of mine.

Since coming to reside in Manchester I have paid frequent visits to the spot and a few years ago I persuaded a Member of the Manchester Anglers' Association to accompany me. We had to drive about six miles and just before reaching the river rain began to fall. We were provided with waterproofs and decided to begin fishing although we knew we should have some miles to walk in our wet boots at the end of the day. The length of the free water is only about a mile and a half, but along almost the whole way there is a succession of capital streams. About the centre of it, however, there is about 300 yards of what is usually still water fishable only when there is a good breeze. I had met with only moderate success in the streams, but just I reached the still water a thunderstorm came on accompanied by a perfect deluge of rain. I had had the belief that under such circumstances the trout would not rise, but on making a cast among the pelting raindrops I at once hooked a good fish. I fortunately had my landing net in my left hand, so after a little play I got my half pounder safely on the bank. Again I cast my line and again landed a good fish. The trout seemed as eager to take my fly, as I was to hook and land them. This continued for half an hour, so that I soon had a good basketful. I was not alone in my luck for a local pothunter was equally busy. He had no landing net and he apparently fished with only one fly, for his mode of landing the trout was pull in his line through the rings with his hand until about a foot was left when he carefully lifted up the fish and swung it onto the bank as if he had used a crane. Being satisfied with my catch I put up my rod and walked back to find my Manchester Angler. To my surprise I found him sheltering under the cart shed of a flour mill and amusing himself fishing for chickens! He had got two or three small fish whilst I in answer to his jeers about

getting wet for nothing emptied at his feet my basket of nearly three dozen fine trout averaging 8 to 12 ounces.

A smart walk, a change of clothes and a good dinner ended what to me was one of the best days fishing I have ever had. That it was an exceptional day may be judged by the fact that two years afterwards I came across my pot hunting friend whom I had not known previously, nor seen in the interval. As I passed him sitting eating his dinner by the riverside he looked at me and made the enigmatical remark, “Yon was an awfu’ day.



"We were intending to spend three weeks at Doohulla, an out of the way spot on the west coast of Ireland, some ten miles south of Clifden in Connemara. Rail to Holyhead, boat to Kingston. Rail to Galway town, mail car fifty miles to Clifden, where we were met by a dog cart and had a ten mile drive to the Lodge at Doohulla. The Douhilla estate had been taken on lease by a Manchester merchant, and was the entire watershed of a stream about the size of the Ribble at Settle, when it reached salt water. On the estate are a large number of lakes—some of them would be described more correctly as pools, but there will be 12 or 13 ranging from ten acres to five hundred acres. These lakes extend six miles inland in the direction of the Twelve Pins. The lady who presided over the establishment was a capital manageress and a good cook, but she had to depend on ourselves for raw material, except in the matter of mutton, for of beef there was none. We were consequently reduced to mutton, hares, wild ducks (principally flappers this years hatching), snipe, sea trout, brown trout, lobsters, crayfish and oysters, by the help of which we struggled along and managed to keep the body and soul together for three mortal weeks, and I would not mind engaging to do it again. The Atlantic washed the bottom of the mint bed in the garden, and even our friend Estcourt (Manchester City Analyst) would have failed to detect any sulphurous acid in the breezes. It was a place to make one suspect that we in Manchester were paying too dearly for our sovereigns and recognise that there is another and perhaps finer meaning to the phrase "The price of gold."

Our first performance in the morning was a header into pure water, the bottom visible at thirty feet; then a pull to the lobster pots, selecting a good fish for breakfast. The little river discharging the water of the chain of lakes ran past the garden. The lowest lake would be distant some five hundred yards, and after the middle of July was well stocked with white trout. Our fish averaged one and three quarter pounds all

through. The best single basket was 14, but we were rather too early for the best fishing in fact we were early enough to catch the fag end of flapper shooting. Our best fish was five pounds; my best was four pounds. We had landed one day to discuss lunch, which had been sent up from the Lodge, a hot potato pie with a few snipe hidden away among the potatoes, when I thought I detected a break in the ripple about eight yards away from where I was seated. I watched the spot a minute or so, and there it was again, followed by a good sized tail. Without moving my seat I could put my hand on my rod and after a preliminary swish through the air, dropped my tail fly over him. He came at once and proved to be my best fish – four pounds—a fresh run beauty

The county consists of rocky hills, boggy flats and lakes, a home for white trout, snipe and wild duck; but scarce a tree bigger than a gooseberry bush. I should say that the place and its surroundings differed little from what they were 500 years ago. This remark applies also to the natives. I will give you an illustration. I had noticed some salmon tints appearing in the parti coloured nether garments of our boatman, and as the day wore on the salmon tints steadily increased (you see our boat was not fitted with sliding seats.)"Joyce" said I (for we were in Joyce country), "Joyce you will have to get you wife to put a patch on those trousers, otherwise you will become positively indecent before tomorrow night." "She will then, soi, if Mr Glover will give us the run of the sheep paddock." "By all means Joyce do what you like."

After dinner Joyce and his spouse came down to the Lodge, and we all adjourned to the paddock. There was an undercurrent of merriment in our faces, but it was not so with John---John evidently meant business. If he had just hooked a twenty pounder he could not have been more earnest, more intent on the job in hand. He surveyed the woolly coats with the critical eye of a Yorkshire spinner, spotted his animal, separated it from the rest, cornered it, closed in and cross buttocked it as smartly as a "bonny Tyson" at a Cumberland sports. His wife, armed with a pair of scissors then came up, and cut off an apron full of long staple; thus ended the first stage of putting a patch on honest John's complicated toggery--- the raw material was obtained. Wishing to see the thing out we accompanied them home. A pair of hand cards were produced, not unlike a bath glove covered with card. By means of these the fibres of the wool were layed parallel, then cleared, and rolled into a sliver, about as thick as the middle piece of a fishing rod. This was repeated until there was enough for the purpose. The carding and roving thus finished it was then spun into a single thread somewhat like course hosiery yarn. A very doubtful affair was next brought out which roused my curiosity. It turned out to be a loom. Half the yarn was used as warp each alternate thread being passed through a kind of heald, the other half of the yarn was wound on a stick, some what after the fashion of a boy's kite string and formed the weft. The weaving was done by raising the alternate ends of the warp by means of the healds and handing the weft through. This was repeated until there was enough cloth made. The ends of the warp were then tucked in over the last threads of weft, and there was the patch complete with four selvages to it. It was about as big as a sheet of note paper and was, there and then, clapped over the salmon tinted hole, and securely fastened down on the top of its predecessors with a packing needle and a short pack thread. It no doubt did its work well for many a long year, and as regards appearance I will say that it was in perfect harmony with the rest of John's picturesque get up, which would have gladdened the eye of any true artist,

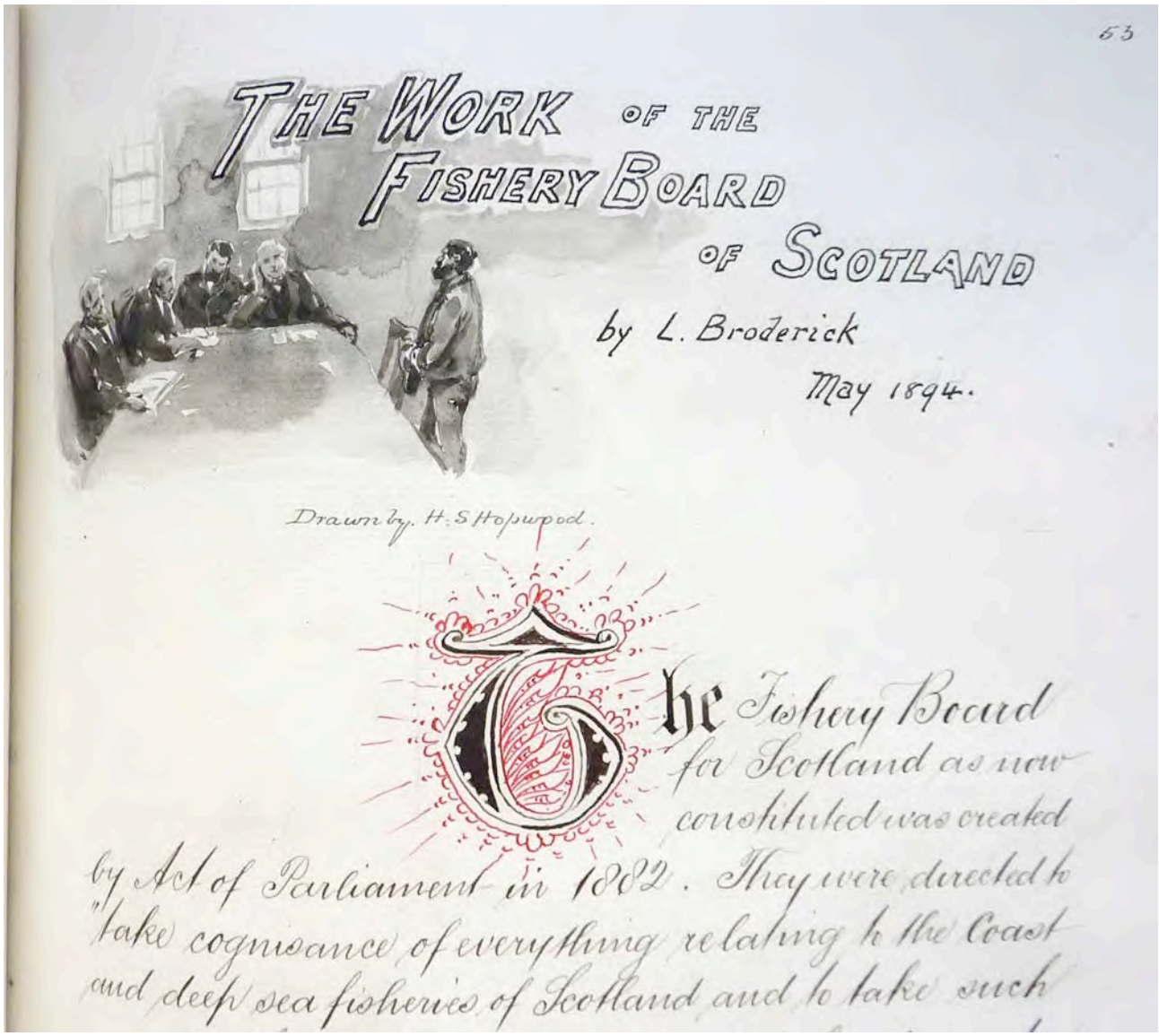
At my first visit to Doohulla the water held no salmon, although the white trout now and then scaled as much as ten pounds. Mr Glover through the kindness of Messrs Ashworth transferred ova from Oughterard to Doohulla. The transfer took root very much to the satisfaction of Mr Glover and also to the gratification of a large number of tenants on the estate. These tenants occupied an island on one of the lakes, forming the sixth link in a chain of thirteen lakes. They (the tenants) were continually making raids on the salmon fry. It would have been of no use to serve then with a notice of eviction. They would take no notice, as Mr Glover well knew. The lake on which was their island was in the midst of bogs and almost inaccessible. It was determined, however, to take light boat as far as possible and to try to continue the journey by shooting the boat across the bogs. After an adventurous journey we glided on the waters of the lake in question. We were a party of five, three of being armed with breech loaders. We had a good supply of cartridges as we quite expected the adventure would not end without bloodshed. Our approach had evidently been watched and on our showing ourselves we were greeted by a terrible outcry from the island the like of which I never heard before or since. As the boat drew nearer to the island the tumult increased and suddenly culminated in a general uprising and grand demonstration. Some of the more daring spirits ventured within shot and paid the penalty of their rashness. They were promptly dropped. Our cartridges were charged with large shot, swan shot, ten or twelve pellets to the ounce and were effective at eighty or even a hundred yards. The skirmish lasted two or three hours at the end of which we counted 90 dead herons twenty being old birds. In addition to these we had mallard, widgeon, teal and sheldrake. After lunch we prospected the island. It was five or six acres and covered almost entirely with Irish Holly. The foliage began about six feet from

the ground and was exceedingly dense. The branches were much interlaced and altogether it was a model home for the heron. The surface of the island was a mass of branches and ferns, breast high, interspersed with a few grey rocks. It was a cloudless summer day and the grateful shade under the hollies was delicious. The climate is very mild; there is scarcely any frost. The consequence is a most luxurious vegetation. I found maiden hair fern but unfortunately I am no botanist. I described this island to the late Mr Samuel Barlow, who went from his many friends all too soon, and he said he could conceive nothing that would delight him more than the spending of a few days on it and if I went again to Doohulla he would gladly form one of the party if we would have him. I told him his offer was a great temptation for me to repeat the visit.

After completing the tour of inspection we put our rods together and as I sent out my cast, three droppers and a stretcher I felt that those flies were probably dropping on virgin water and so it apparently proved. Several times I had four trout on at the same time. The fish were perfectly unsophisticated. There was no credit in taking them I landed nine fish in three successive casts. I basketed seven or eight dozen, not a fish above six ounces or under three ounces but after the first hour it became simply monotonous. One of our party who had not thrown a fly before this visit took nearly as many as I did, who professed to be a past master. The lines trailing behind him when we pulled the boat back to fresh drift caught freely. In unhooking one fish from the near dropper, another rose at the tail fly, and nearly put the hook home in my friends finger. But our adventures that day were not to end with the fishing. On taking our seats for the return journey a step was made on the bottom of the boat instead of on the guard boards. The consequence was a hole as big as the crown of a hat. We had to cross 150 yards of deep water, how was it to be done. After due deliberation the plan that found most favour was the following. We selected a tough piece of turf about sixteen inches square, cut it carefully with a sharp knife making it a couple of inches thick. This was placed over the hole and upon it we laid a flat stone to hold it down and in order that there should be no lack of weight for keeping it tight one of our friends volunteered to sit on the stone. A trial trip was made twenty yards, or so, and back again. It was most satisfactory not a drop of water had come through. The rest of the party that is the other three, then took their seats and we shoved off. But our Engineering was bad—inexcusably bad. We had overlooked the fact that when five were in the boat she would sink deeper in the water than when two only were in and the pressure of the water on the grass sod would be increased in proportion. The result was that we had not half way when a considerable leak started on the right side. In order to stop this our friend eased his weight over from the left. This was most injudicious; it was immediately followed by a stream of water pouring in as thick as my wrist. “Keep still man we yelled.” “Well I ain’t deaf and I aren’t a fool either. Any donkey would know it would be dicky up if I stirred.” The fact was our friend usually so amiable was sitting in two inches of water while we were sitting high and dry. A smile began to spread over our faces as we neared the shore, and we were able to see the bottom of the lake. When the welcome sound of the boat grating on the shore met our ears we lay back and fairly screamed with laughter. “I’ll tell you what it is gentlemen, you are behaving like a couple of blackguards. I should have served you right if I had jumped up and made you swim for it, and by Jove I would have done if it had not been for your guns and things. I have been wet through at my feet and at my shoulders, but never before in such an unchristian fashion as this.” We recommended him to lie on the ground, face down, and let Joyce rub him well with whiskey to prevent his catching cold, but it was no use we could not extract a smile.

We left the boat to be repaired and brought down at some future time, and had to face a stiff tramp o’er bog and moor; and thus ended one of the red letter days of my sporting life.

There is one charm in such a day. It does not merely begin in the morning and end with the evening; it is a pleasant act for all time. I can assure you that the recalling of old memories, necessitated by writing this paper has been to me a great pleasure, so much so that I fear I may have dwelt too long on what are only the recollections of an old fogey".



The Fishery Board for Scotland as now constituted was created by Act of Parliament in 1882. they were directed to "take cognisance of everything to the coast and deep sea fisheries of Scotland and to take such measures for their improvement as the funds under their administration not otherwise appropriated might admit of, but without interfering with any existing authority or private right." Previous to that time the fisheries had been under the supervision of the Commissioners of the British White Herring fisheries, who had been in existence since 1809 but who had practically left the Fisheries to take care of themselves. Thirty years ago there was a great outcry about the diminution in the productiveness of the sea fisheries which were generally believed to be largely due to the destruction of immature fish and ova especially by beam trawling. A Royal commission was appointed in 1863 who reported that the supply of fish had been largely increased and that the methods of fishing involved no loss of young fish or ova, and that all the restrictions should be removed except such as maintained order among fishermen. Subsequent legislation was guided largely by this report and as a consequence the Scottish Fishery Board was constituted without the necessary powers for dealing with many obstacles to the development and protection of the Fisheries both in the sea and fresh water.

Since 1882 the Board have made Annual Reports to Parliament. These Reports for several years have been in three parts published separately and entitled as follows :-

Part I General Report.
Part II Report on Salmon Fisheries.
Part III Scientific Investigations.

They contain a vast mass of information with regard to everything connected with the Fisheries in Scotch Waters and incidentally with those in other parts of the world, both from an economic and natural history point of view. The last Report is for the year 1892 and was issued in May last year consequently another Report for 1893 is now about due but is not yet published.

In Part I General Report for 1892 all the statistical information relating to Sea fisheries collected by the Board is arranged and commented upon. Many of the figures thus exhibited are of general interest and some of them may be briefly referred to. Fifty years ago the fishery interest was so mainly dependent on fish cured viz. Herring, Codling and Hake that it was considered not worthwhile taking statistics of fresh fish. Now owing to cheap transit and in improvements in preservation a revolution has taken place and since 1883 returns have been collected of the fish landed and fish sold fresh. The value of fresh fish for home consumption is now very much greater than that of those cured.

On the whole since the constitution of the Board the Scotch fisheries have been remarkably productive especially the Herring fisheries. During 10 years since its establishment, 13,360,000 barrels of herrings have been cured against 9,944,000 barrels in the previous ten years being an increase of 34%. A continuous record is also recorded with few exceptions in other descriptions of fish. In this connection it is to be noted that the character of the boats employed has undergone considerable change and fishing is carried on at greater distances from the shore than formerly. There are now fewer boats by 1,000 than ten years ago, but they comprise a large number of steam trawls. The total tonnage is somewhat greater and their value in 1891 is a quarter of a million more than in 1882.

Much attention has of late years been given to the effect of the great increase in beam trawling in injuring fishing grounds and under an Act of 1889 almost the whole of the Scotch territorial waters on the East Coast and the firth of Clyde, firth of Forth and Moray Forth have been closed against beam trawling. Sufficient time, however, has not elapsed to enable the Board to speak definitely as to the result. Their Steamer the Garland is now employed making investigations to ascertain what the effect has been. They complain strongly, however, that they are without the necessary means for enforcing the restrictions efficiently.

The Board has also had within its province the improvement of harbours and the extension of the telegraph to remote fishing districts. Since 1828 Parliament has annually granted £3,000 for the improvement of harbours and since 1880 this has been supplemented by the Herring Brand fees. Out of this latter fund £1,000 to £1500 a year have been applied to telegraphic extensions making a total since 1883 of £10,000. This amount has been applied under guarantees for 7 years given to the Post Office to make good any deficits in the receipts from such extensions.

Fifteen important telegraph extensions have been carried out in different parts of the coast viz. 4 in the Lewis, 3 in Shetland and one each in Orkney, Barra, Mull, Ross, Inverness, Argyle Sutherland and Bute, and have proved of great benefit for the fishing community. Since 1882 the board have assisted in improving and constructing eleven piers or harbours, and in deepening some harbours. The total amount so expended has been £366,342 and of this the Board has contributed £40,092.

Under their powers to compel returns the Board now give monthly complete tables of all the fish taken viz. :

Means of Capture
Quantity landed
Quantity used fresh and cured
Quantity of cured fish branded unbranded and reported.

And also Miscellaneous information as to Harbours Etc.

The facts reported respecting the property employed in the Scotch fisheries, afford a striking view of the wealth of the ocean and the importance of the great industry. In 1892 there were no less than 14,000 fishing boats employed. Of these 99% (13,838) had sails or oars and only one percent (162) steam power. Of the steamers however 118 or 73% were beam trawlers, whilst of the sailing boats only 65 or half percent were beam trawlers. The total value of all these boats and fishing tackle amounted to £1,860,000. The number of men and boys employed in fishing was 49,300. The area of their nets covered178,280,000 square yards or 58 square miles and the length of their lines measured 71,500,000 yards or 40,000 miles. The fish landed in 1892 (exclusive of shell fish) weighed 271,800 tons and their value was £1,596,000 very nearly corresponding with that of the boats and the tackle employed in catching them. Beyond those engaged in fishing there is a slightly larger number employed in curing viz. 50,177 men and women.

The Statistics show that the Herring is by far the most important of Scotch fish amounting in fact to 66% of the total. About 80% of the Herrings taken are cured and of these 75% are exported to other countries. The order in which the different kinds of fish stand in regard to quantity taken is as follows--- Herrings--- Haddocks---Cod and Ling--- after which follow flat fish a long way behind viz. Flounders--- Plaice and Brill---Skates---Lemon Soles--- Halibut—Turbot—

A noticeable feature in the statistics is the great disparity in price obtained for hauled fish and those taken by the line and which to a great extent accounts for the recent rapid development of steam trawling. The prices

obtained for the trawled fish are often more than double than those obtained for the same fish caught by the line. This fact cannot be taken as a complimentary *(sic)* by an Association like ours devoted exclusively to the artistic practice of line fishing. The explanation, however, is that trawling is principally carried on by steam boats which are independent of weather and tides and can be relied upon to deliver their Cargoes with regularity at convenient ports and with due regard to the Railway time Table.

A department in the work of the Board which should not be overlooked relates to the duties imposed upon them by the 32nd section of the Crofters; Holdings Scotland Act 1886 under which advances have been made to fishermen for the purchase or repair of gear. This financial adventure does not appear to have been encouraging for after running two and a half years till the end of 1890 it was decided to issue no more loans. During that period 246 loans amounting to £30,000 to be repaid by instalments were granted. The instalments principal and Interest which had become due up to the end of 1892 amounted to £20,460. Two thirds of this had been paid and £7,000 was in arrear. The Board had taken possession of and sold 54 mortgaged boats and of the amount then in arrear £3,300 was deemed irrecoverable.

Turning now to Part II of the Report---

The Salmon Fisheries--- it might be expected that this would be more interesting to us than the General Report in Part I. This is scarcely borne out owing in the main to the fact that the Board is not vested with sufficient powers to develop the fisheries or to cope with the various circumstances which operate injuriously towards them. If the Law of Scotland had been framed with the express purpose of limiting the salmon fisheries and checking enterprise it could not have been more skilfully devised. For instanced neither the Board or any other Public Authority has power to open up natural obstructions in rivers except by consent of the landowners where the obstructions occur. In many cases such landowners have under old charters a proprietary title to follow and take the fish in the upper reaches of the river after the obstruction has been removed. Notwithstanding that the land on both sides may belong to other people. Again such new fisheries as escape these old charters are caught in the widespread mesh of the Crown, which has a general claim to all newly created salmon fisheries. In the present time there are 500 miles of rivers and 40,000 acres of Lochs suitable for salmon, which are barred completely against them by obstructions that in the majority of cases might easily and profitably removed. As the Law stands, if the proprietor of the obstruction objects neither the district Board nor the Fishery Board, nor the Secretary for Scotland can do anything. In the 10th Report the case of the Ballisodare River on the West Coast of Ireland is referred to as illustrating what might be done. Thirty years ago there was not a single salmon in that river. Eleven years after the erection of ladders 10,000 salmon were taken out of it and it now yields from 8,000 to 10,000 annually. What has been done on the Ballisodare might, it is contended, as easily be done on several rivers in Scotland but for the unsatisfactory state of the law.

Another matter about which the Board concern themselves, but without much avail, and one in regard to which they will have our entire sympathy is the pollution of the rivers by the refuse from various Works on the river banks and the Town Sewage. In this respect there seems to be a better time coming through the actions of the County Councils, and the rapid growth of local sentiment which cannot understand why a man should be allowed to contaminate for scores of miles one of the most beautiful features in the landscape just to save his pocket the expense of settling tanks or other suitable appliances for removing deleterious matter.

Naturally in this part of the Report the disease which from 1877 has committed such ravages amongst salmon receives a great amount of attention. A large mass of statistics has been accumulated relating to the description, condition and sex of the fish attacked but it does not appear that any remedy for the disease that can be applied on an extensive scale has been discovered. It is considered of the utmost importance to get all diseased and dead fish out of a river as quickly as possible to prevent spread of the contagion. The disease is caused by a fungus, the life history of which, was exhaustively investigated by Professor Huxley a dozen years ago. It is technically known as Saprolegnia and is closely allied to the fungus Peronspora which is the cause of potato disease. In the years—1870 to 1892 – 96,187 dead or dying fish were taken out of the Tweed. Of these the number affected by the fungus disease were 95,296 salmon, grilse or sea trout and 332 fish of other descriptions whilst only 559 fish died from other causes.

Statistics are given of the boxes of salmon sent to Billingsgate from the year 1834 to 1892. From these figures it would appear that the yield of the salmon fisheries of Scotland has not increased during the last half century.

At the commencement of this period the average quantity sent Billingsgate was 28,000 boxes per annum. For the last ten years it was 25,400. It is estimated that about half the salmon taken are sent to Billingsgate Market but that the proportion was greater formerly, consequently the foregoing figures are not conclusive as to the apparent decline in the Salmon fisheries.

A table going still further back is given of the Rental of the Tay fishing viz, from 1828 to the present time. These figures show a considerable advance in the rentals of that river. The average for the first ten years of that period being £12,400 and for the last ten years £19,600 an increase of 60%.

In their tenth report the Board summarise what has been done for the promotion of the Scotch Salmon fisheries and also summarise under 14 heads the various recommendations which from time to time they have pressed upon Parliament. In the first place they claim to have improved the Salmon fisheries as follows:- The Shetland Islands with their valuable an varied sea trout and yellow trout fishing, have been brought under the operation of the Scotch Salmon fishing Acts. Natural obstructions in the case of several rivers have been opened up, and salmon permitted to reach spawning grounds to which they never previously had access; several dams over which salmon had formerly to be lifted by the river Watchers have been altered so as to afford an easy passage to ascending fish; the close time applicable to many rivers has been changed so as to be more in conformity with the physical characteristics of each river; and in one or two instances attempts have been made to abate pollutions by the establishment of sewage farms, or the use of catch-pits. Little, however, comparatively, has been done of what the Board strongly recommended to be done.

The recommendations fall under the following heads, but there is not time to set out the reasons and grounds on which they are urged.

One, Prohibition of sale of salmon caught during the extension of time for rod fishing and during which tine netting is illegal.

Two, District Boards to remain in office till their successors are appointed. At present, if a triennial election does not take place the Board lapses and there is no means of reconstituting it.

Three. District boards to have powers to prevent pollutions in rivers and lochs.

Four. Where there is no District Board, proprietors of fishing should be able to prosecute, for contravention of byelaws relating to obstructions illegal engines or illegal modes of fishing etc. At present they are unable to do this.

Five. Smolt-proof guards to be placed above Mill Wheels, especially at the time when Smolts are descending.

Six. Netting etc. in any lade belonging to any mill or factory to be prohibited except against the proprietor of the fishing when it occurs.

Seven. Fixed engines to be legally defined so as to prevent the use of destructive hangnet and certain other engines in rivers and estuaries.

Eight Prohibition of the use of gaff or cleek for the landing of salmon, until 1st May, so as to prevent injury to Kelts, which should be returned to the river.

Nine. Power to be given to river watchers to take diseased fish out of the river and bury them above the highest flood mark.

Ten. A minimum as well as a maximum penalty to be fixed for offences under the Fisheries Acts. At present an illusory fine of 2/6 or 5/- is commonly inflicted for a first offence. This the Board hold should be considerably increased.

Eleven. Powers to District Boards to make natural obstructions in rivers passable for salmon.

Twelve. Powers to district Boards to make byelaws, such bye laws to receive the sanction of the Secretary for Scotland before coming into operation.

Thirteen. Powers to prevent illicit traffic in salmon.

Fourteen. Powers to regulate fishing in the Solway Firth. Owing to a technicality the Scotch shore of the Solway Firth does not come under the supervision of the Board.

In the eleventh report there is a very interesting note on the natural history of salmon in Norway by Mr Archer, Inspector of the Salmon fisheries of Scotland. One result of his enquiries was that many salmon do not as had been commonly supposed, spawn every year. After marking and replacing salmon in the river he found that a larger proportion of them returned from the sea the second season than returned during the first season after being marked.

This fact appears to justify the conclusion that whilst many salmon spawn every year there are many that do not do so.

I will close this part of the subject by mentioning that the replies of Clerks to district Boards to enquires to the Fishery board respecting the fishing, including trout of other descriptions in their respective districts are given very fully and should be of service to any one desiring to select a river or loch by which to spend a fishing holiday advantageously.

I come now to Part III of the Report entitled Scientific Investigations, which is by far the most voluminous and also the most interesting to the general reader.

It is, however, impossible to do even scant justice to the vast and varied work here representing which has been going on for the last eleven years. When the new Board came into existence in 1882 they took the view that to fulfil their dutie's efficiently it was necessary to know all that could be learnt respecting the life history of the different species of fish under their supervision, the physical conditions by which they are surrounded, the enemies that devour them and the varied fauna up on which they themselves subsist. To aid their investigation Parliament has annually voted a sum of about £2,000 and addition in 1887 £2,500 to purchase a steam yacht called "The Garland" and since then a further sum advancing from £500 to £1,200 for its maintenance. In 1884 the Board established a Marine Laboratory at St Andrews which has been continued ever since under Professor McIntosh. In 1885 another Laboratory was established at Tarbert (Loch Fyne) but was only occupied until 1887. In 1886-7 a portion of Rothsay Aquarium was made use of, and from 1884 to 1889 a portion of the scientific work was carried on at the Natural History Department of Edinburgh University under the charge of Professor Ewart. At a later date a Marine Laboratory has been erected at Dunbar where hatcheries on a large scale have also been established. In addition to the foregoing, fishery people and the staff of fishery officers around the coast have aided the Scientific Investigations. The board especially acknowledged their indebtedness to Messrs. Johnson & Sons of Montrose who on various occasions allowed them the use of their powerful steam trawler "The Southesk."

The scientific work of the board from its commencement was summarised in an article in "Nature" last August from which the following is quoted:-

"One Inquiries into the influence of beam trawling on the fish supply, especially within the territorial waters; the capture and destruction of immature fish by various means of fishing; the condition of inshore fisheries for shell fish and the supplies of Mussels and other bait for lure fishermen; surveys and examination of the fishing grounds etc.

Two. Investigation into the food, fecundity, reproduction habits and migrations of the food fishes, the location of their spawning grounds, and of the nurseries of young fish, the time and duration of spawning etc.

Three. The study of pelagic and demersal ova and of the development of the food fishes, and edible molluscs from the eegg onwards.

Four Inquiries into the Micro-organisms in river waters, and associated with salmon disease, and into the food of fishes in inland waters.

Five. Observations on the temperature, salinity and physical conditions of the sea around the coast.

Six. The artificial propagation of Sea-fish and Shell-fish to restock depleted grounds.

Regarding the success of the Board's scientific work the Review quoted goes on to state that their investigations "have furnished a mass of scientific and statistical evidence unexampled in the history of any fishery." The most important of their enquiries have been directed to the influence of beam trawling in regard to the destruction of immature fish, especially flat fish.

As stated above, this mode of fishing was prohibited in the territorial waters, and certain specified areas along the east coast. The result, however, has not fulfilled the expectations of the Board. From experiments made with the "The Garland" it appears that the takes of fish by means of trawl nets since the closure have not increased in three waters, but have on the contrary steadily diminished, and the conclusion arrived at is that there is a general over-fishing and great destruction of immature fish in the extra-territorial waters. Other countries have become alive to this fact and in certain English fishery districts as well as in several foreign states the landing or sale of immature fish has been penal.

Among the means adopted or proposed for counteracting this depletion of the fisheries, the principal are, the closing of breeding areas or those frequented by young fish against certain destructive methods of fishing and the establishment of Marine Hatcheries on a large scale. Under the first head, beam trawling appears to be the most obnoxious, but the comparatively unobtrusive operations of the Shrimper who works close in shore are scarcely, if at all, less destructive of young fish. It is stated that in the Solway Firth a single Shrimping boat in a year captures over 110,000 young plaice and these figures have been contraverted as being very much under the mark.

As regards hatching and stocking the seas with young fish the Board has established a hatchery at Dunbar, which can accommodate at one time 80,000,000 eggs in 16 hatching boxes. Similar hatcheries also now exist in the United States, Canada, Norway and Newfoundland and the Isle of Man and steps are being taken in the same direction in Belgium and France. During 1892 240,000,000 cod were hatched at Arendal

Norway and placed on the fishing grounds at a total cost of 1d. per 10,000 In Newfoundland the number was 165,000,000 Cod, 429,785,000 lobsters and 7,000,000 lobsters were hatched in the Canadian Establishment.

These figures are immense in comparison with what is done at the celebrated hatchery Aquarium and Hatchery at Horton, but in relation to the areas to be stocked they are insignificant.

Thirty years ago it was generally believed that sea fish spawned at the bottom of the sea especially on sandbanks and in Shore. Investigations, however, have shown that this is not the case as regards nearly all food fish, the ova floating and being hatched at or near the surface of the water. In their 9th Report the Board the following classification in regard to spawning of different kinds of fish and which embraces nearly all food fishes

One. Those whose ova are relatively very numerous and are pelagic, floating isolated at or near the surface of the sea. This group includes all flat fishes and all marine food fishes except the herring.

Two. Those in which the ova are pelagic but are connected by a continuous membrane and not isolated. The only fish on our coasts whose spawn is known to act in this way is the angler or Monk.

Three. Those whose ova are demersal or lie on the bottom and are not numerous. This group comprises (a) fish that deposit all their ova suddenly in the course of a few hours or days as the salmon, lump sucker, herring, smelt etc. (b) fish which produce successive crops of eggs throughout the season as the catfish, stickleback and most small shore forms. Floating and hatching of ova at the surface of the water is peculiar to sea fish it being obviously out of the question in the case of river fish. In the North sea it has been well ascertained that the ova of many flat fishes spawned far out to sea gradually floats towards the shore and that the young fish are hatched and commence their active career close in shore and gradually as they grow, work their way out into the deep sea.

As a result of researches very startling figures have been arrived at respecting the fecundity of several species of fish, that of no less than 37 species having been approximately determined the following quotation is from the 9th Report:-

"The Ling produces a greater number of eggs than any other fish tent to thirty million may be considered an ordinary average among medium sized and large specimens. On the other hand the pipe fish brings forth each season only a few hundreds but in this case the eggs are taken charge of by the male who carries them about in a compartment situated on his under surface. The cod produces from two or three to seven or eight million; the haddock from two or three hundred thousand to nearly a million; the Saithe from four or five to seven or eight millions; the torsk or tusk from about one or two or three millions. In the herring the number ranges from about twenty to fifty million. The average for the sixteen specimens examined being over thirty million showing a considerably greater fecundity than has generally supposed. Among flat fishes the most fertile is the Turbot from three or four to nine or ten million eggs, and the least so, the long rough dab, which produces from about thirty to sixty thousand. In its proportion to its size the flounder produces more eggs than any other fish, the number ranging from over 500,000 to about 1.600,000. The common or English Sole is also very fertile."

An important matter which has occupied much attention is the supply of bait for line fishermen. Experiments have been made to discover the kinds that are most valuable and also how far artificial preparations can be substituted for natural bait. The general result of all the experiments was the chief best baits in the firth of forth stand in the following order--- Lug-worm, mussel, clam horse mussel and limpet, cockles and garden snails were also found very successful. An adequate supply of suitable bait is of great importance. In the case of mussel bait it appears that in some districts it takes very nearly a ton of mussels to catch a ton of fish.

I cannot close this imperfect sketch without acknowledging the courtesy of Mr Robertson, Secretary to the Fishery Board, who on my informing him last week of the Meeting of the Manchester Anglers' Association, tonight, at once forwarded me copies of their reports for the last five years. Had I been aware of the extent of the elaborate investigations described in Part III I should have taken steps at a much earlier date to obtain copies both on account of the intrinsic interest of those researches and with the hope of presenting amore adequate view of them to this meeting. On its scientific side the Board have had a free hand and it is here that their work is most valuable, original and interesting. Any one of the divisions into which it is classified would have been sufficient for and would have amply repaid a full evenings discussion. I trust that this imperfect outline may not be without interest and may help to satisfy us of the soundness of a national policy which aims at the preservation and development of so great an industry and source of wealth as the Fisheries of Scotland.

Left Manchester Monday June 4th 9-47 a. m. train and returned by the 8-30 a. m. from Kinross June 9th. Stayed at Harris's Green Hotel Kinross.

The Hotel is pleasantly situated, the food good and Anglers are made very comfortable, in fact everything is done to make the fishing easy. A trap takes the Anglers from the Hotel to the boat house and is always ready to bring them back whenever they are ready to return. The boats are most comfortable and the boatmen most willing and obliging, but I do not wish to lead anyone astray when I say fishing easy (sic*)* for I can assure you the fish are very difficult to catch, and many who have fished there regularly for many years assured me that the fishing is not what it used to be, and that you cannot get the same number or weight of fish in a days fishing that you could a few years ago. When once in the boat, and in the part of the Loch selected by your boatman, as the most probable place to fill your basket, you have to work hard, and it is one continued succession of casts, until you find yourself tired out, without having landed a fish; you may have had a few rises, but of course you missed them, and could give very good reasons for having done so, so you sit down with the intension of never fishing again in Loch Leven, but I understand many anglers have gone through the same experience as myself, say the same thing and yet they return again and again to Loch Leven to fish. As a fishing place I believe Loch Leven is very much over estimated and this was the opinion of many of the Anglers whom I met there; they all agreed that to go there simply for the fishing, it was not good enough and any one who did would in all probability would return a wiser but a sadder man. Occasionally an individual angler or two may get a good basket, but it is of very rare occurrence, and is made the most of by everyone concerned with the Loch. If the Proprietors were to publish every year a statement of the number of days fished, number of rods out, and number of fish caught they would tell a tale that would open the eyes of many an innocent Angler. If Angler goes there with another object as well as fishing, say to represent the Club to which he belongs, then it is well worth while, if he can spare the time, for it is a very pleasant and enjoyable trip, but if he goes there with the idea that he will have really good

fishing, the chances are ten to one that he will be bitterly disappointed. I have fished many places but none where luck plays so important a part. I am sure the fish lie in different parts of the Loch at different times, and that upon the wind and the kind of day greatly depends the part of the Loch where the fish are to be caught. The boatmen play a very important part and upon them to a very great extent you will have to depend for your success. If you are fortunate enough to be placed at the tender mercies of men who know the Loch well, you have much in your favour, and if the day is very suitable and the fish taking you may have a few fish at the end of the day, or if lucky a record day; but if the men do not know the best drift to take you to on that special day, they will in all probability take you to a place where you will get the rise taken out of you; but no fish.

Loch Leven like many other places, which have come within the experience of most Anglers has the following peculiarity, and that is very often on what is considered the most suitable days few fish are taken, and on the most unsuitable good baskets are frequently made. I would myself much rather spend the money required for a trip to Loch Leven at Horton, but at the same time I think that an Association of the standing and importance of the Manchester Anglers' Association ought to be represented every year at the Loch Leven competition. As I consider the attendance at Loch Leven more a matter of duty than anything else, for most certainly it is not worth while to go there for the fishing only. I think the Association ought to pay the expenses of any member willing to give up his time, say three or four days in order to represent the Association at the competition. As far as the general outing goes I can only say I enjoyed myself very much, and I hope some day to find myself at Loch Leven and I sincerely trust it will be in the company of the Rev. C. P. Roberts, for much of the enjoyment arising out of this my first trip was due to his genial and happy companionship.

Tuesday	9 fish	
Wednesday	2 fish	2 lbs 10oz.
Thursday	3 fish	
Friday	13 fish	

Or 27 fish for four days. Some of the fish (the two on Wednesday being the heaviest) weighed about a pound and a little over. The fish fight well and give excellent sport, in fact, fight as well or better than any others I have caught.

Through the Suldal & Bratlandsdal

by E R Austin

Many papers have been written on this subject, some of them of the most charming character by our brother angler Abel Heywood that I fear the interest of it is almost exhausted. However in the absence of a paper from any one else for this month a few notes from a fresh observer may prove welcome.

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In the very first paper in Vol. I and in the paper Norway revisited both by Mr Heywood the district leading up from Bergen is admirably described and after having visited the scenes themselves these papers have proved of increased interest. So it is with all such pictures for these are but word pictures, to hear them described without having seen them with one's own eyes is like what the description must be to a blind man. Having passed through these enchanting scenes one can understand the pleasure of reviving them by the reading of these papers.

Since that time a new route has been opened up thanks to the energy and enterprise of the Norwegian Government. Our party consisted of two and our old narrator, Abel Heywood, was the leader of the expedition.

One sea voyage is very much like another, only varying more or less in its monotony and depending for its interest on one's fellow passengers. This voyage owing to the excessive calmness of the sea (which means happiness to the majority of one's fellow passengers) was chiefly varied by solos on the fog horn for calms at sea usually means fog, and as the landing of your fellow anglers at Stavanger in the time to catch the Fjord boat at seven on Monday morning entirely depended on the density of the fog during Sunday night it was in no pleasant frame of mind that we went to roost. Let me here remark that if you have to select a cabin try and ascertain first if it is clear of any ventilator pipes to the regions below. In spite of previous acquaintance with the "Domino," the leader of this expedition had unfortunately selected a cabin with one of these unenviable accompaniments. It was worse than a third passenger in the cabin for that party would be more accommodating in his movements than a stiff pipe 15" diameter. The result was that the expedition had to go to bed in detachments. What a blessing it is to be able to go to sleep at will and how the writer envied this ability in the leader particularly when the night is made hideous by the bleating of a fog horn at sea. At such times the most unpleasant fancies come into ones mind and if at a wakeful moment the engines should stop altogether one fancies that a bump must follow next. Many anxious calculations were made on Sunday of the distance yet to be run according to the log and it was with but little hope of arriving in time that we went to bed, the only consolation being the promise of the Captain that he would have those who wished it called an hour before arrival, if the Steamer should be on time.

One is apt to think that a good start is a good omen and you can imagine our pleasure on being knocked up at 5 a. m. and the scurry of dressing quickly to get on deck for one's first glimpse of a new country. As seen through the folds of a thick fog this was rather dispiriting, perhaps the raw morning air had something to do with it. Bye and bye the fog rolls off under the influence of a gentle breeze wreathing itself round the low hills and Stavanger breaks into view after a sharp turn round some islands amongst which our steamer had been for some time threading her way. The first thing that strikes one is the certainty of its being a new country, from the very quaintness of the buildings which owing to the almost tideless waters come down to the very waters edge. There is a look of Holland and its devious canals about the place but the marvellous clearness of the water soon dispels that illusion.

After a very cursory examination of one's baggage we find ourselves on board the little Fjord Steamer on a glorious summer morning winding our way amongst the islands of the Stavanger Fjord on our way to Sand at its head. The scenery pretty at first gradually closes in and the hills rise into mountains giving one the first real idea of Norway. The land at Sand almost a brand new place (brought into life by the opening of the new route through Bratlandsdaal and the Roldal) after driving into various recesses in the fjord and embarking country folks.

At Sand a huge river runs into the Fjord with such a volume of water that its course can be seen right across for a mile. A noted salmon river sometimes called the Suldal river and the scene of experiments made by Mr W. E. Archer in marking salmon described in the Blue book produced by Mr Broderick in support of his capital paper "The work of the Scotch Fishery Board" read at the May meeting of the Association.

By the kindness of Mr Roberson the Government inspector of Fisheries these blue books are now in our library.

In the field about a month ago appeared an account of a lady's fishing in this river (Mrs Maitland King). In six hours her basket was some sea trout seven salmon from forty pounds downwards altogether 149 pounds. This speaks volumes for the fishing in Norway and after seeing the river one can quite understand it. If a lady can do this what etc. etc.

At Sand the writer made his first acquaintance with Norwegian land travelling and it is scarcely possible to believe at first sight that these primitive looking conveyances could carry one over miles of country and over such mountains with so much comfort and I would back on of these Norwegian Stolkjaerres (a two wheeled cart with seats for two in front and the driver behind) against any country conveyance in this civilised land of ours for comfort with a minimum of weight.

The road from Sand to Osen (about 19 Kms) runs along side the river, at many places at great height above it and the foaming torrent below is a grand sight. About half way is a fine house built we are told by Mr Archer who rents the fishing in the river and as we pass pools and runs of the most sporting looking character one cannot help envying the owner of such a river running past his very door. We see no signs, however, of any fishermen about.

As soon as the head of the river becomes navigable for Steamers there is a small Station "Suledal" charmingly pitched on the bank of a splendid pool at the foot of some granite precipices a fine conical hill shown by the photo. Here we take the Fjord Steamer and for some time it is about as much as she can make headway against the strong stream round the bends. As the fjord opens out the writer gets his first impression of what Norwegian mountains really are the towering cliffs running almost perpendicularly in to the water clothed from top to bottom with firs and that prettiest of all trees the birch and crowned with snow every ledge having its fringe of trees and it is only by measuring the height of the cliffs by the trees that one gets an idea of their vast height.

On this Fjord we pass through the "Portal" where two large cliffs some 2,000 or more feet high come close together leaving only room for the Steamer to pass through. Here we begin to think of the morrows fishing as our leader has planned to stop at "Naes" at the head of the Suldal Fjord.

Another brand new place and picturesque as all Norsk Hotels are, standing on the edge of the Fjord and one looks round and wonders where the road there from breaks through the surrounding mountains.

Our leader has a letter from a friend who knows the fishing here and we take short walk whilst dinner is preparing in search of the river mentioned, we find it a huge rushing torrent not far from the hotel ----ing across the Fjord that we speedily decide is not possible to fish. On returning to the hotel, on dinner intent, we discuss the great question with the hotel porter and a local boatman and learn that the fishing is done from a boat and what is very much to the point that same Englishman had that day taken 63 trout in the Fjord and 90 the day before. This is puzzling, as not a sign of a rising trout had we seen although the waters were as calm as the proverbial mill pond. A talk with the Englishman soon clears the mystery up. It was no exaggeration their reported catches and we learned that the fish are to be found at the edges where the fosses plunge in from the mountain sides,

After dinner we take boat and are pulled up to where the river tears across the Fjord and soon have a few fish—silvery trout that look like bars of silver in the clear water and which we take to be sea trout. We pulled across and across the stream and land some half dozen fish—not of any great size the largest perhaps scaling three quarters of a pound. We fish until eleven o'clock when being early on in the month of July it is still quite light. Arrangements are made with our boatman for an early start and we go to roost dreaming of great things for the morrow which we have fair hopes of coming true after a talk with our English friends who are leaving on the morrow going further north. Our first thought on waking is the weather about which we need scarcely have troubled ourselves as the whole of that week was a continual bath of sunshine. We aim at first for a foss directly in front of the hotel and apparently not a quarter of a mile off but never were one's idea of distances so terribly upset by the surroundings—this foss turns out to be about two miles away. A trial here gives no result which is the reverse of encouraging but one soon forgets this little disappointment in the glory of the sunshine and magnificent scenery. We then make for a foss we are told of some where round the corner and a long pull it is in which we both have to take our part with the oars. Our boating ideas receive a rude shock on entering on this part of the business. Fancy a small fir pole for an oar with rudely fashioned blade and left square at the working part and only one crutch for a rowlock behind the oar to which it is fastened by a withy passed through a hole in the crutch. An apprenticeship is required for this work indeed. When the oar wears a piece of wood is nailed on as a wearing strip.

In the light of our previous evenings experience this looks more likely, a fair sized river enters the Fjord here tumbling into it over huge stones. As advised by our friends we land first of all and fish from the bank a difficult matter what with huge stones, bushes and sundry twisted birch stumps. We are, however, rewarded with several bonny fish and find to our astonishment that two kinds of trout are lying together, the silvery sea trout and the ordinary brown trout—the latter seeming to lie amongst the stronger water and stones.

We take to our boat after fishing along the edges from the shore and the fun becomes lively, fish after fish being landed, now a bonny brown trout though scarcely as bright as our English fellows, and now a silvery trout, the gamest of fish that was ever beguiled by a fly.

The water is that of brilliant transparency so well known in snow fed rivers where there is no mud of the low lying lands to sully its purity, it coming straight off the snow fields on the top and d Vol 8 mountains sides and it is a pretty sight for a fisherman to see his fish fast hooked dashing about tw deep in the water for time after time after warily winding his prey up within landing distance the game fish takes a header at the sight of those foreign devils down to the bottom with a rush that nothing can stop. The quantity of fish lying at this place can be estimated by the fact that at the same spot on the previous day our friends had basketed fifty fish. After a time the sport slackens and we go further in search of fosses, but none came up to this one and after taking another turn at it on the way home we pull contentedly home with fifty trout the largest two pounds and what a hot pull it was in that lake of magnificent distances. A week might very well be spent here but after taking some photos our leader announces the route for tomorrow at 8 p.m. (?) by road through the Bratlandsdaal north towards Odde.

As I have said this is a road only made within the last few years and one can understand it for there is no natural road whatever, the river has cut its way many hundred feet into the solid rock and the road had to be cut in the face of the beetling cliffs, at first by men suspended from above until a foothold could be gained. Here and there it has not been possible to get through except by tunnels and half tunnels.

We halt for lunch at Breifond overlooking the Roldal Lake, a charming prospect, having taken sundry photos on the road--- one of an ever to be remembered scene where the snow topped mountains were reflected in the clear surface of the lake.

A stiff climb now lies before us as we as we have to cross the mountains to Odde at the head of the Hardanger Fjord. Here a splendid zigzag road winds up the side of the mountain which has to be walked until the summit is reached a rock being marked with the altitude 3280 feet and we pass through a snow field many feet deep the road being in a small cutting of snow and at times a small lake is visible emerging from its burden of winter clothing and miniature icebergs floating about on its placid waters. A few photos are taken here.

The descent from the engineer's point of view is still more extraordinary the road being literally cut out of the face of the cliff and you see it winding for more than two thousand or more feet below you.

It is very pretty to see the way the hardy surefooted ponies tackle these descents—they are of uniform grade and the little fellows tear down the slopes until they arrive at the turn of the zigzag at which they slacken of their own accord there being no such thing as brakes and not a breech strap.

A lesson might very well be learnt from Norsk practice by our road makers and above all by users of horses. The new roads have evidently been made to a grade that permits a full speed being maintained downhill without any brake being required. The seat on which passengers sit slides on iron bars and on coming to the descents of any length the weigh is adjusted so as to take it off the ponies back and the slide fixed by a thumb screw, the process being reversed on going up hill. The usual saddle is dispensed with, an ornamental metal bridge being substituted connected by straps with the shafts and the two oval pads bearing on the pony's shoulders behind the withers.

The ease and certainty with which these little fellows with their three men and baggage in a "Stolkjoerre" behind, dash at the slopes is most exhilarating, though slightly tending to raise the hair on taking the sharp turns with only a few big stones placed on end at the side of the road between you and a thousand feet of precipice.

Here we seem to enter into quite another region, large trees and a glorious valley ever opening into fresh and more lovely views with magnificent fosses on both sides amongst them being the noted Later (*Laatefos)* Foss, the Espiland Foss and the Hulda Foss each of them worth a days visit, until we drop down into Odde a baking hot place with the fashionable hotel so dear to the British tourist as he very often finds in more senses than one. Our chief desire is to get out of it as soon as possible, but we have views for the morrow. We arrive later in the evening in time for the table d'hote but with no time to change and the result is we are ushered into a large "spise saal," in our knickers and travelling clothes amongst a fashionable company. It is pleasant to see old faces here, however, as on looking round the room we receive a nod here and a bow there from our fellow passengers of the "Domino" who had gone on to Bergen and had travelled South whilst we were wending our way north. Here also we met our fishing friends again. At dinner we hear talk of a wonderful salmon caught that afternoon and find the fish laid out in state in the court of the hotel, a magnificent clean fish of thirty five and a half pounds caught by Dr. Boyd of Oxford, who is proud of telling you of the remarkable way he was landed and figures in a photo along with the fish, taken by our leader.

The next day is devoted to an exploration of the Buarbrae Glacier an off shoot of the Folgefond Glacier which crowns the mountain tops for many miles with a sea of ice. One would imagine that the exploration of a glacier meant comparative coolness, the water was cold enough running down the valley but the writer remembers it as the very hottest walk of his life. A rough road up a narrow valley with the sun streaming down on ones back and a steady climb all the way lingers still in the writer's recollection. The toil was well repaid however and some excellent photos were taken of the end of the glacier with its lovely blue shadows. On the way up to the Sandven Vand a lake evidently formed in ancient times by a huge moronic closing the end of the valley through which the river of Dr. Boyd's exploit had cut its way in one corner, a fisherman was met carrying a solitary trout from the lake our leader has fished here in times gone by but with indifferent success hearing that the German Emperor is expected that afternoon he decides it is time to clear out as the place cannot possibly hold him and two of your Manchester Anglers. We do so by the afternoon boat and have an amusing experience of the way cattle are handled on these boats by means of a steam crane. It is none too soon for half an hour down the fjord we meet the "Hohenzollern" with His Imperial Highness on board the rear guard being brought up by an ugly torpedo boat. This precipitate flight can be understood when it is known that the Emperor lands two or three hundred strong and makes a famine in the place.

The previous days travelling occupying the whole of the day, had been made by land so the five or six hours by steamer is an agreeable change. We land at Eide and the writer had pleasant dreams of resting there for the night, after the long hot days work—Not a bit of it--- Our insatiable leader as if possessed with the demon of travel, charters a return "caleche" from Vos and after "Afteus made" we again take to the road. The writer bargains feebly for a halt at the end of the first ten kilometres for the night, but once started the demon of travel also enters his soul and does not leave him until he has landed him at one o'clock in the morning at Vos. Nothing could have been more delightful than this drive from Eide round the lake above the gorge and under the beautiful "Shire" foss in the waning evening light of a Norwegians Summers day. For a time when crossing the mountain top there appeared to be a slight diminution in the light but by the time we had dropped into the Voss valley it was broad daylight once more.

The fishing at Eide is said to be good particularly in the lake above when the sea trout run up, which they are better able to now that the salmon traps have been brought off the rivers leading up to it. If the writer ever has the good fortune to find himself here again he promises himself a few hours to test the question at the charming hotel – demon or no demon. Our leader pointed out where he had caught sundry trout in the river feeding the lake which takes its source from a lovely foss. His sport however had not been great but judging by our experience on the Suledal better things might be expected by fishing from a boat at the mouth of the river where it debouches into the lake.

On descending into the Voss valley the fisherman will notice a beautiful trouty looking river running into the lake in front of Fleischers big hotel. Judging by our leader's experience in years gone by this is not worth giving attention to as the fish run small.

One of the chief essentials to the comfort of the traveller is good cooking and the dainty luncheons laid out at the stations are things to be remembered.

How it is tourists come from home with tales of poor hotels and indifferent cooking is a puzzle to the writer for never was any expedition so well housed or so well fed as ours. Perhaps it was owing to the "savoir faire" of the leader and his knowledge of the language. There was one word that seemed to have a magical effect and that was "strax". This only missed fire once. At Naes when we explained the meaning in English to the waiting maid. She pronounced it "shairp" and the effect was that breakfast was half an hour behind the appointed time.

A few hours sleep sufficed us at Vos and we were again on the road northwards with the intention of travelling right through to Laerdal. However on halting for lunch at a new hotel standing on the lake side at Opheim and called "Franniaes" we noticed considerable signs of fishing about the hall and a talk with the landlord (a young fellow who had spent some time in America) and a look at the lake behind decided us to break our journey for a day. The hotel is quite new and excellently managed by the landlord and his sister. Here let me pay a tribute to the pluck of Norwegian women. In the summer little Miss Moylire, a thorough botanist as one can see by the pressed specimens of the wild flowers in the "saal" does not disdain looking after the cooking and waiting with her own hands on her guests and in winter time goes to Glasgow and studies medicine.

The writer would strongly recommend his friends to make a stay at this place, the fishing being good in the lake, for in spite of the brilliant sun shine we caught some nice fish our joint basket being for the afternoon fourteen fish and the next morning about the same number. The largest fish are to be had with the minnow fished along the edges of the shallows. Our expedition, however, stuck to the fly throughout. Here again the fish were found at the mouths of the small streams running into the lake.

Some amusing experiences of the hotels on this route, when our leader first travelled along it, are given by him in his first paper. This is now quite changed. Nice hotels have been built at every station.

The next day found us on our way through some of the finest scenery that Norway can boast of. The trip from Gudrangen where we arrived late in the evening, is so admirably described by our leader in the paper mentioned that it is only necessary for the writer to say that it is not one bit exaggerated. The Naero Fjord without exception is one of the finest bits of scenery that the writer has had the good fortune to see and viewed by the light of a summer's evening made a lasting impression on his mind.

The Steamer winds it way through the Fjord stopping here and there at charming country places along the shores and at length drops us at Laerdal where much to his surprise our leader is met by a native from Haeg carrying his own letter announcing his intention of coming to stay for a while. We speculate on the piece of good luck that possessed this man to expect us by this particular steamer and congratulate ourselves. It is a Saturday evening and at midnight for it is too hot to turn in we are amused at a kind of Wild West rehearsal, all the cows of the town being turned out and escorted by seven men on long tailed ponies to the "sacters" on the hills.

Our travelling with the exception of the final 40 kilometres up the Laerdal valley is now over and looking back it seems to be about a month since our expedition left Staranger so much has been seen and done in the time.

Fishing is now the order of the day and although your anglers did not fill their creels thrice in the course of one days fishing as happened to our leader on his ever memorable first expedition still the baskets holding 15 pounds were more than once filled, sometimes at Borgund, sometimes at Haeg and sometimes at Breistolen high up on the mountains at about the same altitude as the top of Ingleborough.

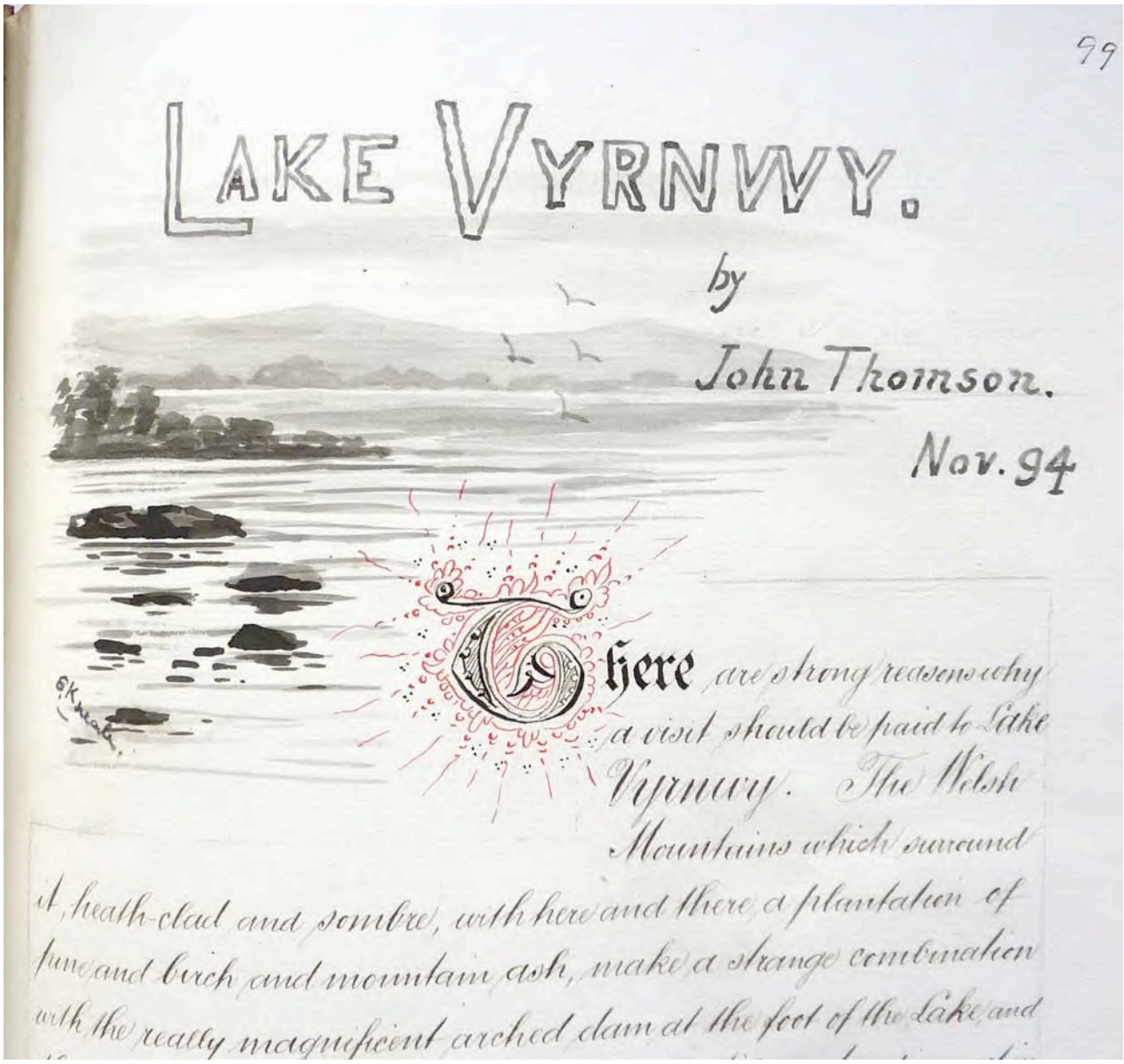
Some of the baskets were as follows
20 Fish weighing 11 pounds including 5 of one pound each (see photo)
11 Fish`` " 13 pounds (3 of 2lbs ea.)
11 Fish " 9 lbs (two of 2 lbs ea.)
13 Fish " 7lbs
20 Fish " 12lbs (2 of 2lbs ea.)

for one rod and such glorious fish almost as silvery as the Suledale fish but with red spots.

In travelling through the country the engineer sees signs of considerable ingenuity about him.
The farm houses are all in the valleys but a large amount of grass grows on the almost inaccessible hill tops.
These supplies are got down from the tops by aerial wires taking flights of hundreds of feet through the air from the valley below. The wires are stretched by primitive capstans and the hay, timber etc., are slid down from above.
Some of the bridges are also very striking for here and there may be seen some very good specimens of cantilever bridges.
Whether these are as ancient as those said to have been constructed by the Chinese some two thousand years ago the writer does not know but they are very ingeniously constructed.
Advantage is taken of some over hanging shelf of rock as is so well shown by the photo taken at Borgund in which strong fir poles are laid projecting over the ravine, their butts being carried well back and weighted with stones.
Sometimes as in the case of the Borgund bridge there is a difficulty of getting a landing on one side. This is got over by struts projected from the rocks below. The two cantilevers form about a half of the span. The total span of some of these must be quite fifty feet.

Not much now remains to be told, after many pleasant days spent up and down the valley, fishing here and there, the inevitable packing up day comes all too soon. A day and a half's travel by road and afterwards by Steamer down the Sogne Fjord lands our expedition at Bergan at 6 o'clock on a lovely summer's morning whence the steamer "El Dorado" is taken for the home voyage.

Seven hours steaming through the multitudes of islands lying off the Norsk coast brings us to Stavanger whence we take our departure at about 9 in the evening striking out into one of the most glorious sun sets which brings to an end the most enjoyable holiday of its kind the writer has ever spent. Needless to say all kinds of resolutions are made on the homeward voyage of again tasting the pleasures of another expedition."



There are strong reasons why a visit should be made to Lake Vyrnwy. The Welsh Mountains that surround it, heath clad and sombre, with here and there a plantation of pine and birch and mountain ash, make a strange combination with the really magnificent arched dam at the foot of the lake and the picturesque tower with its green coppered tiling standing out in the water like some castle on the Rhine. The dam is built of stone. About 263,000 cubic yards of it were used, more than 500,000 tons of stone and 27,000 tons of cement to bind together. There are 33 arches. The straining tower, three quarters of a mile above the dam is the entrance to the aqueduct. It draws the water out somewhat below the surface, and there is a sort of fine mesh that strain out all the grosser impurities from the water. The hand of man has worked here in unison with the hand of Nature and the effect is charming. Those who have been at Rome have felt the interest that the noble old aqueducts give to the Campagna. Monuments of the greatness of old Rome, these time stained overgrown ruins, do not deface the scene, but call up to the mind the picture of the Imperial city in her days of splendour, when the streams they conveyed slaked the thirst of millions. So these great works at the source of the Severn among the lovely mountains suggest to us the busy streets and docks of distant Liverpool. Her thronging multitudes must be refreshed by these cool pure waters. It surely lends a double charm to the restful loneliness of this lake among the hills, to remember the toilers in the crowded streets, and to reflect that for a brief space we are like Tennyson's Lotus Eaters, dreamily resting, free from toil and care. Another curious thought lends enchantment to the lake. Underneath these waters is the site of the old village of Llanwddyn. There was the old church, there the bridge over the cedig, the post office and the old Cross Guns Inn. Here stood a farmhouse just below where yonder trout has broken the surface. In the bay over there stood Eunant Hall, a fine country house with many gables. A little island marks the spot near the mouth of a stream. The fish are now sheltering in the remains of the houses.

One is reminded of Horace's ode---

The fish are swimming in the top of trees,
Where erst the pigeons roosted in the breeze.

Or better still one's fancy carries one away to the Arabian Nights, to the enchanted lake the fisherman found among the hills, where he caught the fish of diverse colours who had once been the Mussulman, Christian, Jewish and Pagan inhabitants of a submerged city. When those fish were in the frying pan, you may remember how a majestic lady walked through the kitchen walls, and striking the pan with a wand exclaimed, "Fish, fish, are you doing your duty?" Truly a searching question whether for man or fish! There is another charm about the Vyrnwy Lake. The angler is an honest simple man, not averse to creature comforts. These he will find admirably provided for in the hostel built by the Liverpool Corporation on the hill just beside the embankment. He will find good entertainment when he comes home tired in the evening; an excellent table d'hote at eight o'clock, wonderfully furnished rooms, good attendance and comfortable bedding on which to dream of the captures of tomorrow. The hotel is about a thousand feet above sea level.

There are plenty of boats and skilled boatmen. There are also plenty of fish, as you will see whenever the wind goes down. The surface is then covered with rings, nearly all over the lake. There can be no doubt that Vyrnwy is an early lake. April and the first days of May is the best time for fishing, though sometimes good baskets may be made in September. The flies should be small, Loch Leven size, and the gut of course fine though pretty strong. I recommend three flies at a time. For point flies claret and mallard, claret and grouse, or black body with gold twist, claret hackle, and teal wings or March brown would be my selection. For the middle dropper I have found nothing to equal green and grouse and for the top dropper the butcher, silver body, black hackle and blue black wings, is facile princeps. I have also found the alder fly a good point fly on bright days. Lee's favourite and zulu are good droppers and sometimes with a high wind the fly called golden dropper kill well.

I have seen the trout take pretty well in a dead calm if you can get your flies into the middle of the circle just after a fish has risen and let them sink pretty deep. The difficulty is to get within casting distance, under such conditions. On Loch Leven, also, you will some times find it possible to pick up a good many fish in a dead calm in the same way, though there I have usually found red and teal the best of all flies; whereas on Vyrnwy I have never done any good with this. The experience of others may be different. It appears that faith must be a sine qua non for the success of a fly; if you do not expect, you rarely seem to succeed.

There is no reason why a fair hand may not capture the limit of twenty trout on any good day in the spring; in the summer the numbers will be much smaller, and in autumn the large baskets except on specially suitable days, are killed with the natural minnow or the Chapman spinner, which I confess does not appear to me to be sport. It is better on these autumn days to take your gun and go for a duck and a few partridges on the rough shooting attached to the hotel.

The trout in Lake Vyrnwy are derived partly from the aboriginal species, which inhabited the now submerged rivers and partly from Loch Leven stock. When first the fishing was opened the average weight was fully a pound—last year it ran something between half to three quarters of a pound. The best fish I have seen was a fine fellow of two and a half pounds, which my son killed on the butcher last spring. There must be a good many of two pounds and over, but strange to say comparatively few of them have been caught, and so far as I know those that have been got have taken the fly, not the minnow.

Another remark that should be made is, that very often the rise seems to be in quite deep water. Again and again I have done better well out in the deeps than at the sides, though in the spring there can be no question that the rocky sides always hold the very best fish, and many smaller ones. If any of my hearers have fished Crummock Water, they may have discovered that the sides are not always the best places, for in that lake there is nothing to equal a drift right down the middle. Trout do not seem to rise steadily in the deeps. They come on for half an hour or an hour at a time, whereas in the shallow water at the margins there are more ready to take a casual fly. A visit to the fish hatcheries and breeding ponds will show what systematic arrangements have been made to keep up the supply of trout. But there must be many thousands bred naturally in the three or four streams that feed the lake.

Manchester might well take a lesson from the success of the Liverpool Corporation in making their Vyrnwy reservoir a first rate fishing lake. Thirlmere has all the advantages that Vyrnwy possesses. Before it was bought by our Water Works Thirlmere was an excellent trout lake. Many beautiful three quarter to one pound trout have been taken with the fly from its shores in those days. But I do not think our Corporation have dealt wisely with it. They have allowed the pike to become far too numerous. These monsters should be netted in the breeding season, and a few swans would do a great deal to keep them down by consuming their spawn. The great Lake trout has been introduced into Thirlmere. As a sporting fish this is a fraud.

Occasionally he will take the minnow, but except in his early youth never the fly. He is a cannibal of the worst type, fully as bad as the pike himself. There can be no doubt that the Loch Leven trout should be introduced yearly. They belong to a breed that seems to adapt itself to all waters, though when food is scarce it bears but little resemblance to the same fish in its native habitat. Everywhere, however, the Loch Leven trout is a sporting fish, taking much of its food at or near the surface. If Thirlmere were all stocked with this variety it would soon rival Vyrnwy as a fishing ground. Why should not our Manchester Corporation entrust this lake to the anglers of this city? At present it is worthless from a piscatorial point of view; but in three years time with the expenditure £100 a year in stocking it might be made first class, and might very soon not only recoup all expenses, but yield a revenue to the Corporation.

I think our association might do worse than arrange for a competition on Lake Vyrnwy about the middle of next April. We have sent representatives to the National Competition on Loch Leven. Might we not try our own prowess on these nearer waters? Our discussions here are too academical. It is pleasant in these winter months to sit in the halo of many pipes and babble of green fields and flowing streams and lakes with a perpetual ripple on their surfaces; but when the spring comes let us take our twelve foot rods and try conclusions with the Vyrnwy trout.

In writing on this subject I will say at once that it is the most unqualifiedly pleasant sport that I have ever had or ever heard of. Elsewhere there is sport more exciting, sport with greater hardships, but at the same time with larger game and greater triumphs, sport on the other hand with more luxurious accompaniments and less work, but for good sport under pleasant conditions I know nothing equal to the subject of this paper. There are perhaps other rivers also in the Rockies, which have as many and as fine fish and where the climate and other natural conditions are as good as on the Rio Grande: but for me for several reasons no river seems to equal it. I have heard others express similar sentiments. I doubt whether I shall ever enjoy fishing as much elsewhere. Among the causes that make the Rio Grande specially my favourite id no doubt the fact that an added interest attaches to it by reason of my having seen almost every reach of it, from the source in the perpetual snow down to the Mexican Border where one may find Alligators in its waters, a distance of 899 miles. My first sight of the river was in June 1883 when on my earliest camping trip in America. Who can forget his first bed under the open sky? his eyes wandering about the skies and mountains, the soft breezes playing about his pillow and the horses steadily tearing of the grass close round him! All strange it was and so delicious that time, but I have never yet grown tired of it though now I have lived in that way for months. We had been driving under a roasting sun for three days from the foot of the Poncha Pass down through the centre of what is known as the San Luis Valley, when we came quite suddenly upon the refreshing sight of the cool clear waters of the Rio Grande moving quietly along between grassy banks in the level plain. The San Luis though called a Valley is in fact a long treeless strip some 50 or 60 miles wide of the New Mexico plains stretching up from the south into Colorado at an altitude above sea level of about 8,000 feet between the La Garita and Cochetopa Mountains to the west and the superb Sangre de Christo to the east running north and south as far as the eye can reach. This latter range no matter from what quarter it is seen is one of the most striking sights imaginable snow capped nearly all the year round, it rises abruptly 6,000 to 7,000

feet out of the level so called Valley beneath, an unbroken wall surmounted by more than a hundred symmetrical saw toothed peaks blushing rosy red morning and evening and dazzlingly white during the day, the serrated edge cuts into the blue of the sky like a horizontal zigzag of lightening. No chain of mountains, that I have ever seen, make the same impression on me. From a distance and in the clear air of the region a hundred miles of the range is taken in at a single glance. One sees sunshine and storm alternating in magnificent contrast. Half way down the San Lino the Rio Grande del Norte (The great river of the north as the early Spanish Settlers in Mexico named it) quietly glides from La Garita Mountains, through a huge rocky gateway and debouches upon the plain. The gap in the rocks has grown much wider than the actual river by the shifting of the watercourse and on the grassy flat between the rocks hidden in a thick grove of trees, if the picturesque little town of Del Norte. Here the primitive Mexican methods still prevail. The houses many of them are built of one foot square mud bricks—albeit the warmest winter and coolest summer material I know--- one story high only and with flat roof. The thrashing is done by driving herds of goats or ponies round and round and round over the grain strewn about the yard as it comes from the field. The men wear sugar loaf hats (white felt or straw) and a coloured blanket thrown over the shoulders and of course widening out towards the skirts which makes the whole figure resemble the Pons Assinorum on short stilts. These and many other sights takes one back to civilization older than that of the State in which the first white man's house was built in the present capital Denver—in the year 1858. Higher up the San Luis than the point at which the Rio Grande enters, other smaller streams of which the Saguache (pronounced this Sai watch) is the only one worthy of a name, but all of which abound in trout, gather in a common course and join the Rio Grande twenty or thirty miles south east of Del Norte. But altogether these form but a very small stream as compared with the Rio Grande itself at the point where it has already in the 80 or 90 miles of its course received a thousand little tributaries from the snow fields, which cone tumbling down gulches through rank grass and over rocks into the narrow valley of the river proper. These rivulets are only interrupted in their headlong course for a moment here and there in pools where the storms of many Springs have filled up barriers of pine trunks, smooth and grey now with the sun and water and filled the interstice's with drift wood and their number is increased by hundreds when the melting snows make temporary channels and come leaping over the cliffs in all directions. Of these smaller streams I remember in particular the one which bears the name of the Great River through its whole course from the snows in which we camped the night I first saw it, down to the tropical waters of the Gulf of Mexico. From El Paso the point at which it becomes the boundary between Old Mexico and the United States to Matamoras on the Gulf coast I know the river only at second hand from a friend who explored it for the U. S. Government years ago. At that time the border was a sort of no man's land where the outcasts of Society lived without other laws than "Might is right". Without a chart, of course, and with only two attendants, both Mexicans, to row, he made the voyage in a canoe to the gulf. Fever was staved off nightly, only with liberal doses of quinine, the rapids had all to be shot at a venture, and every camp was hide and seek with robbers and Indians. The voyage down, however, was concluded in safety, but both of the Mexicans were killed on their way back.

Trout fishing extends but a short distance below the Colorado line. In New Mexico there are reaches of the river bed miles in length, across which I have seen clouds of dust blowing during the dry season, the water in these places having sunk into the ground to come to the surface again lower down. All through New Mexico and Texas as far as I know there is nothing in the way of fish to be caught except rough fish that only take bait popularly called cat fish and white fish—the latter running up sometimes to as high as 50 and 60 pounds in weight. But for one who prefers ducks and geese to fishing the river hereabouts is a Paradise in Spring and Autumn. Before leaving these lower reaches I would fain speak of the old town of Paso Del Norte on the Mexican side with its Moorish Church built in 1551, its picturesque people, its fiestas and its bull fights, but this supposed to be a paper on fishing.

To return then to the source of the river. Its first beginning trickles out from under a perpetual snow field high above the every day world, and barely showing any current as it passes among bog violets, mosses and bog plants from one pool to another of a great morass which lies out on an open shoulder of the great Continental Divide above (the) timber line, it disappears for a short time in a gloomy gulch lined with pines, among which lie---as a notice on a blazed tree shows--- the bodies of two miners in a snow slide of years ago. Then reappearing in the Valley below still nothing more than a turbulent brown brook, it bubbles and rushes in and out among willows and long grass, to grow by degrees as it passes down –80 miles—to the San Luis and through the long sun dried deserts of New Mexico into the quiet and stately river that moves along now through the open plains, now as a chain of lakes among high precipitous cliffs, and again in a steady swift stream, till it mingles its waters with the blue expanse of the Gulf of Mexico.

Within the limits of the state of Colorado, from which I will not again stray, the only fish in the river except minnows and such small fry is the mountain trout, in all respects like our own English trout, except

for the absence of the red spots. In habits the only difference seems to be that owing, no doubt, to the exigencies of climate. These trout spawn in the Spring, have shorter hours for feeding and gather more exclusively into the pools in the autumn. At the high altitude of which I am writing the water reaches freezing point every night by the end of September, and hence probably the spawning in Spring and early Summer. The shortened feeding hours too are no doubt to the fact that the flies and other insects hardly get warmed up even in Midsummer, before nine o'clock in the morning. The general character of the food is much the same as with us at home, the largest fish of all usually declining anything but ground bait, except in Midsummer. There is even a May fly season which is known as the "Willow bug time". No account of the Rio Grande fishing would be complete without the special mention of the willow bug, it is a most forbidding beast to look at while at rest, but rather pretty when on the wing. The flight is slow and always on a dead level and the regularity of the flapping of the four great light brown wings when seen diagonally gives the impression of a well ordered procession. The body is flattish and from an inch and a quarter, to an inch and a half in length, colour dark orange on the belly shading off to brown on the back with a bright orange ring round the neck. The wings, which when the fly is at rest, lie perfectly horizontal on the back projecting even beyond the long body are so folded one over the other that one only appears. They are of a transparent darkish brown, though they both look light and very bright in the sun. During the "Willow bug time" an incessant crossing and recrossing of the river at about eight feet above the water from the trees on one side to those on the other, is kept up giving the effect of a most voluminous and efficient aerial ferry service. They appear in millions all at once, and in ten days they are gone. The tenantless brown shells of the helgomites (? I don't know whether this is the right word) stand rampant on every stone and stick like a huge marching army struck dead. These "bugs" begin to think of their posterity apparently almost as soon as they are hatched. After three or four days of life they begin the process of reproduction a third fly curiously enough almost always standing by and the interior of the male passes almost wholly in to the female in a few hours, leaving the head and the wings of the male to crawl about for a short time and then die. Altogether the willow bug is a most curious fly. Unfortunately for me I had had no previous experience of this season when I started for the river this past June and neither had nor could I get anywhere anything at all nearly resembling the willow bug and with scanty materials and not being anything of a fly maker myself I was unable to turn out anything that I dared to offer as an apology for the genuine article. As with our own May fly one can not do much with any other during its season, and I have to admit that on this occasion I resorted pretty largely during the first two or three days to putting on of the natural flies onto my leader. To show how poor one's chance would otherwise have been I may mention I opened the first fish I caught, a half pounder, and found in its belly no less than ten of these large creatures and four of the Helgomites. Beginning at about nine o'clock the rise continued until noon when it became luke warm , to increase again at about four in the afternoon. In the evening after six I was glad to find that "even in the high and palmist days" of the willow bug I had fair success with the white coachman and I must say that the inconvenience and discomfort of casting with a last big bunch on the leader went far to neutralize the pleasure of catching more fish than one otherwise would have done. After three days I entirely abandoned it, the more readily that the never to be too highly praised, blue dun, cock a bundy, red spinner and grey hackle began to reassert themselves as the willow bug waned. "Poor insect! What a little day." But before I leave the willow bug entirely I must speak of one of the two big fish of this trip. On the morning of the third day I was wading in the shallow water collecting some of these beasts from the Alder bushes from which they allowed one to pick them when I noticed in the perfectly still shallow water at the head of the Mill race a huge trout cruising round under a small alder from which one of the numberless willow bugs collected upon it, from time to time dropping. I immediately sneaked out of the water and crawled cautiously up behind the bush flat on my stomach and putting on two large brutes, had not even dropped them quite onto the water, when the big fish made a half turn to the right, sailed up to the surface jumped to meet the flies and took them! Then for a moment the delicious feeling of triumph at having a real prize took possession of me. This fish was certainly over three pounds. The return in the evening, the comparison of baskets, the congratulation—I saw it all--- I thought of how often I had longed for such a moment—I thought of the friend at home with whom I had fished hundreds of times and never seen such a fish caught. In imagination I wrote to him and watched him read about it. Such a fish was my ambition—and that ambition I still have to live for!

To speak first of the expedition I made this year to my favourite fishing ground. Three of us left Colorado Springs by train at night, and passing through the Royal Gorge of the Arkansas River over the range and down the San Luis were at Del Norte the next day by noon. Our great anxiety had been as to the condition of the water as the floods from the melting snow on the eastern side of the mountains had not subsided. But our first glimpse of the Grande set all doubts at rest. It was in absolutely perfect order, and there was a man wading up to his waist in the middle of the river. How differently one feels towards the man

who, fishing in the first stretch of the river, is a sort of guarantee of sport, and the man who is doing the same thing when one happens to reach the stretch one had proposed for oneself! Everyone assured us that "Sport was good everywhere and the Willow bug was up about South Fork". The popular belief is that these "bugs" move upstream in an army. Needless to say it is not so but that they hatch out just a little later as the altitude increases and the warm season is deferred. In due course our train stopped in the middle of the meadow and dropped in our baggage at Phillips's ranch. We were heartily welcomed by the family, as two of us had already been there more than once before and I had stayed there often and we saw in a pan on the kitchen table a fine four pounder earnest of things to come. Mrs Phillips came to the Grande many years ago with her grandmother parents and brothers all of whom live at different points on the river except the old lady. She like Mathew Arnold's Monica had ever wished to return to England to die and be buried there but as this world grew shadowy and the next one more real, she chose to be buried by a certain rock under an Aspen tree close to the house. Phillips has cattle and horses on the range for which he cuts a fair amount of hay in his Meadow, which constitutes all that there is of valley land at this point. The house commodious and comfortable enough and built by himself of boards is at the waters edge and the mountains rise steep on both sides of the river. The only industry in the valley is the raising of, hay and cattle and a little cutting of sleepers for railways, out of the pine forests. A long string of sleepers are now lying high up on the mountains on a slope opposite to the house thrown over a steep cliff looking in the distance like so many matches. The wagon-tree and wheels, on which they were hauled from the other side of the mountains to the Cliff's edge, were dragged up in pieces in the early Spring and put together, and there they stay, as the hard times which have struck the Denver and Rio Grande Railway in common with others has called a halt in the work. The old county traditions as to house keeping and the old recipes for Devonshire cream etc. are still alive in the family, and the excellent fish, game, milk, cream, butter Devonshire cream, preserves etc. together with the hearty good will of father, mother and children and the Liberty Hall style of the whole household make a visit to Phillips's a great pleasure in itself quite apart from the fishing. After dinner on the day of our arrival we got into our wading togs and went down to the river to discover the omnipresence of the willow bug. Both on that and the following two days our luck was only fair—some seven or eight pounds each daily. I got a good deal chaffed about "seeing snakes" on this trip--- they are harmless enough, water snakes, but none of the others happened to come across them. One I came upon as I waded along on a grassy bank within a foot of the water's edge. It was a large fellow and had in its mouth a trout which it declined for some time to let go of only lashing forward with its tail as I splashed it with water. At length however when I touched it with the string of my landing net it slid into the water and to my disgust went right between my legs! A pleasanter sight was a little fluffy thing like a newly hatched chicken that I found standing as if ill all humped up in the arm. When I put down my arm towards it however, it ran off with a plaintive little cry, and immediately the old mother grouse came out of a bush with her wings and tail all spread and scraping them along the ground circled round and round me till I was well out of the way of her brood. Eagles, buzzards, hawks, grouse, ducks, blue-jays, nightjars, doves, robbins, like our thrush but with a red breast and ordinary magpies and a variety known as "camp robbers" are among the comparatively few birds that one meets with. Of animal life, too, there is not much to be seen by day, several varieties of squirrel one sees constantly and prairie dogs, rabbits, (a beast resembling our hare) wood chucks (like minute bears) and occasionally wild cats, foxes and big game such as deer of which two visited Phillip's meadows each night this year as we saw from the tracks in the mornings—elk mountain lion and bear, but the general impression left on one's mind is that there is little either of bird or animal life in the Rockies, and this is certainly a great detraction from the pleasures of outdoor life here. Still the quiet fisherman has now and then delightful opportunities even here of being present at little family gatherings and incidents in wild life that are not vouchsafed to the ordinary traveller. On one occasion I watched for fully quarter of an hour a great good humoured romp between two Danish Boar hounds a St. Bernard and five wolves which ended amicably as it began. But to return to the fishing. On the third day we found evidence of a barbarity, which had certainly decimated the fish that used to be in the Rio Grande when I first knew it. I refer to the practice that is known as "fishing with dynamite. One of my friends picked up out of the water, what he thought at first to be a candle. On second thoughts however he put it down very gingerly observing that it exactly answered the description he had often heard of "A stick of giant." It **was** "a stick of giant" dropped no doubt by some miners from the neighbouring camp of Creede surprised in the act. This mode of fishing is to put a fuse into a stick of giant powder and throw it into one of the big pools. The fuse being cased in waterproof stuff is not extinguished by the water and in a minute or two the explosion takes place and immediately the surface is literally covered with fish; not one being left alive within a radius of many yards. Destructive, however, as this has been to the fish, fully five times as much damage is done every autumn when the head gates of the numerous irrigating canals in the San Luis Valley—some of them with ever larger sectional area than the river itself, though with

less fall, are shut down for the winter and the fish from an ounce to five pounds are taken out onto the fields in cart loads and used as manure! The wanton folly even from a monetary point of view of allowing three canals to be run without screens at their head gates is inconceivable, as the number of fishermen who used to spend thousands of pounds yearly in the valley has decreased to mere fraction of what it used to be. The fact is that it costs the Canal Companies less to kill every Bill to restrain them introduced into the Legislature than it does to screen their canals. It is a criminal waste! Where are the millions of buffalos now that used to cover the whole country here, and where will the mountain sheep, elk and deer be soon if the Indians and professionals hunters are not stopped by the enforcement of the existing laws? And are the trout to follow?

On the fourth day of our stay and thereafter we drove to some reaches three miles higher up the river. By this time we had become able to do fairly well even without the "willow bug", especially towards evening and great was the relief. The water was deeper and swifter in this part of the river where it varies from fifty to a hundred and twenty five yards in width and we had hard work to keep on our feet. I getting a complete ducking once except for my head while crossing a rapid. On the occasion of our first visit to this upper water a coldish wind rendered our luck only moderate and the last three days were by far the best. We went even a little higher up in those days and it would be impossible to imagine more ideal water for fishing. We began just at the foot of some low Cliffs. The river here takes a turn and having a long shingly beach on the near side, runs in under the little cliff opposite, which it has slightly undermined. The water is all an exquisite green in the pool, except for the long curve of the Stream which feeds it and a shelf of rock just visible some two feet under the water gives a warm reddish look to the far side of the pool for150 yards down. A little growth of Alders divides the shingle on our side from the meadow behind and bushes and little trees stretch out towards the day from the crevices in the opposite rocks. We waded in so as to reach the deep water and in this pool half a dozen of more fish of half to three quarters of a pound were taken almost at once. I didn't know it at the time, but I learned later but in that pool our flies were undoubtedly sailing over a huge five or six pounder, which had been repeatedly seen and was known to haunt the green water. This special Monster never takes a fly but has gone off with numberless minnows casts and lines. Having heard of him from a neighbouring ranch boy, I arranged to try for him with a minnow. Unfortunately for me my companion on that occasion believing that the appointed hour had passed began to fish without me and immediately struck a fish, which made one single rush and having exhausted the line went on without a pause taking away with him bait hook and gut.

Whether or not this was our monster we shall never know, but needless to say we saw no more of him that day. We caught however between us in a little over half an hour's fishing about seven pounds weight, the largest fish being two and a half pounds. I do not think on the whole that the extra sized fish are worth the disagreeableness of minnow fishing, unless for a special purpose as on this occasion. But to return to the earlier day. The second pool was not less beautiful than the first. It was almost round with a diameter of nearly a hundred yards. The river coming down a long broad rapid into it sweeps against one huge rock from which a bridge is made to the mainland by an old tree trunk on which is piled a wash of drift wood. The water has entirely cut away the lower part of the end of this rock and comes round and under it in a green curl making a deep swirling pool to seaward so to speak, and forming a long steep sand bar immediately below the rock and alongside of the deep water. From the other side I marked down that sand bar as **the** spot and was glad to note that the others neglected it rather than wade across for it. Standing near the head of the sand bar I could cast beyond the rock so as to draw the flies along underneath the overhanging end, and was rewarded at the first cast by seeing a good big brown trout follow me for a second. After a few casts into the pool I returned to the first cast and that time I had him. He fought long and well but I landed him safely as the coast was clear. A few throws more and another also about a pound was hooked and landed—and so three times more and I left the spot with five fish none over a pound and a half and none under three quarters of a pound. As I write Ihear that a friend now down there fishing has just caught seven fish in the same pool aggregating ten pounds. Later in that day I had the largest fight, a little over half an hour, that I ever had with a fish that weighed only a pound and a quarter. It taught me the folly of trying to land a fish in rapid water. I am convinced now that it always pays, where possible to do so, to make for quiet water as soon as the fish is hooked even at some risk of losing it en route. I remember two years ago a friend hooking a big fish which it took him two hours, or rather more, to land. It was in swift water and turned out to be hooked in the belly and to weigh three and a quarter pounds. After I had at last landed my fish in the rapid water I saw one of my companions close to the same place tried exactly as I had been tried, with the addition he had lost his fish in the end, while the brief golden moments between sunset and the dark were slipping away from him. In those same golden moments I suffered **the** disappointment of my life. Wading down a rapid where the river is two or three feet deep and a 100 yards wide I had a long line out and was casting into the little shallow bays right under the Alders, letting the leader, a white coachman, fall almost on the sand when it was

taken heartily and I struck "sight for sair een" the huge fish not a bit less than five pounds came dashing past me (O horror to think of it my line was slack of course) with dorsal fin and tail out of the water and leaving a furrow behind him, out into the very middle of the stream he went and there sulked. I made up my mind that I had lost him and that the line fast butt reeling up I came to the spot and to my amazement the point of my rod fell level with the water, my reel buzzed and another long furrow shot away downstream forty yards or more and then again a dead stop. I looked round upstream all was clear for half a mile, down stream for 300 yards to the bridge, shingle on both sides all the way. I decided that I had him and once more in imagination saw my quondam fishing chum reading the description of my triumph. Then reeling up much more cautiously this time again I came near but he sulked on. I waited patiently and at length off he went again with another long rush down stream. The next time I had to stamp before he would move. Five times in this way he dashed off and five times he stopped. But the fifth time I felt an ominous grating feeling come down the line, again I reeled up in fear and trembling and came near, only to see that hideous object a sunken snag. Once more he dashed off and my line and my drop fly flew into the air! Is there in all the world anything that so burns into a man the feeling of impotence? There is **nothing** to do. The fish is independent of you. No use in slashing him with the line, nothing to throw at him, no earthly way of getting him back, can't argue with him or coax him,---d—n him! I had this fish on for fifteen delicious minutes and I am glad to have had him. He has been carefully fished for since has twice been hooked, and was once actually drawn onto the sand before he broke, but nevertheless one may still speak of his **enormous** size with impunity. On our last day we had the best sport of all and it was like the whist player's supreme delight in "discarding the superfluous trump" to throw back in kingly style everything that might not weigh a pound!

I have spoken principally of this last expedition which was made in high Summer and was qualified to some extent on one day by mosquitoes, on another by an extra hot sun, again by rain and so on, but on whole it was both most successful and delightful. But the perfection of fishing in this same river is in the autumn. Then the miles of gorgeous reds and yellows that mingle with the dark green velvet of the pines on the mountain sides and creep down to the very waters edge, make a veritable fairy land of the valley, and the crisp air absolutely sparkles with sunshine. In such weather one feels vigour and joyousness that make everything passable.

"Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how
Everything is happy now, everything is upward striving,
Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for years to be green or skies to be blue.
Tis the natural way of living.
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heaven, they have no wake;
And the eyes forgets the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrows and aches."

Lowell's words about Spring might equally well be applied to such Autumn days. With perfect weather and the certainty of its continuance, with exquisite beauty on all sides, a feeling of buoyant health, ideal pools and quantities of fish; how can this be improved upon? In all sober earnest I believe that there is no single draw back. On such occasions a feeling of perfect joyousness has often come over me, which I can not describe and such as one can seldom feel after the years of childhood. Nothing mars one's pleasure, no rain, no flies, no tiredness, no muddy water, no fear that the fish won't rise, no chance that you won't catch lots. It comes near to being a debauch! But just once in a way why not? In the Autumn I have caught as many as twenty fish none less than half a pound, in one pool about sunset with a single small blue dun and I have known of many a day's catch of 50 and 60 pounds. I well remember one day in the Indian Summer of an early October after the first snow had fallen and while the shingle had still a thin white covering. The sun came out at noon in all his glory while the white volumes of clouds were still rolling about on the upper halves of the surrounding mountains and the lower world was all fresh and clear. The fish began to rise splendidly and in less than three hours I had 45 fish that weighed 26 pounds the largest being two pounds and I then stopped only because no more fish could have been used in the house. Yes, the delight of fishing under these conditions is perfect. One always has a fair chance too, except very late in the year, of catching "truly a huge one". Every season many—I mean 20 to 30 fish of four pounds and over are taken and the largest of which I have had any knowledge from an eye witness is eleven pounds odd, one which was, I regret to say, shot in a beaver dam—six pounds dressed I have seen myself and seven pounds I have known bought for our table. Even the nearest chance in the world of such a catch makes existence pleasant. But it is not only the fishing, the whole mode of life is charming. "The boys" (as the ranch hands are called) will

come in the evening and report “Elk sign in the willows, a bull and a cow calf. We must a scared ‘em up as we was comin’ down from the Summer Camp this morning for the water was still riley where they had gone through on a run.” The postmen who come over the mountains on snow shoes will tell you when the deer begin to move down to the lowlands. After the first fall of snow you will learn by a single glance of the existence of many beasts, which you will never chance to see. Badger, beaver, Fox, Mink, skunk, rats, etc., etc., etc., and it is equally tell tale of the whereabouts of the deer, antelope and elk. Bears are often shot in the Spring and Summer, and on the high peaks Mountain Sheep. You look upon the long snowy table lands of the table divide where the bone’s of General Freemont’s men were found, and you hear hair curling stories of fight with bears; Indians desperados with the piquant knowledge that such chances are not yet quite over. One man relates how a certain ruined cabin which you all perhaps happen to know in a neighbouring gulch “when he came through first in the sixties he threw an armful of straw into the fire and was almost instantly seized with a conviction that he had felt a stick of giant in it, and barely persuaded his friend to “get out” and wait when bang! The whole end of the house came out.” it so happened that it was at that same cabin door that I saw the first true sample of Malachi Bone (those who have read The Settlers in Canada, will remember him) I was quite fresh to the country and the picture made a lasting impression on me. Standing six feet four in height, dressed in a blue flannel shirt, and canvas trousers and knee boots, with a white sombrero on his head, he was resting with his hands clasped over the muzzle of a 16 lb. Sharpes’ rifle, the butt on the ground looking at a deer he had just brought in, a perfect ideal backwoodsman! Close to the same cabin too a year later while out shooting grouse I found a dead bear, a sight almost unusual as a dead donkey I imagine.

The capture of horse thieves, cattle wars, the incidents of the North and South War which is still fresh in the memory of those who took part in it, the experiences of early days with the Indians etc., etc., etc. form the staple of the evening entertainment at the Mountain Ranches, and events date from great storms. Chance travellers come in and ask whether anyone has seen a horse of such and such a description and from the answers you perceive how closely these mountain dwellers observed all the animals they come across. Probably every man in the room can mention every stray horse he has seen in the last fortnight. The little changes in work appropriate to the seasons too are interesting. About a certain time the cutting of wood for the winter begins, the wagons are sent down to the nearest town for the last supplies preparatory to putting all vehicles on runners and keeping near home. And all the time one goes out in the sunshine every day to spend hours by a lovely crystal clear river, using the smallest flies and drawn gut, to come home with unfailing heavy baskets and light hearts.

I should advise anyone coming to put this to the test to bring all the flies and gut that he wants with him. It is impossible to get well made flies or even decently fine gut here. Drawn gut is **usually** too fine, for the chance of hooking a monster is ever present. Selected fine gut and flies of this eye ----- are the most generally useful, though both heavier and lighter tackle is sometimes needed and some should be brought. Split bamboo rods can be got here at reasonable prices, and it is not worth while to bring them. Wading waterproof trousers coming up close under the arms, and fastening over the shoulders with straps are the correct dress. They cost here some$12 to $15 (say £2 10/- to £3) A heavy hunting knife in a scabbard is a most useful thing for a hundred purposes. For the rest one’s outfit should be much the same as for a fishing expedition at home. For myself in the **Summer** I wade in ordinary clothes only putting on gutta thigh boots over the tops of which I have no objection to wading if necessary, as it often is, but in the late autumn the water is too cold for doing this with comfort. For Autumn too it is desirable to have a light leather jacket lined with flannel. As I hope to have a week or more’s fishing again in September, I hereby offer my services gratis as a guide to any Member of the Manchester Angler’ Association, who may make up his mind to try this most fascinating fishing. A deer and elk too, I am not afraid to guarantee if a fortnight can be spared for the purpose."

"I do not profess to be a very enthusiastic angler after coarse fish, and my experience is not large. Still I shall never neglect any opportunity of becoming acquainted with all sorts of fish, and fishing, and also should never hesitate, when given the chance to angle for any fish from the – what we here I think call the "smelt" to the "tarpon"—I was going to say whale when I remember reading that they are now largely caught by means of the harpoon cannon, that is a cannon ball that generates gas in the body of the whale and prevents it from sinking--- this is scarcely angling.

The Papers written by the Members of this Society are many and some of them bursting with science, some brimming over with fun, and most of them full of adventure and sport covering the writer with a halo of glory and filling the audience with envy. When considering what to put in the form of a Paper the idea struck me—what a vast open field there was in such a subject as "the disappointments of an angler" and what exasperating circumstances he has to contend with. It is the side that anglers do not care to write or talk about, we glory in our triumphs, but our many failures and disappointments are hidden away in silence.

Angling is not always the gentle art, not always the meditative peaceful pastime. I have known times when fishing has turned the gentle angler, the contemplative man, ay—and even the humane angler into a perfect fury, yes I have seen him dance around and stamp on the innocent ground. I have heard him abuse the existing Government, the State and Society in general when the only one really to blame was himself.

Still there is a pleasure even in the disappointments of fishing, not perhaps at the time but afterwards. I think I should have chosen this subject had I not had a friendly brother angler from whose experience I could with an anglers easy conscience help myself.

You will I trust excuse these few preliminary remarks, but our worthy secretary gently hinted to me that a paper ought to occupy such and such a time."

Sweet Worming ford Mere, I am Breaming on thee.

"Perhaps you may be tempted to think from the title of the paper, that it may be of a practical nature; if so pray dismiss the thought.

I have studied the habits of the bream in his various haunts, and in books especially, we have fought together in river and pond, I have even been rash enough to have him flayed, but I am forced to acknowledge that poetry that has ever cast its "glamour" round the lordly salmon and the silvery trout very often vastly increasing their size and weight, has never yet wasted its sweetness on the bream. No you may extract poetry from a mangel wurzel , but not from a bream. A certain angling author in describing the bream has said:- "The Bream is like unto an old decayed leather bellows both in appearance and flavour" but to my mind the said author has left out the strongest point in a bream which is its smell. If you wish to experience a holy contempt for the world that we live in, to feel kind "o" sorry that you were ever brought into the vale of tears, go! catch some bream, take them home, have them flayed. Of all the foul smells that ever tortured the nostrils of suffering mankind, entering even into the marrow of his bones, command me to a dish of flayed bream. Personally if I wished to show my utter contempt for a poor fellow creature, to compress into one crushing epithet all the loathing and disgust I could feel, I would not waste good wholesome swearing of the received type in polite Society, but I would call him a flayed bream. Such is my prejudice against this fish.

Varieties :-

Three varieties, The Pomeranian bream which is very rare in this country.
Second, the Carp Bream, which is of a yellowish colour and grows to about eight pounds in weight.
Third, the White Bream, or bream flat, a small silvery fish which generally gets as far as a pound.

I will not burden you with the characteristics of each fish beyond saying that the throat teeth of the small silvery bream flat are in two rows numbering two and five respectively, whilst those of the large yellowish coloured carp bream are placed in only one row on each side numbering five.

Habitat:- Bream are usually fished for in lakes, large ponds, and in slow rivers with deep reaches.

His appearance:- The appearance of the bream I have described from a certain author mentioned before, but I think a more truthful description would be that of half a pig, sawn lengthways from the snout to the tail. He is very ugly, very fat, and thickly covered with a coating of filthy slime, but I **will** say he is generous with his slime. He will leap up fondly on your knee from the bottom of the boat, to share it with you, he will slap you on the shoulder in a friendly way and spoil your coat, he will smack you on the shirt collar, he will even slime your sandwiches.

His food:- True to his nature the bream loveth the most repulsive kind of food. To get a good take of bream you must get a slop pail and fill it with chopped up lob worms, mashed up with potato peelings, grain, scrapings from the scullery maids grease pots or any filth you can collect from the refuse of the kitchen, this when messed up into the substance of a pudding of a nature to turn the stomach of a stone statue must be put in the swim the night before you go to fish.

How to catch him:- The bream has a certain amount of common sense for which we ought to give him credit. In the "Complete Angler" we read that the bream, which go in large shoals have always one or two sentinels on the watch, and these are often noticed rolling on the top of the water, over the baited swim. If you see the sentinel you may take it for granted that the shoal is close under where he is disporting himself and this is a good way to find where they lie. Watch the water for the sentinel and mark the spot, and try and not frighten him away by any awkward splashing in the water.

Rowing gently will drive him away, but will not scare him, it is the awkward splashing of the clumsy rower that drives him scared to the bottom and frightens away the shoal. Various authors say that the best time to catch the bream is about three o'clock in the morning and many dream fishers stay out all night, so as to begin just at daylight, you require a strong rod, a running line, a fairly large hook, a large long float and a very strong stomach.

In the Yare in Norfolk the best time to catch bream is at slack tide. The fisher baits his hook with a lob worm, a nice oozy worm with plenty of wriggle about him and lets him lie about six inches on the bottom with the float lying flat on the surface of the water. He puts his rod down and lights his pipe, intending to wait events; probably just as you have struck the match and got the flame well shaded with your hands—up the float will tilt rising from the water—(The reason of this is that the Bream seizes the worm and rushes up from the bottom, thus lifting the shot and causing the float to rise). Well you drop the match (and perhaps your pipe too) seize your rod and strike gently but firmly, then there is a dead tug, or often, a rush for mid stream you must give him his head or he will break away. After two or three violent tugs, which will make you think that you have got a monster on, he will soon give in and just as he comes up sideways, and

you are going to put the net under him, he will give a flop and often break your tackle. (You can then light your pipe properly.) But if you do succeed in getting him out he is never so big as you expected, but what he lacks in size, he will make up in shine. That dead pull that the bream gives and by which he so often escapes causes anglers to think that the one they lost was always the biggest fish they had hooked.

Such is I believe the best method of catching bream in tidal waters, but in ponds the better way is to fish with the bait half an inch from the bottom and the tip of the float just half an inch out of the water.

Some time since I was persuaded to have a days bream fishing on the Yare at Brundall near Norwich a favourite haunt of Londoners for coarse fishing. Our boatman Fred well known at the Yare Hotel got the before mentioned slop pail and baited up one of the famous swims for Bream the night before. We left ourselves in his hands as docile pupils. We were to get up at three o'clock in the morning so as to be at the swim at daylight. With the prospect of a short night's rest we went to bed at ten o'clock trusting to Fred to waken us at 3 a. m.

Oh! the horrors of that night! How often did I wake up in a fright fearing I had overslept myself, feeling sure I heard a rattling of pebbles at the window, for this was the signal agreed upon to call us, as Fred slept out--- the matches I struck to look at my watch--- to find I had been in bed an hour or so and if I slept a wink something woke me with a start and again I struck a match to see the time.

In the midst of the night which seemed like a miniature eternity,

I was wakened by a shock
For I heard a voice a-screaming
While a-dreaming I was breaming
Hi! get up, -- its three o'clock.

Drowsy and unrefreshed I got up and donned my clothes and went to call my friend, who I felt sure was also breaming in his dreams. Such however was not evidently the case, he seemed to have lost all his enthusiasm and required gently rousing.

A cold white mist overhung the river, a refreshing north easterly wind made us feel raw, however we had arranged to bring a spirit lamp and some coffee to refresh us on the water.

We yawned our way to the boat and Fred pulled us two miles down the river whilst we nodded and tried to keep awake, and pretended hard to be happy. We reached our swim and tried to get up some enthusiasm for the sport we fished and fished **and fished** – each saying "they'll come on presently," but they didn't. After an hour of fruitless labour I suggested the spirit lamp and the hot coffee, this brought a gleam of comfort to us, until having got the kettle full of water and the lamp well lighted we found we had forgotten the coffee—each thinking the other had it.

By a luck chance my friend and myself each found himself possessed of a flask with some whisky in it in our pockets, but luke warm whisky and water at that time of the morning is not exciting.

We fished till eight o'clock and got four or five bream flats and then went home to breakfast. I have since wondered whether we had been treated in the same way as a friend who had had a swim baited for Barbel in the Thames the night before.

He went out at nine o'clock in the morning and got nothing, but a loafer who had seen the boatman baiting up the swim, went in the small hours of the morning and took away, as he afterwards heard, more than a hundred weight of barbell from the swim—perhaps someone of kindred character had gone the night before for he could scarcely have got there in the morning before us. The man you take with you must be treated civilly.

Civility in these parts is shewn by occasional glasses of beer, it will make him take a deeper interest in your success, but don't make the mistake I foolishly made on one occasion after a successful days fishing. On my return to the Hotel I told my man to go and get some beer. In something under an hour the landlady came and asked me whether I would be responsible for any amount the man might consume as he had drunk six quarts and on my remarking to him that I thought six quarts was enough for any reasonable man in less than an hour, he answered –Ah! But you forget Sir, that I have a wife and seven children to drink for.

That same morning that we had been fishing three gentlemen from London—I think they were Lawyers—came for a days bream fishing. They wore black clothes and they had a **great** catch of bream, the bottom of the boat was covered with them, but their black cloth suits were in such a state of filth with the slime from the bream that they had to stay in bed all next day whilst their clothes were being washed and dried, as they had only one suit each with them.

However as the old saying has it, every dog has his day and if a fisherman will only persevere he is bound after many disappointments some day to meet success and my day came at last—and now **again** we come to the title of this paper:-

"Sweet Wormingford Mere I am breaming on thee"

Of all the charming spots I have ever seen and I have seen many, Wormingford Mere is one of the sweetest. It lies about a mile and a half from Bures—a little gully from the river takes you into a truly fairy spot. It is a lake and formerly an old quarry containing about ten acres of water. It is surrounded by Woods and can only be got at to fish by boat. The water is about fifteen feet deep close to the sides and descends like a pit to about forty feet deep in the centre. It is so hemmed in by trees that it can not be seen from outside. It is the home of wild birds, and long thick rushes surround it, the haunts of many a gigantic pike. It simply swarms with roach, small in size, and strange to say nearly all diseased and covered with black spots—each of these spots is a little black insect that feeds on the body of the roach. These roach may be caught by the hundreds with paste, gentles or a small bit of worm. But in the hot summer time a days breaming is a thing to be remembered.

The Mere at the time I speak of belonged to the Vicar of Wormingford from whom I had obtained leave for a days fishing. There is also was at Bures a fisherman of the name of Baker who had a very good and roomy boat- is very civil and anxious to please. He will give you a good days fishing in his boat, find bait, do all the unpleasant work etc., for three shillings a day and his food, a sandwich and a quart or two of ale chucked in, and who has no objection to a pipe of your tobacco. He undertook to have the boat on the Mere early in the morning and a young gentleman from the neighbourhood shared my permission and was to be in the boat with us.

Starting after breakfast from Colchester about ten o'clock and after a lovely ride of nine miles over hills and dales I arrived at the entrance to the Mere. I crept through the trees and there I saw Baker and my friend at work. I shouted to him and was answered in a cautious kind of Indian scout fashion. "right you are"! "they're on!!!, We're among em!!!" whilst getting in the boat I saw several bream flopping about—two or three of them over five pounds. I had never seen such fish before. We crept back to the swim and I found there was about sixteen feet of water and the rod I had brought with me was not long enough, as I had intended to fish with a light line. Baker lent me a twenty foot rod and I quickly got to work, he bobbed my hook and I threw in. the float did not go down but went off sideways- "There you are" said Baker. What's the matter said I "Why strike man" said Baker and I struck, immediately down went my rod half under water. I raised it and down it went again and amidst the excitement of **our crew** I began by landing a four pounder. Look out Sir said Baker when off went my friends float with a rush, my friend had never fished before and did not know what to do so Baker seized his rod.

I threw in again and my float lay flat on the water though heavily shotted. I struck and I felt a big one on, he made a rush for the boat and running underneath us he smashed the second piece of my rod—or rather Baker's rod. Gathering up the line I held on and after some difficulty from getting entangled in the rope attached to the stern pole, Baker got him out with the net. Again and again every time we threw in we got a fish. Three or four times we got broken away and a few we missed and Baker lost a lot of time attending to my friend's tackle which would keep getting entangled. We had not time to think, our arms **ached** with the sport, while for three hours we put in such a time I could not have believed possible, we had not time to weigh the fish but kept on at them.

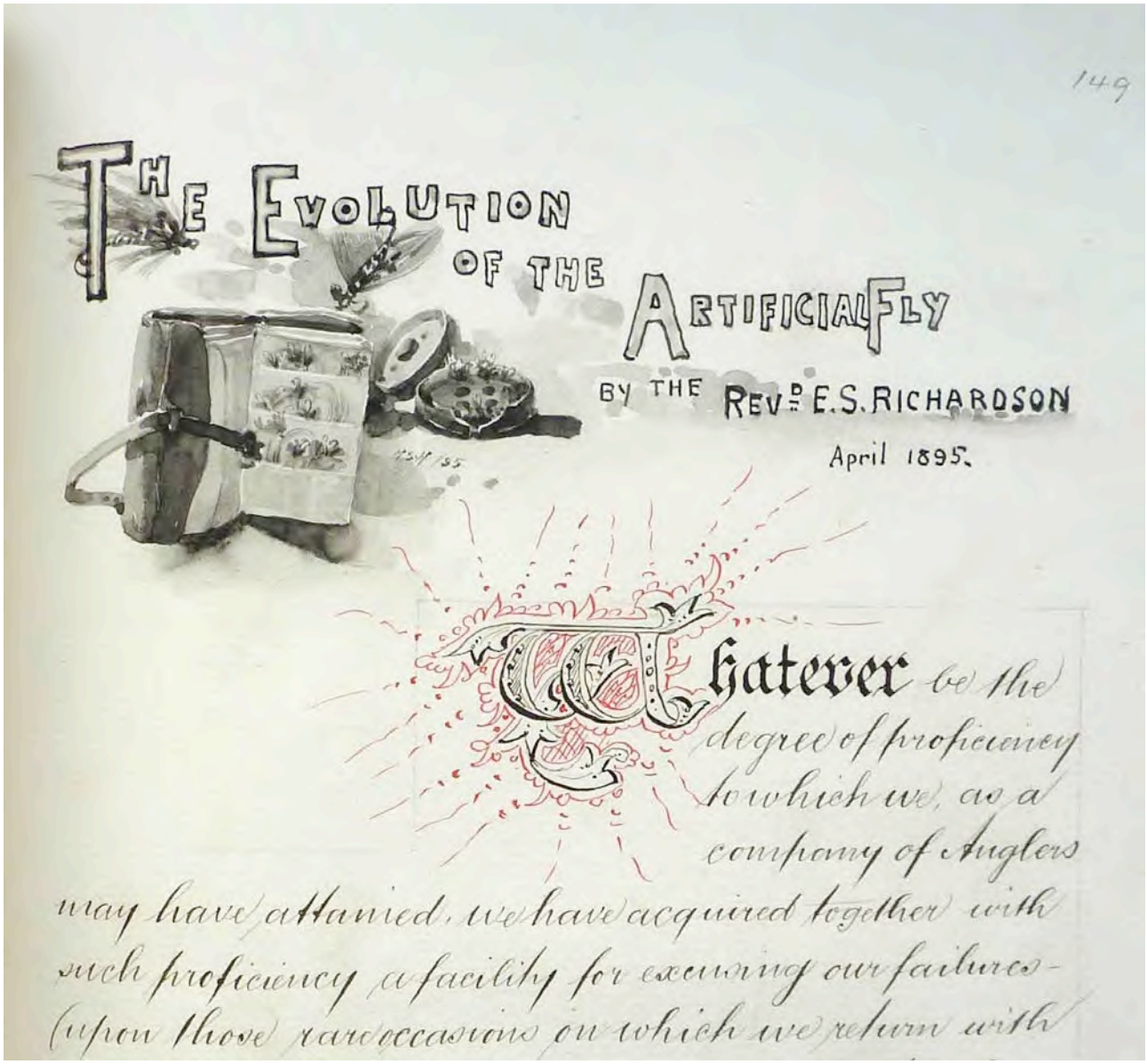
About two o'clock they began to slacken and we agreed to stop for dinner, but we were continually interrupted by having to pull in another fish. However we resolved to have a change as Baker had baited two swims and whilst pulling over a few yards to the other swim we had a chance for ourselves a bite and a smoke and then to work again. Here Baker hooked a splendid fish, but could not rise him, he dipped the rod in the water again and again, but hung down like a leaden weight. He had him on full ten minutes and at length he gave a flop and broke clean away. I should think he was about eight pounds. Next came my turn. After a short pause my float made a jump in the air and I struck a heavy fish, he rolled about and tried to head me, but I held on. Suddenly my line bagged and I thought I had lost him and I was pulling up to throw out again when the brute rose to the top of the water, still on my hook, made a lunge and I almost lost my rod. I gave him all the line I had and he took it, after a struggle of two or three minutes Baker got the net under him and he weighed, afterwards, five and half pounds, my biggest fish. At length about six o'clock I had to give up having an engagement and to my great disappointment had to leave off while the fish were still on. Taking some of the fish I had caught amongst which were four or five over four pounds and one of five and a half pounds, I drove back again.

My friend and Baker continued fishing and at the end of the day the total eight of fish we had caught was one hundred and twenty pounds. Baker getting the largest fish weighing six pounds and a quarter. If I had been there earlier and could have stopped till dusk with them I do not doubt but that I should have got double the amount I did.

Then it was that I discovered the real virtue of the bream. In the pride of my heart I brought them home and gave them to the Cook with instructions to give me a dish of bream for breakfast. I slept that night the sleep of the just and all the time I kept pulling out Bream in my dreams. In the morning I was startled by a most extraordinary smell. I thought the drains must have burst and flooded the kitchen. I ran downstairs in a state of alarm and called out "Cook" "Cook" whatever is the matter? Is the drain burst? Or what is it – that sewage gas is most poisonous, it is terrible and must be seen to at once. I soon discovered the cause. Cooky was flaying that five pounder for my breakfast. Oh! for goodness sake said I "stop that" throw it away! Open the window, bring me a spade, or turn on the gas -- do something—and lighting a pipe I tried to get the sickening fetid smell out of my system, but it clung to me like the taste of a dead animal. Not over fresh at that and ever since when I have caught bream, I have always been generous with them, and given them to anyone I had a grudge against.

Thus endeth the grandest days coarse fishing it has ever been my lot to enjoy and I look back with pleasurable regret upon that eventful day when I returned from Wormingford Mere covered with glory and slime.

Finis thank goodness.



"Whatever be the degree of proficiency to which we, as a company of Anglers may have attained we have acquired together with such proficiency a facility for excusing our failures (upon those rare occasions on which we return with empty baskets), which would compare not unfavourably with that possessed by any other body of craftsmen. The reader of this paper feels that he will exercise a wise discretion in refraining from any excuse making for what is to follow, being conscious of the highly developed critical faculty which the audience possesses, and which would be more than sufficiently powerful to dissect an apology from the poor result of an attempt to angle not **with** but **for** the artificial fly in the not inconsiderable waters of the Angling literature of the past. These waters have been assiduously fished not for the finny but the feathered—winged and hackled tribe. May it never be the fate of any angler present to expose himself to the ridicule from his friends to discover that he has exhausted the resources of his art upon waters, which were barren. It has been the writer's fate to painfully learn that there was no such subject as that one upon which he, rash man, had promised to read a paper. He had hopes but that is months ago, of bringing from the past an attempt, uncouth rough, and to modern ideas ridiculous to imitate the flies of former days—he had hoped that by patient research he might light upon the name of that man who first was mastered by the conviction that if only he could present a colourable imitation of the fly on the water to those fish in whose dietary it was plainly included he might use it "to bait fish withal" Whoever he might be, was it not plainly the duty of all anglers to know his name—to give to that name an honoured place in their Saints Calendar and might not one of the youngest members of this Association earn the gratitude of his fellows by telling them how far

they were indebted to an inventive and painstaking ancestor who, when Peny Ghent was young and stored with a treasure of coal—since stolen—had caught trout with "the genuine and only" artificial fly. That such a man, or was it a woman, once lived to fish or fished to live must remain as certain as his or her incognito is complete. The fly of those first days which would now excite the risibility not only of men but of fishes is buried decently though unkindly in the past, and must remain not indeed unwept, but with its ruggedness unknown and for the purpose of supplying a rudimentary form from which our "quills" "duns" "spiders, and the rest can be shown to be but the results of the evolutionary process useless to find a subject for a paper—many would that it were all—the Members of the association know to be no easy task. The writer confesses that it was with a sense of having easily surmounted this initial difficulty that he heard that no member had hitherto dealt with the subject which a photograph of a fly reproduced in the xxx of January 12th this year suggested to his mind.

He has found since then that the reason why no other member has chosen this subject is the obvious and excellent one given above. He has observed waking and sleeping that there is after all an up to date look about the centenarian "landrail sedge" and has in fact come to the conclusion that the earliest artificial fly of which we have a record "would kill any where". For that earliest record we have not to go back very far, for in a book the well known "Book of St. Albans" printed in 1496 by Wynkyn de Worde Dame Juliana Berners not only mentions fly fishing for the first time in our literature but she gives a list of twelve flies, assigning them to their to their several months of the year, giving most excellent directions for making them, while to her too belongs the honor of first telling that the salmon may be taken with the artificial fly, thus "Also ye may take hym, but it is seldom seen with a dubbe at such time as when he lepith, in lyke fourme and mannere as ye doo a trought or a grayling." Now I think it is impossible to suppose that the invention of the artificial fly is so recent as the close of the fifteenth century and while I think it would be well if some member of the association would next year being the fourth centenary of the publication of Dame Berners book read a paper on the life and work of that lady, her knowledge of the artificial fly seems to have been more complete than could have been that of the original inventor. I imagine such a fly tyers table as that up on which Dame Berners twelve patterns could be made. It would have upon it wool—black, yellow, dun, roddyd (ruddy), dolkie (duskish), tandy (tawny), and green; silk black, yellow, (threde), barkyd hempe, as well as the wings from a partridge, drake, jay,, capon, cocks hackle, natural and dyed, peacock herl, buzzard. Now a fly tyer of the present day would be far from ill equipped had he no more materials than those required for making the flies necessary in the opinion of the first writer who mentions the subject. You will agree with me that we do not find the stream at its source and regret with me that we are only able to strike it at a point when its character had assumed the main features, which has with us at the present day. We shall I fear never know who he was who first conceived the idea to which as fly fishers we owe so much. That the delicate film and colour of an insect's wing might be simulated by the fine fibre of the feather of the bird and who so put his idea into practice as to earn the unclaimed title of the inventor of the artificial fly.

Passing from dame Berners we come nearly a hundred years 1590 later to Leonard Mascall's "Booke of Fishing with Hooke and Line". He has been called the Pioneer of Fish Culture in England, and needs only to be mentioned that we note that he got his patterns either direct from Dame Berners "Treatise", or he and she from a common source e.g. their dressings of the Stonefly. Dame Berners 1496 "The Stone Flye, the body of blacke wull, and yellow under the wynge, and under the tayle and the wynges of the drake."

Leonard Maskell 1590 "The body is made of blacke wool, made yellow under the wynges and under the tayl and so made with the wings of the drake." Through a century then Dame Berners pattern is a persistent type—and says Mr R. B. Marston, referring to it " many a dish of fine trout I have killed in Yorkshire with the fly described" and he adds "I think Dame Juliana's claim to be the first to give a dressing of this most deadly fly will not be disputed." Of course as time went on anglers improved in their imitations and we find in Markham's book (The Art of Angling) 1614 the advantage of cork as a material for fly dressing recommended "Now for the making of these flyes, the Cloudie darke fly is made of blacke wool, clipt from between a sheep's ears and whipt about with blacke silke, his wings of the under may be of the Mallard and his bearde made blacke and sutable, fixed upon a fine piece of cork, and folded so cunningly about the hooke, that nothing may be perceived but the point and beard only". We may perhaps have thought that the cork body was an invention, even a Yankee invention of our time and we may be reminded how slowly the evolutionary processes have done their work in our art by finding a fine piece of cork cunningly folded about the hook in 1614. I must not leave Gervase Markham without quoting his exhortation to anglers to copy nature an exhortation never more needed than in these days when as in children's copy books each line written is a further departure from the original copy, every fly tends to become less like nature than the last being made as copy of a pattern, the angler often never having seen, or should I say never having cared

to see the natural fly. He writes on this point "Now for the shapes and proportions of these flyes, it is impossible to describe them without paynting, therefore you shall take of these several flyes alive, and laying them before, tri how near your Art can come into nature by an equall shapes and mixture of colours, and when you have made them you may keep them in close boxes uncrushed and they will serve you many years."

The evolution of the artificial fly in the hands of Tackle makers is likely to produce a race of creatures which imitate nothing, and which bear names which have not the remotest connection with entomology, the dark snipe, the orange and partridge—strange birds, they may be of great interest to the ornithologist, but not necessarily to the Angler for they are neither flies nor fishes. Let us learn the flies and name our imitations of them after the originals, and go back to those originals for our patterns, in this way our sport would not only become more intelligent and more closely allied to that natural world amongst the secrets of which it is pursued, but it might be more productive, and the evolution of the artificial fly would mean a variation from present degenerate forms towards a more natural type and would consist of the more and more close and skilful adaptation of material old and new to the purpose of imitating insect life. The thought comes to one's mind sometimes, has the artificial fly since Dame Berners time, as an imitation of the "natural" progressed or retrograded. It is more neatly tied, it is attached to a strand of gut so fine and light as to disarm the suspicions of the oldest campaigner among trout, and rods are lighter and more dainty in their touch, but it may be yet doubtful whether the fly used by the average angler is so true a deception as in the old days. From this digression we must return to Gervase Markham who treated of "the whole Art of angling" together with -------- Baloone. The use of the Fighting Cock and other matters domestic and agricultural in 1614, he tells us of "the made fly" he uses first the expression "the cast of the flie"—he says—"if you angle with a made fly, and a line twice your rod's length or more (in a plain water without wood) of three haires in a dark windy day from afternoone, and have learned the cast of the flie, your flie must counterfeit the may flie, which is bred of the cod bait and is called "the water flie"; you mus change his colour every month beginning with a dark white and so grow to a yellow, the forme cannot be put so well on a paper, as it may be taught by slight. The head is of a black silk or haire, the wings of a feather of a mallard, teele or **pickled** hen wing, the body of crewel according to the moneth for color, and run about with a black haire, all fastened at the taile with the thread that fastened the hook".

Between Markham and Lawson who seemed to have worked together and Izaac Walton comes Thomas Barker to whom Picator in the Complete Angler more than once expresses his indebtedness and who from the following couplet would seem to have known and valued the floating as distinguished from the sunken or wet fly.

"Once more my good brother, I'll speak in thy ear;
Hog's red cow's and bear's wool, to float best appear."

He and not Walton is the first writer to describe the use of the reel or winch and more to our purpose he is the first to divide artificial flies into the two main divisions of one, Palmer, hackle or spider dressed flies—two, Winged flies. He says "Now I will shew you how to make flies, learn to make two flies and make all, that is, the Palmer ribbed with gold or silver and the May flye. These are the ground (or foundation) of all flyes." And he gives the best description of flye tyeing then to be found. He knew well the necessity of changing his flies, he says in one place "I took off the lob worm and set to my rod a white Palmer flye, made of a large hook; I had sport for the time until it grew lighter, so I took off the white Palmer and set to a red Palmer made of a large hooke. I had good sport until it grew very light. Then I took off the red palmer and I set to the black palmer; I had good sport, made up the dish of fish." And now we come to a writer and to a time well known 1653, the year of the publication of "The Complete Angler" or the Contemplative Man's Recreation. Being a discourse of Fish and Fishing not unworthy of the perusal of most anglers. It does not belong to this paper to tell for the thousandth time of the charm and fragrance which belongs to this book, a book which has been said is aglow with human interest and in this lies its ever fresh, ever endearing power to charm; he clothed the dry bones of a practical treatise on fishing with so attractive a garb of joyous love of nature and human nature that he must indeed be a "severe soure complexioned" man, who cannot love him. He may be counted antiquated as Shakespeare has been considered "much overrated", he was not a scientific angler if science to be truly called so implies exactitude for of all the sciences that refuse to be arranged in pigeon holes and promise the "Scholar" that he shall always find cause and effect traceable in their precise sequence, angling is the worst or the best. It is not an exact science. We still have our artificial flies tabulated under different months, even as they were in Dame Berners days, yet we have all learnt that Izaac Walton was right when in the Address to the Reader he wrote "that whereas it is said by many that the Flye fishing for a trout, the Angler must observe his twelve several flies for the twelve months of the year, I say that he

that follows that rule, shall be as sure to catch fish and be as wise, as he that makes Hay by the fair days in an Almanack, and no surer, for those very flies that use to appear about and on the water in one month of the year may the following year come almost a month sooner or later, as the same year proves colder or hotter" As there is nothing new under the sun, it becomes the fate of every writer, soon or late, to be found out as a plagiarist. If ever there was a book original in its spirit possessing a charm to which there is no artificial copy possible it is "The Complete Angler" and its value is in no way diminished by the discovery that Walton took from Barker what Barker took from Dame Juliana and that his Illustrations too were copied from a German book published in Frankfort in 1598. Those who have seen Dame Berners twelve flies given in her Treatise of 1496 and Walton's in the Complete Angler 1653 know that the lists are practically the same. You will remember the dressing of the Stone fly given above from Dame Berners 1406 and Leonard Mascall 1590. here we find it again in Walton. The third in the list, the month of April. "The body is made of black wool, made yellow under the wings and under the tail and so made with the wings of the drake." So he gives all twelve quaintly adding " Thus have you a jury of flies, likely to betray and condemn all the trouts in the river". He gives with little variation Thomas Barker's directions for fly fishing, and then strongly advocates that all materials for fly tying should be carried by the ingenious angler who may walk by the river and mark what flies fall on the water that day, and catch one of them if he see the trouts leap at a fly of that kind; and then having always hooks ready hung with him, and having a bag also always with him with bear's hair or the hair of a brown or a sad coloured heifer, hackles of a cock or capon, several coloured silk and crewel to make the body of the fly the feathers of a drakes head, black or brown sheeps wool or hog's wool or hair, thread of gold or of silver, silk of several colours (especially sad coloured) to make the fly's head; and there be also other coloured feathers, both of little birds and of speckled fowl. I say having these with him in a bag and trying to make a fly tho' he miss at first, yet shall he at last hit it better, even to such a perfection as none can well teach him, and if he hit to make his fly right, and have the luck to hit also where there is store of trouts, a dark day, and a right wind he will catch such store of them as will encourage him to grow more and more in love with the art of fly making. This is parading in full kit with a vengeance and little wonder on hearing the many conditions to be fulfilled before trout were to be caught poor. I wished himself in Lapland where might buy a good wind of one of the honest witches, that sell so many winds there and so cheap." It was not until the fifth Edition of Walton's book appeared that his friend Cottons "Instructions how to angle for a trout or grayling in a clear stream were added to it. There is no question that he was "a first rate hand" and indeed if Walton must be considered the father of anglers in general, the fly fishermen, the trout and grayling fishermen must regard C. C. as their apostle. Many of his instructions have been but little improved upon even to the present day. His opinion of London made flies is strikingly poor, and I can remember how my own father and his angling friends used in my boyhood to adopt a specially disparaging tone when referring to London flies ---- of these in his days Cotton says in reply to V …….. who had told him that in London "we make the bodies of our flies both much bigger and longer, so long as almost to the very beard of the hook." "I know it very well" says Cotton "and had one of those flies given me by an honest gentleman, who came with my father Walton to give me a visit; which to tell you the truth I hung in my parlour window to laugh at." Of Cotton's own description of flies (artificial) Mr Marston has said in a very delightful little book published last year entitled "Walton and some earlier writers on fish and fishing" that it is far ahead of anything that had appeared previously, and for long afterwards remained the standard authority to which fly fishers referred. Any one who imagines that the flies used more than 200 years ago were clumsy large affairs should read Cotton's descriptions carefully. He adds largely to the original twelve patterns of Dame Juliana, and to the "jury" of Izaac Walton, he makes considerable additions to the Fly Tyers stock of hair, fur, feather and the rest and gives patterns of nearly seventy flies--- arranged according to the months, many of which are to be found among the well known artificials of our time. It would not be possible to follow farther the history of the artificial fly and most of those present will be acquainted with the books of Fowler, Theakston, Ronalds, Halford, Pritt or others. We now use the feathers of game birds in great variety, have special colourless wax, fly tyers silk, and numerous advantages unknown to those of whom we have spoken to night. It is to be feared that the amateur fly tyer does not grow in numbers, and as a consequence that the angler naturalist is seldom met with. It would add undoubted zest to our sport if we would stay now and then to examine the natural fly by the waterside and try and imitate him or her with those materials that are so easily obtained after a little practice not difficult to manipulate.

To frame the little annual provide
All the gay hues that wait on female pride
Let nature guide you sometimes golden wire
The shining bellies of the fly require
The peacocks plumes thy hackle must not fail
Nor the dear purchases of the sable tail
Each gaudy bird some slender tribute brings
And lends the growing insect proper wings
Silks of all colors must their aid impart
And every fir promote the fishers art
So the gay lady with expensive care
Borrows the pride of land, of sea, of air
Furs, pearls and plumes the glittering thing displays
Dazzles our eyes and hearts betrays.

The natural flies we imitate change their colours before our eyes, and the observant angler and fly tyer will follow the change of the blue to the olive dun, of the March Brown to the great Red Spinner, to the August Dun.

There are times when it appears to matter little whether one's fly resemble anything or nothing. When the question is asked again "why fish take bunches of feathers tied on hooks, and what do they mistake them for?" But there are times when for bunches of feathers flies must be substituted and this not only in the dry fly but in the wet fly fishing and then success or failure must inevitably be determined by the closeness of the resemblance existing between the natural and your imitation.

In conclusion may I give the dressing of a fly known to us all, the Blue Dun from Dame Berners time to our own.

1496 *She gives* "The body of the donne woll and the wyng is of the pertryche."

Walton copies this "The body is made of dun wool; the wings are of the partrige's feather."

Cotton "Take a small tooth comb, and with it comb the neck of a black grey hound and the down that sticks in the teeth will be the finest blue you ever saw. The wings of this fly can hardly be too white, and he is taken about the tenth of this month and lasteth till the four and twentieth."

Ronalds calls it the Cock Wing, notes its metamorphosis from the blue to the olive dun and then to the red spinner, for the imitation he gives:

Body fur of a hare's ear or face, spun on yellow silk. When this dubbing spin silk is warped on some of the largest part of the dubbing is left out to form legs.

Tail two small whiskers of a rabbit.

Wings from a feather of a starling's wing, slightly stained in onion dye.

Legs picked out from body with a heddle.

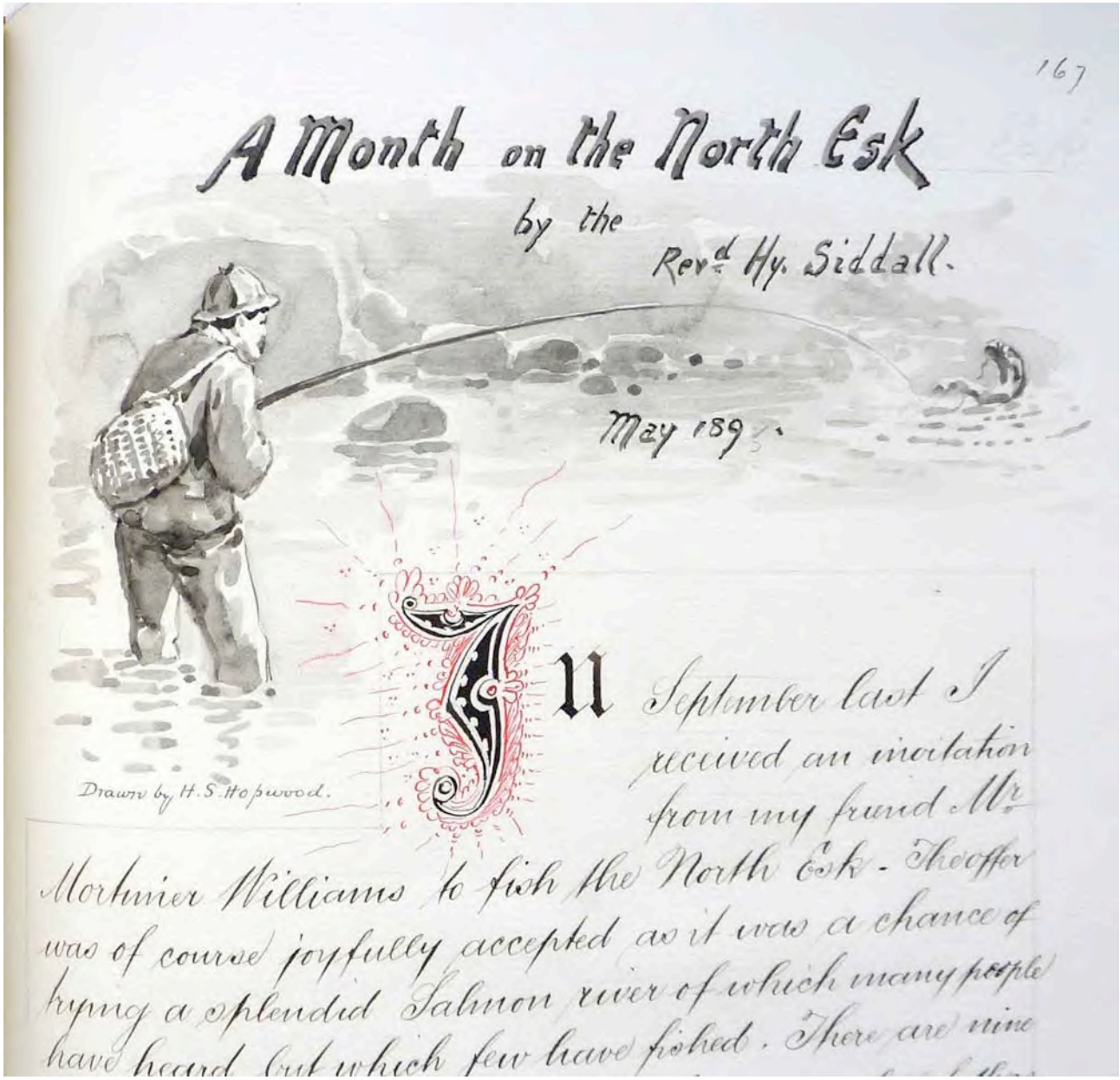
Theakston Blue Drake Slips for wings are generally selected from those of the starling body, orange silk, tinged and dyed with fox cub down and two or three fibres of amber mohair.

Foster Body a small portion of blue fur spun sparingly on yellow silk; wings from the field fare's wing feather; legs a light dun hackle.

I give this one example to show how with differences of material there has been throughout a single desire—viz. to reproduce the natural insect—and how after all the nature of the case demands that this should be so. Vol 8

I could plead that fly tying to some extent at any rate should be made a part of the art of every angler, and that, not merely to consist in the acquirement of technical skill in the management of the materials but that it should be combined with a closer study of natural history.

I fear that I must have somewhat tried the patience of my audience during what I feel has been an attempt to make if not flies without fur and feathers at least bricks without straw."



"In September last I received an invitation from my friend Mr Mortimer Williams to fish the North Esk. The offer was of course joyfully accepted as it was a chance of trying a splendid Salmon river of which many people have heard but which few have fished. There are nine rivers of the name of Esk, and a large number of others whose name has the same origin. As for instance the Wisk, Usk, Exe, Ouse, Isis etc. Geographers count no fewer than fifty streams in this Kingdom which derive their name from the old Celtic word "Uisqe" which our teetotal friends will be rejoiced to hear simply means "Water". "Whisky" was formerly (some think it is still) the water of life—the eau de vie of the Celt.

The North and South Esks mentioned in this paper are not those of Midlothian but the two Esks of Forfarshire which fall into the sea the one three miles north of the other three miles south of Montrose.

To Montrose then I started with Mr Williams on September 16th. The weather had for the previous weeks been dreadfully fine and dry but the month was getting on and the equinoctial gales and broken weather might be expected immediately. Nearing Scotland we looked with great eagerness at every stream en route, hoping that the weather in the North might have been more broken than in England. But all were alike "No water" "no water" everywhere. The Ancient Mariner would still have been in trouble had he visited any of the Streams we saw.

The journey itself is not with out interest. We went by Edinburgh over the great Forth Bridge close past the golf links of Burntisland and Kircaldy , over the long Tay Bridge to Dundee thence skirting the famous links of Carnoustie on to Arbroath known to fame as Aberbrothock and so to Montrose. Montrose is

a nice little town of 13,000 inhabitants. The main street is perhaps 120 feet in width. The Parish church (Presbyterian) stands in this street and has a fine tower and spire 290 feet high. There are two English churches and innumerable chapels. Ten minutes walk from the centre of the town are the golf links **said** to be the most extensive in the Kingdom. They belong to the town and are free to the public. Adjacent to the golf links is a fine sandy beach with good sea bathing.

The fisheries are an important industry in Montrose Mr Johnston is one of the largest Fish Merchants in the Kingdom. He has quite a fleet of fishing vessels and employs many hundreds of men. He rents all the sea fisheries on this Coast of Scotland, and all the available rivers—amongst them the north Esk. The river is about 25 miles long and is throughout a good trouting stream but salmon can only get up about seven miles and then are stopped by an impassable waterfall. From this to the Sea the river is in the hands of Mr Johnston, who daily nets every pool in it from the opening of the season in February until August 31st when the nets are "off". Thence forward to October 31st the river is let in short lengths for rod fishing.

The rivers on the coast are more fortunate than most others in having two distinct runs of Salmon one in the Spring the other in the Autumn and the amount of fish sometimes to be seen there is almost incredible. Over 2,000 salmon have been taken by the nets in the pools, of this short river, in one day.

For the Autumn fishing, then, we came to Montrose making the Central Hotel our head quarters. Next morning saw us off betimes five miles by train to Craigo, where there is a little station at the head of the length called the Craigo water, the one it was our privilege to fish.

This beat or "March" is about two miles long. At the head of it is a large deep pool called the Dam, created by a single dyke or bank across the river made for the purpose of heading off water with a Mill race. A large volume of water is here abstracted from the river and returned again a mile and a half below.

The other pools on the Craigo length are the Dyke Pool, The Carnegie, Peters Pool, The Pantry, and the Loggie.

The river is small compared with many salmon rivers almost treeless and easily fished.
We had the right bank of the river. The Earl of C. had the left with the exception of the Dam which on the left bank marches with a higher length, then in the hands of Mr D.

On reaching the river we found a substantial Stone Cottage or "Bothy" where were assembled my Gillie, old "Willie" Miller, my friend's Gillie a lightly young fellow called "Jim" and the Earl of C's Gillie Sergeant Milne , a retired soldier, a smart active man, the best tyer of flies and one of the best fishermen on the Esk. After the first salutations were over and we had been duly welcomed to the river we enquired what prospect there was of sport. "None at all Sir" said the Sergeant "There's not a fish in the river, you can see the bottom anywhere and everywhere, I've known this river for thirty years and never saw it so low but once and that was in 87."

"Na said old Willie "its na use fushin till theres mair watter."

Then are there no fish here at all, we said, "Oh aye. Theres fusshe in the Dam, but ye canna get til them, theres no wind but if there was a strang breeze on the Dam fra the sou east, you might get a fusshe or two,"

The dam is crossed near its upper end by a high bridge, so we climbed up upon the bridge and looked down into the water. There sure enough we saw a dozen or so salmon lying in the deeps and scarcely moving. Presently I descried one with a white snout and a white patch near the tail. Thus early did we discover a diseased fish. It was the first but not the last by many scores that we were to see in that river.

We lunched at the bothy and then, I, by the Sergeants advice, put up a trout rod with fine drawn gut cast, and midge flies and proceeded to try for yellow trout. Williams took a salmon rod and his gillie and went down to the Loggie, the lowest pool, to try peradventure a fish might be got where the Millrace discharged itself back into the stream. Sergeant Milne crossed over to the "Airl" who now appeared on the opposite bank, and they too went to a deep hole in Peters Pool and sat down to angle for eels with big fat lob worms.

I got a yellow trout at almost the first cast and became correspondingly hopeful, but this trout turned out to be a bit of a fluke as for two hours afterwards I took nothing but salmon fry. These pests rose at every cast, but owing to the fineness o the water, it required abnormally quick striking to hook them. When caught they could only be thrown in again so I hit on the plan of striking very deliberately at all rises. This saved much trouble in reeling in and unhooking them, though possibly it may have lost me a trout or two.

By the end of the day I had four yellow trout (none over half a pound) and one fumock or whiting. The sergeant and the Earl had nine eels, one of them three or four pounds in weight. Mr Williams and "Jim" who had tried for a salmon had, of course, nothing.

The next day was a repetition of the first, so was the next, so for a week, so for a fortnight. Now and then there was a slight change in the wind but the equinoctial gales never came. No breeze ever ruffled the

surface of the dam, where in course of time salmon could be seen leaping frequently and furiously. Old Willie said they were diseased "Theyre a'diseased, they'll tak nothing!" but said I there's Mr D. and his gillie both fishing the Dam.

"Aye theyre both fishin't, l'ane in a flee and the t'ither wi a minnard, they fished it a' day yesterday and they catched naethin, an theyre swearing awful."

Who's swearing Mr D. or the gillie?

"Baith on em, baith on em. Deed man but they're swearing awful. But they'll catch nae fish for a' that."

It certainly was tantalizing. In no other part of our waters were there any salmon. Here in the dam monsters were leaping continually and two skilful fishermen were trying all they knew in vain.

They cast, now the fly, now the minnow, now the prawn right in the midst of them but never got a pull. Thus day after day passed on and lower and lower fell the water. All previous records were beaten. Never had the oldest inhabitant seen so much shingle and so small a stream. Once there was a shower. The distant Grampians clouded over! The sky was overcast! It actually rained!!! The dust three inches deep on the roads was quite dampened over. Everybody's spirits rose. Next night it rained for two hours. In great hopes we hurried early to the river hoping that old Willie's perpetual cry would at last be changed. Every day we used to greet him with "Well Willie how's the river." The invariable reply was "Not a bit of difference, there's not grain of rain" This time there was a slight alteration. "There's been nae rain to mak ony difference there's not a drop maair watter in the river, its nae use till there comes some rain."

There was however a small rise in the water perhaps three inches. This only raised to its level at our first arrival, but the water was "fresh" we thought we would try. I took in hand old Willie's salmon rod which had always been lying ready. I do know what a "weavers beam" is never having heard of one except in connection with David and goliath. But Willie's rod reminded me of my early conception of a "Weavers beam" It was a long (19 ft.) stout greenheart pole, the top piece being at the extreme end, nearly as thick as my forefinger. I assayed to wield it, with a result not unlike the attempt of a novice to toss the caber. Indeed I believe a caber to be only a kind of grown up specimen of Willie's rod. I observed to the Sergeant that I should not like to have to fish with a rod like that. "Oh" said the Sergeant, "that is a beautiful rod, a very powerful rod. When the fish are running strong here, Sir, it does not do to have a weak rod, or weak tackle of any kind. I just hang onto them as hard as I can and get them out. If the hold breaks it probably would have broken anyhow, and if it holds you may catch three fish whilst you would have otherwise have been landing one. You see that Carnegie Pool, Sir, 200 to 300 yards long. I've seen that pool paved, literally paved with salmon from end to end and often, and often have I seen six rods fishing it at one time three on each side and three of them into fish all at once. Our rule you know sir is that whenever a rod strikes a fish the other rods in the pool stop for fear of fouling, but I've often seen three strike at once, not having had time to leave off. And then you know, sir, you want your fish out of the way as soon as possible."

"What is the largest fish you ever got in this river Sergeant?

"Well, Sir, I believe 45 pounds is the biggest. I have often got them over forty pounds but don't remember one over forty five. But I have seen fish that must have weighed sixty or more. I was fishing some years ago with a gentleman who hooked a fish in the Dyke Pool, which we had on nineteen hours. A good many of us took turns at the rod, but I had the honour of losing him, Sir, at the last. He broke away. That fish we were all sure was sixty pounds or more. (This incident is mentioned in the Sportsmans Guide to Scotland).

I stayed a month at Montrose to fish the Craigo water. There was nothing to be done, but much to make one hope for a good time coming. All the accounts one heard of the river were so "fetching", keepers, water bailiffs, gillies, tradesmen all agreed in telling the same tale—

"Your on the Craigo water Sir? That's the best fishing about here. **When there is water.** If the rain would only come you would see such a sight offish as you never saw before".

These sayings made one feel what a chance was being missed. Then we heard that the Sea outside was swarming with fish waiting to come in. Sometimes we wandered down to the harbour and had a chat with the sea fishermen in the boats there. They all said there were more salmon jumping out side than ever they had seen; yes even twenty miles out they were cruising about waiting to go up the Don, the Dee, the Esks and the Tay.

But Jupiter Plurius had evidently gone for his holiday, at the time I went for mine, no rain fell. That September was the driest month **ever** registered at Ben Nevis. The drought continued to the middle of October, and I never had a chance of casting a salmon fly at Craigo. But the month was not passed entirely on the banks of the North Esk.

One day a tradesman said to me "Why, Sir, don't you try the South Esk? By paying half a crown a day you can fish the tide way for finnock (i. e. herling or whiting) and sea trout, and you have always the

chance of a salmon." He then told me that on the previous day he had himself caught 13 finnock, five sea trout and one grilse there.

Delighted to have a place to try in, where there was water and fish I hastened off next morning by train to Bridge of Dun, four miles away. There I found the keeper's house tendered my half crown, put on my waders and went to the river close by.

The first thing I saw was a man fast in a salmon. He was fishing for finnock with a worm, and got this 15 pound salmon.

It was then just high water, and I was advised by the keeper to use small flies, to follow the ebbing tide half a mile down the river, and fish there. I did so. So did others and in a while I was in the midst of a dozen anglers all fishing for dear life, as fish of some sort were rising freely, but the Grilse of the Sea Trout require hooking when raised. Nearly every angler had a big 17 or 18 foot rod. I had a light easily handled 12 foot trout rod. By quick striking at the rise I managed to break, in possibly, in some of the biggest fish, but in the course of two hours I got twelve finnock averaging over half a pound and three sea trout of which the best was over three pounds. I think none of the natives had had so good a bag, so I went home satisfied.

After this I repeatedly went again to the south Esk, with varying success. Sometimes not a fish would move. Amongst the Anglers there were many who had Season tickets. I think they paid £2 for them, and some of them go almost every day. I have seen these men make three or four casts—look around at the sky—remark that there was too much fog or haze – and go home. And I invariably found that in the then low condition of the fresh water a hazy sky meant no sport.

Two days before my holiday ended Mr Johnston called, expressed his regret that we had such a very unfortunate season, and said if we liked the **bottom** reach of the North Esk which he always reserved for his own family; and along with it a pool known as the Laddie's Hole.

As this is quite a unique kind of place let me tell you what I already knew about it.

The Laddie's Hole so called because a "laddie" can cast a fly across it, is a deep pool 20 yards by ten, along side and connected with the lowest Mill race on the river. The Mill race about four yards wide and eighteen inches deep runs out into the tide way and is only separated from the river by a low bank which is covered with water in any normal state of the stream. Now the two were entirely divided. Fish coming up the tide way find plenty of water coming down the Mill race, and scarcely any in the river. They ascend the former and find themselves in a cul de sac, with the Laddie's hole adjoining. There they take refuge. There is no way of escape but by going back down to the tideway again. But salmon will never go back unless hooked, so the Mill race and the Pool get full of fish that cannot get away. There in course of time they would all become diseased. In this predicament they will not take a fly, but they will take a worm, and all the angler has to do is to bait a very big hook with two very big worms, cast it into the pool and await results.

In the Mill race itself you fish as in any other stream casting your worm up and letting it come down with the current. In this way I saw a school boy, one of Mr Johnston's sons, catch in a short time 15 finnock, five sea trout and two salmon besides getting broken several times.

In order to save the fish and set them free, the water bailiffs from time to time net the piece of water, get out the fish, carry them over the low bank, and deposit them in the river.

We were invited to see this operation performed when we had only been a week at Montrose. A net about twenty yards long, with floats at the top edge and sinkers at the bottom, is dragged from one end of the Laddie's Hole to a shingle at the other. As we saw it done it presented a scene almost indescribable. As the net neared the shore a tumultuous motion appeared in the water enclosed within it. But when the shingle was reached there was an immense mass of silvery life leaping, plunging, struggling on the stones, with a dozen men trying to lay hold of the fish to carry them alive to the river. There was a goodly crowd of spectators who roared with laughter, as I think I have never heard anyone laugh before, we I may say laughed as loudly as the rest. Some of the men were trying to catch hold of a big fish each. But they were heavy and slippery and not easy to catch hold of. Here you would see a man with a thirty pound fish, one hand grasping the root of its tail the other firmly imbedded in the bleeding gills. There you could see another hugging a great fish to his breast, when plunge, and lo' the fish had escaped from his arms as was again kicking on the ground. In the midst of the fray were men with huge iron hoped landing nets, into which they tried to scoop, and others with wooden shovels to push, part of the struggling mass. At last all were captured and thrown into the river. We looked on with amazement wondering how so many big fish could have been contained in so small a pool, for none could have been less than about five pounds weight. The meshes of the net are so large that anything smaller could get through. There were I suppose 120 or more fishes in that haul at least ten pounds each on the average.

But we were to wonder still more "They are going to draw the net again", the second time there must have been 80 or 90, and of larger average size than the first. And now one had to wonder not only how so many were in, but how so many great fish had escaped the net the first time. The mystery was, however, easily explained. The pool is deep with big rocks at the bottom and the net did not reach the depths. A third time they proceeded to draw the net, but it was now getting dark, our dinner hour was at hand, we were three of four miles from Montrose on an unknown road and the best of the fun was over, so I and my friend decided to make tracks for the Central Hotel.

The next day I got the actual figures of the fish taken, from the water bailiffs who conducted the work and had the fish counted, as accurately as circumstances permitted. Their books showed 201 salmon and 46 sea trout removed out of that one small pool.

This is what I had already seen of the lower river and the Laddie's Hole. And here for my last two days I had permission to fish, and this storehouse or aquarium was again full of fish, fresh run from the sea.

I will not dwell upon my adventures there nor detail the history of gut and hooks broken, big ones caught and bigger ones lost. I broke and saw broken in those two days, more gut and more hooks than in years of my fishing life put together. And yet I saw the genial Dr. Johnston, (brother of the proprietor) kill three fish varying from 23 to 27 pounds with a ten foot rod. Moreover fish that would never have gone back to the sea of themselves, showed no reluctance to do so hooked, and now and again you would see an angler marching down the stream after his fish, till he was out of sight, seawards, no one taking the trouble to follow him to see the finish, except his own gillie. Sometimes he would return bringing his fish, sometimes with only broken tackle. With regard to myself, I had not a bad two days but my best salmon only scaled 21 pounds and my best sea trout six pounds.

On Saturday October the 16th I bid adieu to Montrose. Jupiter Pluvius had also returned from his holiday, I came away in a deluge of rain. In a few days the river had ten or twelve feet and angling was impossible because there was too much water. The fish came up in thousands and could be touched with a walking stick as they struggled up the sides out of the rush of the stream.

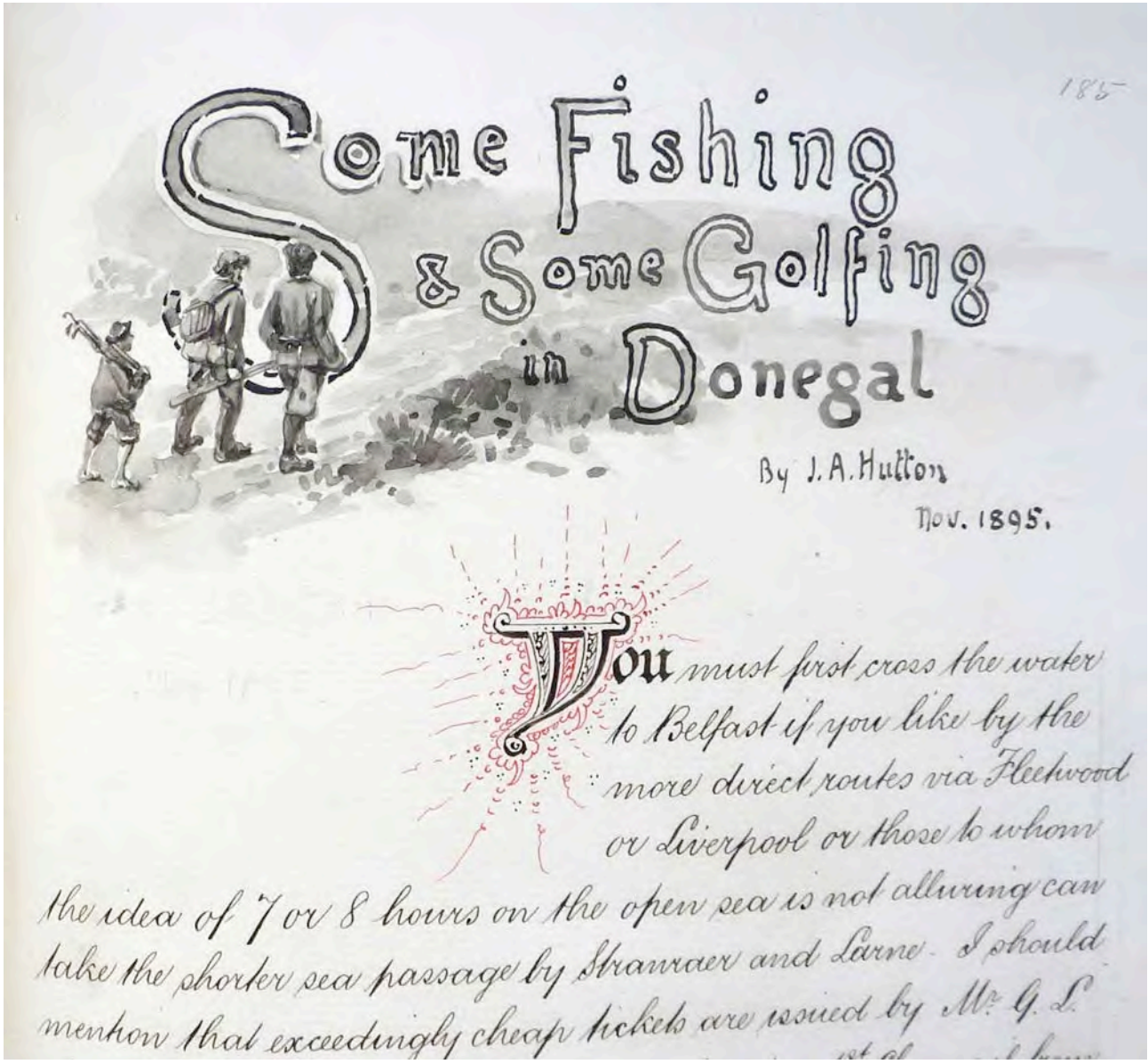
When the water went down my friends had wonderful sport on the Craigo water which fully justified all that had been said in its praise, and I heard of the "Airl" and the Sergeant both with their coats off and their sleeves turned up, taking fish as fast as they could, and with hands and arms covered with blood and scales.

My poor old gillie "Willie" died suddenly a few days after I left. He was a man whom you could trust with your purse or your whisky bottle perfectly certain they would never be touched.

R. I. P.

P. S. This paper is I fear much too long but I should like to add one word more. For men who wish to combine fishing and golf, Montrose is well worthy of attention. There is a good golf links **free.** In few other places can you play without an introduction. In the mornings the links are little frequented and only crowded on holiday afternoons. There are several golf clubs that can be joined for a small consideration, but the links are open to all. I am told there is very good trout fishing in the North Esk, and that permission can be had for the asking. The salmon fishing is, of course, strictly preserved. In the south Esk whiting and sea trout fishing can be had for 2/6 a day. They say the Spring whiting are much finer than the Autumn ones, but even these are twice as big as any I have seen in the Dumfriesshire Esk, where the charge is 4/- per day. Suitable tackle can be bought and all information obtained in Montrose. Brechin is only a few miles away; there resides the best tackle and rod maker in the North of Scotland and **they** say in the Kingdom. Unfortunately, at this moment, I have forgotten his name. The train communication to Montrose is first rate. You can leave Manchester at 9-55 and dine at Montrose at 7-30.

I shall be glad if any other brother angler or golfer should try this, and find it—a good thing—"



You must first cross the water to Belfast if you like by the more direct routes via Fleetwood or Liverpool or those to whom the idea of 7 or 8 hours on the open sea is not alluring can take the shorted sea passage by Stranraer and Larne. I should mention that exceedingly cheap tickets are issued by Mr G. L. Baillie of 21 Arthur Street, Belfast including first class rail from Belfast or Larne to Derry and Fahan, steamer to Rathinallen , Char-a banc to Rosapenna,*(always spelt as Rovapenna)* steamer from Portsalon to Fahan and rail to Buncrana and return journey from Buncrana to Belfast together with five days hotel accommodation for £3-15-0 the tickets being available for sixteen days. The only extras are the charges for using the Golf links, the car hire from Rosapenna to Portsalon and the additional days at the Hotels about 9/- a day. When at Belfast we take the train from Derry and I warn those who are golfers, to avoid the allurements of Newcastle and Portrush, which we pass on the way, for there but little fishing is to be found. Or if you prefer it you can take the longer but more comfortable route by Holyhead and go direct from Dublin to Derry by train stopping at Dublin on the way if you like. Or those who really prefer the sea can go direct by steamer from Liverpool to Derry to which little town all their routes lead. There we need not linger long, what few sights there are can be seen in an hour, and though by no means unpicturesque at high tide, Derry is more interesting for its historical associations than for its sights. There is however a famous toboggan run and when the snow lies half the population disports itself there. It runs down one of the principal streets through the middle of the town and right through the archway in the old wall, past which one has to deftly steer ones machine when running at full speed, an operation not free from danger and accidents are not uncommon. I warn you to keep clear of politics when you are at Derry, the parties are very evenly divided, and feeling

consequently runs high and when the registers are being revised most amusing scenes take place for every claim is hotly contested, the elections usually being lost or decided by a very few votes. We will however take a car to the terminus of the Lough Swilly Railway a single line of narrow gauge, and half an hour will bring us to Fahan where we find the little steamer Menai, which formerly plied between Beaumaris and Bangor, lying ready to take us across to Rathmullen on the far side of Lough Swilly. Now I must warn you that if you mean to accompany me further you must be prepared to leave behind many of the comforts of civilization, for you are now approaching the outskirts of the wilds of Donegal. A char a banc is waiting for us and we drive out of the village past the Abbey for a couple of miles, and then turn up inland across a monstrous bit of country. On reaching the top of the hill we get glimpses of the Donegal Mountains away to the west, and then we rattle down to Milford, where we change horses. The road now becomes most beautiful on our left are high rounded hills, running up straight from the road, with cottages dotted about here and there and on the right are the placid waters of Mulroy Bay one of the most charming of salt water lakes, with the Inishowen hills in the distance,

While the road itself runs through woods of larch and birch, giving one glimpses of lovely scenery on either side. The driver will very likely point out to you the spot where Lord Leitrim was murdered, and with very little persuasion will launch out into long accounts of crimes of this extraordinary man. Living as he did, in comparative seclusion from the world, he exercised the powers of an Easter Potentate, was a hard man with his tenants and if the stories one hears of him are true, was the father of half the population in the neighbourhood, and well deserved his end. The probability is that his mind was not right for he is supposed to have considered himself a really good man, and he is reported to have said when he was knocked down by one of his murders "You have killed the best man in Ireland." His murderers were never brought to trial, though one man was arrested who died in gaol, and there is a story current that he never died at all but was drugged, carried out of the gaol in a coffin and so escaped. His successor the late Lord Leitrim, was one of the best types of Landlords, but unfortunately he did not live long enough to carry out his numerous schemes for benefiting the neighbourhood. The Rosapenna Hotel, our destination, was bought by him in Norway and it was when he was over there superintending the construction of the building that he caught the chill that caused his end, a most deplorable loss to the neighbourhood, for his trustees have not the power to carry out the various improvements he contemplated.

After emerging from the woods our road runs along the Mulroy Bay, until we reach the Castle. Here we change horses again, and a mile or two further on we reach Carrigart, a little village almost entirely dependent on the visitors at the Hotel and which boasts of no less than three places of worship, a large Catholic Chapel, a Presbyterian Chapel and a church. Religious feeling here runs smoothly enough, thanks to the friendliness of the priest the parson and the minister who may often be seen having a friendly game of golf together on the Rosapenna Links. After leaving the village our road turns abruptly to the right, apparently to plunge into another arm of Mulroy Bay, but unless the tide is high, there is little or no water to cover the heavy sandy road across the strand. On emerging on the other side we enter into midst of dreary looking sand hills, but we soon reach the Hotel in time for dinner. I can only hope that any of you who venture hither, may not experience such a drive as we had, with a gale of wind in our teeth accompanied by drenching showers, or like ourselves you would be compelled to spend half the time crouched under the Macintosh wraps of the car.

The Hotel is not particularly well situated, being placed among the sand hills in order to get protection from the gales, and there is only a poor view from the windows, and the first impression is not pleasing but this soon wears away. It is built on the Norwegian style, entirely of wood, with a comfortable veranda, and barring the fact that you can occasionally hear the movements of visitors in the adjoining rooms, is fairly comfortable. I do not propose to give a detailed description of the Links, as such descriptions on paper seldom convey much idea of a course. You start close to the Hotel, and play right round it, never being more than half a mile away, and finish close to the starting point. The views are most varied, and most beautiful, at first you play along side the charming waters of Sheephaven, with the Donegal mountains in the distance, later on you overlook the more peaceful waters of Mulroy Bay. The greens are good and the lies are fair, and the golfer is not to be pitied who can never play on better links than those of Rosapenna.

But it is time to get to our fishing. The sport to be obtained at Rosapenna is not varied, you can try for salmon, white trout or brown trout, and there ought to be excellent trolling in the sea along the coast. I have no records to relate of big captures, for during my visit the weather was most unfavourable, and the season nearly over. The best time would be in June or July when the white trout are beginning to run.

Glen Laugh is about four or five miles away and is open to visitors at the Hotel from April to July, after that time it is reserved for Lady Leitrim and her friends. It holds plenty of white trout and brown trout with always the chance of a salmon. It is a pretty lake about two or three miles long, and considering the

circumstances, under which I fished it, afforded very fair sport. On the first occasion there was a gale of wind blowing down the Lake, and as we were unfortunate enough to get the poorer boatman of the two, a dear old man of nearly eighty after one or two attempts we had to give up all hopes of reaching the head of the loch, and had to content ourselves with fishing the lower end, where only brown trout and white trout lie. The other boat however did get to the head, and they rose no less than six salmon, but like all the salmon in Donegal this last season they rose extremely short and not one was hooked. It was the same story everywhere, few fish showing themselves, and what few fish did rise to the fly, came short. Not a single salmon was caught when were at Rosapenna , and the only fish that was nearly caught, was hooked by my companion on another occasion, on a small trout fly with a light nine foot cane rod a fish of about twelve pounds. Greatly to his credit he played and exhausted the fish and had it lying on its side close to the boat and practically killed. It was actually in the net when it gave one more leap for liberty, tumbled out of the net, and one of the drop flies catching, the cast broke and away it went. Our basket at the end of the day consisted of 18 white and brown trout running up to a pound. The Lake is not open to visitors after July but Lady Leitrim very kindly sends word to the Hotel when she does not require the boats and I was able to get another day's fishing. This time we managed to reach the head of the lake, where the salmon lie, but we only rose one fish, so we did not waste much time, but worked our way back to the lower end and returned home with 25 white and brown trout the best being a fresh run white trout of two pounds. Such were my experiences of Glen Laugh, but I can quite imagine that earlier in the season one might have excellent sport with the white trout.

The river running into the lake at the head is the Owencarron or Owenharron generally called the O'Harry. It can be fished from the Hotel but I never tried it, but I heard that with a full water and on a stormy day one may get good sport with the salmon and the white trout. There is no use going in calm weather, as the stream is very sluggish. When it emerges from the Loch it changes its name to Lackugh. There is a good holding pool just where it runs out, but this can be best fished out of a boat on the Lough, and it is hardly worth while going up so far when one is fishing on the lower water, as there is about three quarters of a mile of unfishable water in between, with very rough walking. I tried the lower water on one occasion but was not very successful only getting a few small white trout. I was terribly bothered with a strong wind from the opposite bank, and only those who have toiled all day long with a heavy salmon rod, endeavouring to cast the fly into the teeth of the wind can realise the pains in my back at the end of the day. My back aches even now at the thought of it. It is a delightfully easy river to fish, with a good mile of fishable water, a succession of long and rather sluggish pools, there are no trees behind to bother one and every here and there little piers built out into the river, rendering wading absolutely unnecessary.

Kindrum or Ballyhiernan is a delightful little lake full of really good sized brown trout running up to a couple of pounds on weight but unfortunately rather far from the Hotel. You have first a drive of about three miles past the castle to the ferry over Mulroy Bay. In the narrows about the ferry during July and August some good white trout fishing may be had, either out of a boat or off the points, the best time being when the tide is flowing; but when we were there the run of fish was practically over. On reaching the ferry one has to get the horse and car across in a large flat bottomed boat and the process of embarking and disembarking is rather tedious though sometimes exciting with a spirited horse. Much time can be saved by arranging beforehand for a car to be waiting on the other side, for one can soon get across in a small boat. The road on the other side is rather rough and hilly and although the Lake is less than four miles from the ferry, it takes one some time to arrive there, and although it is by no means unpicturesque with charming views of Mulroy Bay, one is not sorry to get to the fishing. We only went there on one occasion, but we were late starting and did not reach the Loch till 11-30. After fishing the various bays at the lower end with moderate success, we worked our way up to the head, and just before lunch time I was lucky enough to get a capital trout of one and a half pounds, and on landing for lunch the basket totalled up to a dozen, running from a quarter of a pound and upwards. After lunch we were soon at work again but most unfortunately the wind died away, and the clouds disappeared and not another trout did we catch. Kindrum is however a most charming little lake about one and a half miles long with a number of nice little bays, the only disadvantage being the distance from the Hotel for it takes over an hour and a half to get there. But earlier in the year on a good day one can get capital sport, for the fish run a very decent size and would average well over half a pound. It is really worthwhile landing at the far end of the lake, and walking for about three quarters of a mile over the strip of land which separates the Lake from the Atlantic when there is a heavy swell coming in from the **NW** the breakers are well worth seeing. Not far from here is a little village, in one of the most out of the way situations with a delightfully suggestive Irish name Ballyhouriskey suggesting Ireland, Peat and Potheen in one word. Our drive back from the Lake was most charming and we did not altogether regret the breeze having deserted us and spoilt our sport, for we were rewarded with a most glorious sunset. There was not a

cloud in the sky which was reflected in the placid waters of Mulroy Bay, which looked like streets of Mother o'Pearl surrounded by mountains of a lovely transparent looking blue, except where they were tipped with the blaze of the sinking sun. We recrossed the ferry without any trouble and were soon back at the Hotel after one of the most charming days one could wish for.

There are one or two burns and some small Hills Lakes in the neighbourhood, that might be worth a visit, but our stay was so short that we had no time to try them, nor did we have any sea fishing as the swell was rather heavy most of the time, but I feel quite sure that excellent sport should be got amongst the saithe and lythe along the coast. One might spend a day very pleasantly by trolling along the coast to Horn Head nine miles away where the scenery is very fine. There are a number of other attractions in the neighbourhood of all sorts, mountains, lakes, scenery and antiquities, and altogether one might have a difficulty in finding a better place than Rosapenna in which to spend a holiday, for though the fishing is not first rate, it is quite good enough for amusement, and affords a great variety of sport, to say nothing of the attractions of the links and there is not the slightest difficulty in filling up the whole of one's time in this out of the way spot. We will now leave Rosapenna and pass on to Port Salon. We can drive across by the ferry past Kindrum a distance of about twelve miles, or we can go by Milford right round by Mulroy Bay a charming drive of about twenty miles. There is a comfortable Hotel at Port Salon, kept by Colonel Barton and excellently managed by his sister. Being in difficulties like many other Irish landlords, he wisely allowed himself to be persuaded to lay out golf links, and in a very short time, such is the civilising influence of the game, he had to enlarge the hotel, open a store, erect a pier and start a steam launch to accommodate the increasing number of visitors who came and not only from Ireland but also from England. Port Salon is one of the most striking instances of what golf can do for a neighbourhood. Instead of the desolate inaccessible village, surrounded by half cultivated land, whose inhabitants depended for their living on the scanty supply of the soil or on what they would pick up by fishing, it conveys to one landing from the steamer the idea of being a quite small centre of industry, and can boast of at least half a dozen cars. The links are very good, the holes though rather short, are interesting and the turf very fair, and on a bright sunny day the view is quite delightful. Away across Lough Swilly are the mountains of Inishowen, while below us are the brilliant waters of Ballymastocker Bay, of a lovely blue colour, which reminds one of the Mediterranean, to which the bright white sands of the shore make a pleasant contrast, and the scarlet jerseys of the caddies look most picturesque against the green turf of the links. Unfortunately there is no fresh water fishing to be obtained here, but excellent sport can be had in the sea and there is every variety of rough shooting from snipe and woodcock to rock pigeon, though the latter can only be got when the water is calm enough to allow a boat to enter the pigeon caves. We only stayed at the hotel on one occasion, and that quite against our will. We were stopping at Buncrana and a bright calm day tempted us to take a car to Fahan to catch the steamer that runs to Port Salon twice a week, in connection with the train from Derry. We arrived in time for lunch and had a round of golf and returned to the Hotel for tea, but on going out soon after five o'clock to return to the steamer we were terrified to find that a dense sea fog had come on. The starting time for starting came, but we did not start, nor could we learn from the captain whether there was any probability of our leaving soon, until one of the passengers discovered that they had neither compass or side lights on board and they with nautical knowledge sent our already depressed spirits still lower by telling us they felt sure the captain would not start that night. The more knowing ones then went off to the Hotel to engage rooms, for it was doubtful whether they would be able to accommodate us all for a large number had come over from Derry for the day. Our sympathies were very deep for a young couple, who had come for the outing and who evidently were not married, and were in great trouble as to what they ought to do, but luckily a kind old Irish woman offered her chaperonage and took the girl under her wing. It certainly was a most depressing scene, as it gradually became darker and darker, and the fog settled down thicker and thicker, and our clothes became wetter and wetter from the damp air. After an hour's waiting we most of us gave up all hope of starting and returned to the Hotel, leaving the captain standing on the pier surveying the fog in a sphinx like attitude, for he long ere this had given up answering questions from anxious passengers as to when they would start, and had finally retired into an impenetrable sulky silence. The only individual with a smile on his face was Colonel Barton, who walked up and down the pier looking as happy as a dog with a new tail, for our misfortunes were his gain and was providing him with a capital ending to an already successful season. Not only did we fill the Hotel to overflowing but we cleared out the whole of his stock in his store of night apparel, brushes and combs. They managed to sort us out into different rooms and then gave us an excellent dinner, and we were soon able to look at the humorous side question though it was even suggested that it was all a made up plan between Colonel Barton and the Captain. The next morning we had to be up early, but the fog was still there, though not so thick as the night before, and the Captain decided to make a start and we were able to find our way along the Lough to Fahan without much difficulty, but we were very glad to find ourselves once more at

Buncrana safe and sound and in touch with civilisation. Buncrana is a fair sized village on the Inishowen Peninsular and is only half an hour by rail from Derry and can be reached in 14 or 15 hours from Manchester. The Lough Swilly Hotel is a fairly comfortable house in a most perfect situation standing on the end of a rocky promontory about 80 feet above the sea with an absolutely uninterrupted view all round embracing the Inishowen Mountains and the whole of Lough Swilly that wonderful lake of shadows. I know of no place in the British Isles where one can see the Sun set to such perfection, no words of mine can describe it all I can say is "Go to Buncrana and see it for yourself." This little spot has to me a charm I cannot altogether account for. The scenery although pretty is nothing extraordinary, the golfing is good, but there is not quite enough of it and the fishing is only fair and what shooting one can get is decidedly poor. All the same I have now been there on several occasions and would go again and again. The Hotel is old though it has been recently enlarged and though a little slovenly like most Irish hotels is comfortable and there is an excellent arrangement of baths of all sorts, hot water sea baths, a capital cold sea plunge bath and medicated baths of different varieties. It is more frequented by Irish people especially those suffering from rheumatism and it certainly deserves to be better known in England. The village itself is ugly enough, consisting of the usual long Irish street with every other house a whiskey shop and it really is depressing to see the hopeless idleness of most of the men who depend on their living on the scanty earnings their wives get from shirt making for the Derry Merchants, every house has its sewing machine and some have more and at times the air hums with the noise of the sewing, Unfortunately for Buncrana the linen mills were closed many years ago owing to bad times and the place has never looked up since then.

The Lady's Golf Links are close to the Station and about a quarter of a mile from the Hotel, and when one is too lazy to go to the men's links one can have capital practice on this little course. Two or three of the holes are really difficult and as the greens are very fair and the turf excellent one might do worse than play here. The North West Golf Club links are at Lisfannon, quarter of a mile from the Hotel and you can charter a car for a shilling or go by train or else walk. The holes are long and well laid out, the greens are first class and the turf is the best in Ireland and any golfer who is weak with his brassy can get the very best of practice at Lisfannon. Unfortunately there are only nine holes, but the links are never crowded except on Saturday when a good many golfers come from Derry and even then they are not unpleasantly crowded, the members of the club mostly residents in Derry are a most charming lot of men and welcome a stranger with Irish hospitality. There is a small stream close to the Hotel the Mill river which is of no use except in flood time when one may easily catch a dozen white trout running up to half a pound. The fishing is free and there is only a length of about half a mile as some falls prevent the fish running higher upstream. There is a small stream some miles away at Dunra said to contain plenty of brown trout and probably white trout and in the Mintiagos Lake four miles away trout fishing is to be had, but I never tried either. The best sport to be had is in the Crana River better known as the Castle River. The Castle itself is merely an old house picturesquely situated at the mouth of the river very much overgrown with trees, with a nice old garden and approached by a beautiful old bridge. The fishing is preserved but by applying to Mr Edgar, the Agent, who lives close by, permission to fish can be obtained at any rate for a small charge. The lower length is often let with the Castle and is then closed, but on the upper lengths permission can always be obtained. There are plenty of very small brown trout and a few white trout in the river and after a fresh a fair number of salmon. The lower lengths are best when the water is low, but after a flood one can do better on the higher lengths of the river, even some two or three miles from the sea. It is one of the most perfect little salmon rivers one could wish for, with a succession of beautiful pools, and but little unfishable water. The fish do not run large a fish over ten pounds being very exceptional, so only a light salmon rod of 14 or 16 feet is necessary, nor need one wade at all. The smallest of flies should be used and indeed all through Donegal much smaller flies are used than on other rivers. Rogan of Derry knows the Crana River well, and will always come over to Buncrana for a small consideration. He is a nice civil old man and a pleasant companion like most Irish gillies when they leave the Whiskey alone and should advise anyone visiting Buncrana for the first time to call at Rogan's shop on passing through Derry and to arrange with him to accompany them at any rate on their first day. The best gillie I had there was a man called Conachan a first rate man and clever with the gaff an accomplishment no doubt picked up in early poaching days. He was a great character a typical Irishman with plenty of humour and like most of his compatriots exceedingly sympathetic. If you rose a fish and missed it, or worst still played a fish and lost it, no matter whether you had bungled it or not he was always ready with a consoling excuse and although one may not altogether believe these excuses it still is some comfort to imagine they are true and when Conachan would remark "Shure sorr he wasn't within moiles of the Floi," or "Indade, yor Honor it wasn't your fault," you felt really you were not entirely to blame. His one stock expression was "Oh dear Oh" which used to afford us great amusement, for matter whether you told him that there was going to war in the East, or that they had a very bad harvest in England, or that you had come into

a fortune he would always reply “Oh dear Oh”. He had one fault however as a gillie, which used to irritate me very much until I got to know the river better, I used to ask on coming to a pool “Now Conachan is this a good place?” to which he would invariably reply, “Shure your Honor the very best.” And then I would fish every inch of the water, and more often than not, never stirred a fish or saw one move. After a time I began to get a little suspicious, this really was a wonderful river in which every pool was good, so one day I decided to lay a trap for our friend. On coming to a long shallow pool in which no salmon except one out of its senses could possibly be, I asked the usual question and received the usual answer that it was the best pool in the river and I proceeded to fish it down carefully without any success. “Now Conachan” said I “did you ever see a fish taken out of this pool?”

“I did not your Honor.”
“How deep will it be Conachan?”
“About two or three feet deep sor.”
“Don’t you think it is a very poor pool to hold fish?”
“I do your Honor.”
“Its surely a waste of time fishing here Conachan?”
“It is that your Honor.”
“Then what the deuce did you mean by telling me it was the very best pool in the river?”
“Well shure your Honor, I thought you would like a pleasant answer.”

But alas Conachan has fallen a victim to the curse of his country- Whiskey and on my last visit I only saw him on one occasion, and over that scene a veil had better be drawn, poor man he had some excuse. He caught a poacher one day, a friend of his and had him prosecuted and convicted, but the culprit was a favourite in the district and after that every man’s hand was against him, one night he was attacked and beaten and he never held up his head again. I feel as if I had lost an intimate friend for whenever I went to Buncrana I was sure of a welcome from Conachan, and indeed from all the men connected with the place, the boatman, the car driver or the old servants at the Hotel. They are a charming lot of men if you take them the right way and do their best to make you enjoy yourself. No doubt like most Irishmen they are great Humbugs, and pretend a great deal more than they mean, but it is very pleasant to be humbugged in that way. At one time Inishowen was a proclaimed district as I found out on one occasion when I took my gun with me and learnt that it was necessary to get a special permit from the resident magistrate to carry fire arms. Political feeling has now simmered down and if you don’t get too serious about it you can get plenty of amusement by discussing politics with the natives. I was very much stuck on my last visit a few weeks after the general election during a conversation at finding that not one of the men present could tell me who was the sitting member for the district. “Shure and his Reverence tould us we were to mark the second on the payper.”

You will be thinking that there is not much fishing in all this, but after all it is not the fishing only which constitutes the pleasures of a fishing holiday. But to return to the river. As I remarked before it is small and soon runs down and becomes too low for sport, but then one can go to the links or else try the sea fishing of which more later on. I shall always have tender recollections of the Crana River for in it I caught my first salmon. The first time I went on the water I was not able to secure the services of Conochan though I can recommend Bowler, the man I had, as a decent steady lad with a fair knowledge of the river. I took a car a couple of miles up the river and fished down as I did not want to interfere with an old gentleman who was on the lower waters. I soon discovered that Bowler did not know very much about fishing, so I had to fish the pools down inch by inch, for fear of passing any good holding spot. At last after a couple of hours patient work I had my reward when a good sized fish came out head and shoulder at the fly but alas I missed him and there was nothing for it but to sit down and give him a rest. I had on a largish fly with a purple body, this I took off and substituted a small Jack Scott, and then I timed a quarter of an hour by my watch, and fifteen very long minutes they were, it was too bad to have missed the first salmon I had ever risen, and I had to console myself with the fact that I had had little salmon fishing before and could not expect to become an accomplished fisherman all at once. When the time had expired I approached the head of the pool, and slowly worked my way down inch by inch my hands and arms trembling more and more as each cast brought me nearer to the spot where the fish had shown itself and then suddenly out he came with the same bold rise, and this time he had it and I really had hold of a salmon at last. In a moment I was up on the bank and with one rush he was off away down the pool and some forty yards away he came out with a leap that sent my heart into my mouth, and I feared to lose him and yet almost prayed that we might part company. This may sound ridiculous, but I appeal to those of you who are salmon fishers and I feel sure that when you hooked your first salmon your feelings would have been much the same almost more fear than joy. He played for

some time, it seemed to me hours, up and down the pool and at last I got him within gaffing distance, and Bowler soon showed as he afterwards confessed that he had never gaffed a salmon before. He succeeded in gaffing the line and thoroughly frightening the fish, which rushed off across the pool, and then the line came back in my face, the hook had broken hold. You can imagine my feelings to have risen him and missed him, and to have risen him again and lost him at last, was too terrible for words. Poor Bowler, I think he would have minded less if I had sworn at him but it was past words. I fished on but all heart was gone from me from me, and I saw no more salmon that day. The next day I started off early with Bowler having arranged to meet a friend from Derry later on in the day. This time I commenced on the lower water intending to fish up to the scene of the previous day's exploits. The first pool I drew blank, but in the second I hooked a nice little fresh fish of four pounds, but this dashing little gentleman was soon brought close to the gravel bank on which I was standing and giving the rod to Bowler I tailed easily and really had caught my first salmon though he was not a very big one. In the next two pools I did nothing but my thoughts were away with that fish in the pool up the river and I dare say I was not fishing as carefully as I ought to have done for in the next pool I rose and plucked a fish badly and the same thing occurred in the pool after. After this I was unfortunate enough to have a slight accident. As I was getting over a low stone wall feeling it giving under me I gave a jump to get clear of the falling stones and lighted with one foot in a hole and sprained my ankle rather badly. However the intense pain passed away and I walked on to the weir where I had arranged to meet my friend. He arrived just after I did and was soon at work and rose a fish almost immediately, but he generously insisted on my having a second try at it, but the fish would not come again. After this we gradually worked our way up taking turn and turn about to the pool where I had lost the fish the day before. Although it was his turn he insisted on my fishing first and at the second cast up came the very same fish. This time I gave him no law, and I soon had him near enough for my friend to nip him out with a gaff. It was the best fish I ever caught at Buncrana weighing just over nine pounds. After lunch my ankle began to get rather swollen and very painful and I contented myself with watching my friend and having a cast now and then. We saw no more salmon until we reached the pool where we had met, and where we had raised a fish in the morning. At my suggestion he put on a small Jack Scott similar to the one with which I had been fishing, but it was no use. I had given up fishing by this, but something prompted me to have a cast at the spot where the fish had risen, and the very first time the fly came round, up he came and was away with a rush and I after him as fast I could hobble along helplessly on one leg, and there was my friend roaring with laughter at me and advising me to let go or I would be pulled in. I got fearfully chaffed about it afterwards; my friend always declares that the salmon caught me and not I the salmon. I must have let the line slacken for the fish took another run up the pool I following on as best I could and he gave one roll over and away came the fly. I hope never again to have hold of a salmon under similar circumstances for my ankle was then so bad that I could not bear to put my foot on to the ground, and my balance was so unsteady standing on one leg that felt that at any moment the fish might pull me into the river. After this I was unable to fish any longer so we despatched Bowler for a car as walking home was quite impossible for me, and so ended the most successful days salmon fishing I ever had. To catch two salmon lose another and rise two others in one day is good enough and I would sprain my ankle again for the same reward. I am sure that last salmon knew I had a gamé leg, for although my friend is an excellent fisherman and was fishing with the same fly I was using, in fact one I had given him, the fish refused all his allurements and allowed the fly to pass over it time after time, in order to wait until I came, so that it might have a chance of pulling me into the river. I will not weary you with accounts of other days I have had on this charming little river. I have had many blank days there and there have been days when I have caught fish, but I am afraid the fishing is not what it used to be. All through the summer it is heavily netted at the mouth and in the lower pools and when the salmon do reach the upper waters they have little chance for there is no watcher on the water now, and the river is sadly poached. During my last visit I only fished once for salmon, the water was very low and the poachers had not left many fish in the river and I had to content myself with fishing for sea trout in a pool on the lower length, after sunset, when I generally managed to pick up half a dozen nice fish. I should strongly advise anyone going to Donegal to take sea tackle with them, for when the rivers are hopeless there is always a good chance in the sea. There is an excellent boatman at Buncrana by name of Maclachlan, half an Irish man and half a Scotchman, an amusing old man with all the legends and superstitions of the old salt about him, and full of wonderful tales of storms and wrecks and the capture of all sorts of sea animals. Amongst other things he firmly believed that puffin carries its eggs under its wing when swimming about and hatches them there, and though I told him I had seen puffin's nests he could believe he was wrong. The best trolling is to be had off the rocks down the Loch on either side, the west shore for preference. It is a fine bit of rocky coast with large cliffs, dotted with caves, the haunts of the rock pigeons. One could easily spend a pleasant day by trolling down to the caves, where you can have a shot or two at the pigeon, but I warn you they are most difficult to

kill, and afterwards one could troll back in the evening. Take a short stiff trolling rod, light leads and some old phantoms spoons or devon baits, or some bright gaudy flies, and you are almost sure of sport of one sort or another. I have never fished in Lough Swilly except in September, but that is rather late, July and August being the better months, as the bigger fish move off to the deeper water after that time. The best fish I ever caught was a coal fish of eighteen pounds and as one may often get a fish of over three pounds it is advisable to take a gaff. I often wonder the fishermen don't try trolling in the sea when fresh water fishing is a failure, or even as a change. Sport is much more certain and if you use a rod a large coal fish is a very fair substitute for a salmon. When were last at Buncrana we very nearly had an unpleasant experience. We sailed across to Rathmullen one afternoon to fish for codling, but about five o'clock a dense sea fog came on, so thick that we could not see ten yards from the boat. We were about six miles from home and it was about four miles across to our side of the Loch, and to make matters worse there was a strong tide running out to sea. Maclachlan wanted to make straight for Rathmullen which was only half a mile away but we should have been little better off if we had got there for it was over 25 miles by road round the head of Lough Swilly to Buncrana. Luckily I had a small pocket compass with me, and we steered straight across for the east shore, and by great luck we managed to hit the buoy that marks the bank in the middle of the Loch and so were able to steer a straight course for Buncrana.

We heard the ferry steamer close to us which as we afterwards learnt had stuck on the bank, but the fog was so dense we could not see her. The unfortunate passengers did not get ashore till eleven o'clock that night as they had to be taken off in small boats. We soon made our own shore and then crept along it until we made the Buncrana pier where we found the Hotel boats ringing a small hand bell to guide us for they were beginning to get rather anxious about us. We were very grateful for their kindness, which however was not of much use, for we could not hear the bell until we were close up to the pier. Never in the future will I go out on the sea without a compass, but for it we might have rowed round and round in a circle or drifted out seawards, so dense was the fog, and it might have been very late before we made land. We were all extremely thankful to escape what might have been a most unpleasant experience.

I trust that I may have been able to give you some little idea of what sport you may find in Donegal. First rate fishing is not to be expected, but for those who are fond of golf and are content with moderate sport, I know of no pleasanter place in which to spend a holiday, and I can only hope that some of you may be induced to cross the water and to try your luck in the streams of *"Ould Donegal."*