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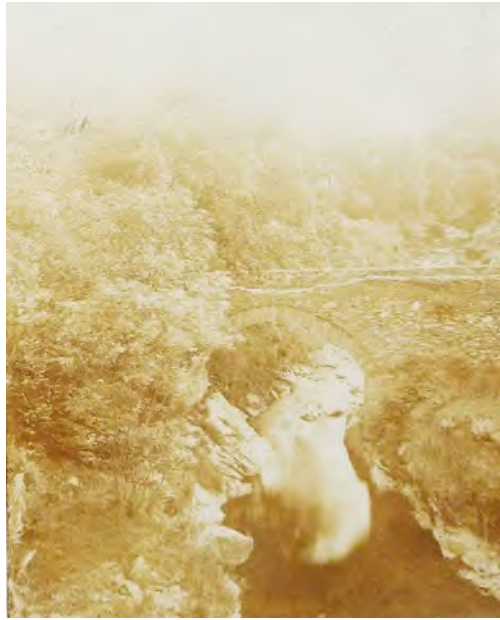
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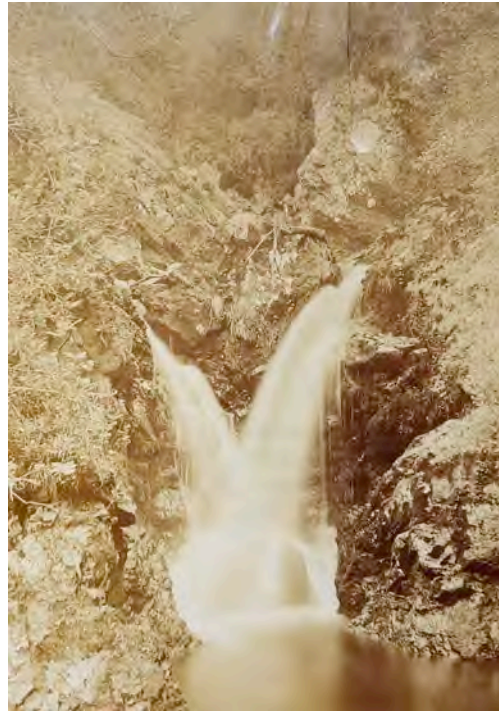
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MANCHESTER ANGLERS
ASSOCIATION.

M. S. MAGAZINE VOL 4

1884

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Preface.

The Fourth and Concluding Vol of the present series of the Manuscript Magazine, records the work of the members from 1882 to the beginning of the present season 1884.

The copying in of original papers, by the authors themselves, has been continued in the present Vol, with it is to be hoped the approval of the association.

The Editor particularly thanks those members and friends who have so enriched the Vol by their illustrations.

With the completion of these records the association enters upon its seventh year of existence. The Compiler of these fugitive papers, of the early or first age of the Society, looks forward with hope, that in its future or maturer life the members will add to their M. S Magazine the results of their experiences and thoughts, equally befitting their enlarged opportunities.

Bowdon

May 1884

SR

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“On a Staffordshire Mere.”

by George Sheffield.


~~~~~ "A day on a Staffordshire Mere" ~~~~~

By David Reid.

Illustrations by - George Sheffield.

~~~~~ Scene - London Road Station. A Midsummer Day, 1881. ~~~~~

On Platform. { "Friar Tuck" "Carbon" "Bellario" and "Dulrush" with angling im-
pudimenta. Chorus of "abbies", Porters, each with tongue in cheek wink-
ing one eye & thumbs over left shoulder.

"Hollo! "Dulrush" come out of this, and take your seat in there Sir. "What! an angler out for the day lolling in a first class carriage, with cushions, and in kid gloves and standups. Oh shame! shame! "Dulrush" mind me Sir, the Master of the properties of the M.A.A. shall know of this, and you will get your deserts. "Out! Out! Sir, do remember the fitness of things, and have a care for the reputation of the Premier Association of the Kingdom". Crestfallen and ashamed did "Dulrush" creep out and slip into the honest anglers seat viz the unvarnished boards of a third class North Stafford railway carriage.

All right now "Dulrush" you are forgiven, come lift up your drooping head, here are friends. Allow me to introduce you "Dulrush", "Carbon", "Lily", "Carbon", myself gentlemen. And now we are all known to each other. So here's to you all & our happy expedition, in a syllabus of cowslip, here's to you all my friends". Then followed a hearty shaking of hands, for ^{meeting} this was an unexpected one, & for the first time friends were brought together, who had long desired such an opportunity. Ah! "Carbon" said "Dulrush" Sir, I am delighted to ^{see you} this is indeed a pleasure. Take a nip? - "Bellario" Sir, I am delighted to meet you "Lily". Ah said "Lily", my friend these are supreme moments, take a weed? No reply "Bellario" I dont smoke only take snuff, and so gradually settling down, and quite time too, for our friends the porters, were winking slyly to each other, one being overheard to say, "Tom, rum cove?, lively lot eh? "Yah Will" here's landed".



The occasion of this meeting was

one of those delightful, and oftentimes the most enjoyable of angling

outs, a few hours together, on one of the sweetest spots

in North Staffordshire - a secluded Mere. The friends

were invited by the owner of the

fishery "Bellario". The party being

well chosen was in conse-

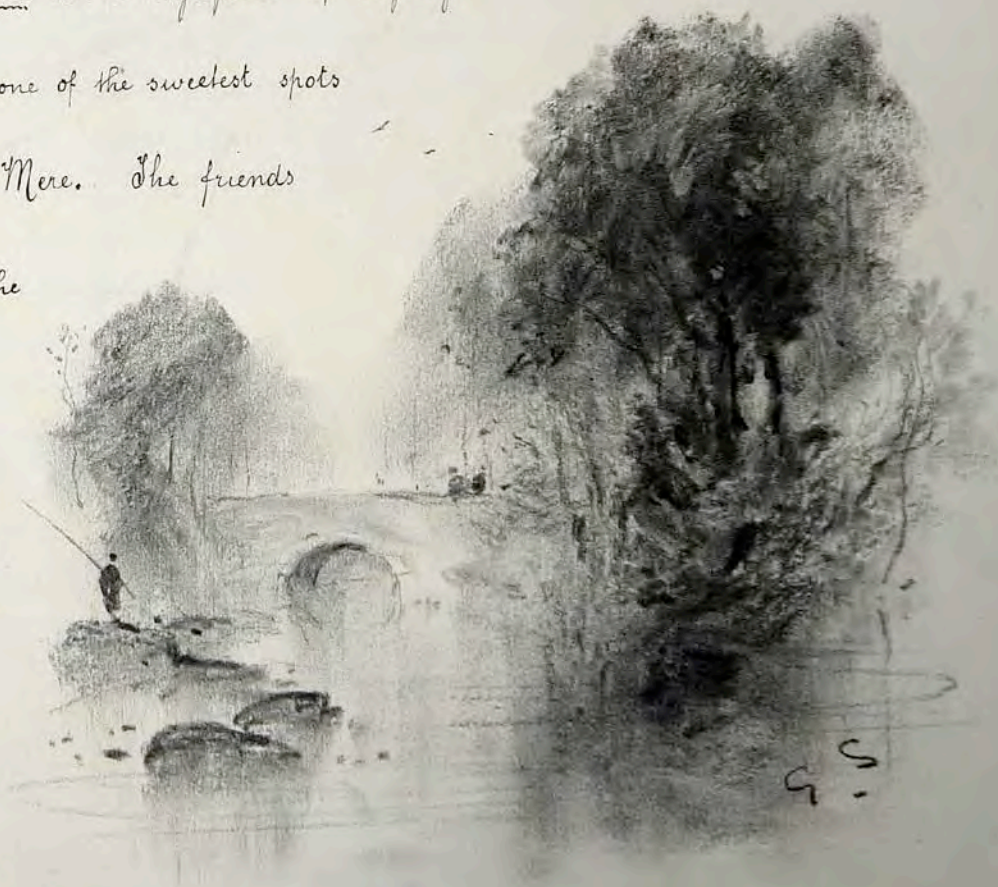
quence a success - no jarring elements,

the corners were all rubbed off and from

first to last, all went ~~all went~~ well. The rod

bent but brake not, the line paid out easily, the reel

sang click musically, and rhythmically, from first to last.



On a Staffordshire Mere.

It is a curious fact, how often in a fishing party, you have a cleric, a lawyer, an artist and a merchant. The cast is good, and as a rule works well. It was so on this occasion, "order, good government, method & success", characterised the whole party and their doings.

A word or two, descriptive of these jolly fellows. Our clerical friend "Lily" accompanied the party on a day out, "as a refresher and relief from his parochial labours, merely a looker on", with book always ready to note the worthy in men, manners, and things, his voice was soft, measured and low; in person he was tall, well formed, an eye at once piercing, and persuasive, fair in complexion and in all ways, even as his name implies graceful as a lily, but alas! - All this was once on a time. Now his fellows call him the "Prior of Nalshingham" and on this out he got added to his title that of "Friar Tuck". Need we add more description? For these names at once shew him in every respect worthy of the fellowship of anglers. He was away from his parish. What did he care for the scene before mentioned on the platform? Bless you Sirs he liked it. The train had not proceeded far on its journey, before our friend found it warm, in fact hot, and in accents bland, gently informed the company of the fact. Suiting the word with the action he withdrew a gem of a cambric perfumed, and oh! so sweet, when oh! fie! fie! "Tuck", out fell on the floor the King of Clubs, Knave of Hearts, and Queen of Diamonds.

Our friend the learned "Bellario", young & handsome "L" the happiest of the party, if it were possible to gauge such happiness, indeed 'twas a treat to see him, his cheerful manly face "lit up with laughter holding both its sides" his merry voice fresh and inspiring, as the early breezes of a summers morn. Who could possibly think of bad debts, swindling creditors, dishonoured bills, unpaid few rents, bad collections, poor commissions, and lying newspaper criticisms, under

such a smile and merry laugh as "L" gives growling! Oh! What! you jolly old aesthetic Lily sighing! What! "I'll show you a place that will do you good. What! "I'll give you a feed of all things that will put life into you" and of a truth he did indeed.

This was our "Manne of lawe", cool, clear headed, and calm in business, in pleasure, merry and bright. May all wearied, worn out, and sick at heart clients, find such an adviser in difficulty, and all of us such a cheery and jolly good fellow, in our pleasures as our friend "L". "order, method, good government" was his watchword, he took charge of the most important matters on this journey "by virtue".

"Dulrush" like his name, in outward appearance is well called, a lang legget chiel, thin about the middle, and awfu heavy about the head, wobbles and is blawn about by every blast, and at the least cause gae floondering over head and heels in the water, makes an unco swish and swirl in his leafless stem, when swayed with the breeze, but 'tis a wind, 'tis a wind my friends yet the lad means weel and with his faults, ~~and~~ certainly the party would not have been what it was, without the presence of "Dulrush". His was the post of Chancellor of the live baits, and he had the great seal in his keeping.

Lastly
—V

- "Carbon", - but who can describe "Carbon"? He was the soul of the party, the leaven that made all go well, incomparable and unapproach-
-able, like the creations of his own genius.



"Carbon" had like the "Prior" only come for a few hours, "for work, strict work and exercise, will pull the boat for you old fellow, or anything else you have got for me to do - always when I am not working, you know." "Many thanks to you "Carbon" for your promise, and those thanks were scores of times repeated, during the out, from the other three, - for "Carbon" was the ideal of a worthy angler - whether in the rough wildness of the inland storm, tugging at the oars, or floating lazily, under the midsummer sun; his pleasant, smiling face, was always the same, his eyes twinkling with humour + his tongue, wagging with wit and wisdom. ~~~~~

On a Staffordshire Mere.

10.

Got all the tackle? Live bait, eh? "Dubrush", "Oh yes all's safe, a splendid lot of live bait—minnows & gudgeon perfection, and could not be surpassed. all alive in the guards van". The tackle will do for the whole party, rods, lines, trolling bait, paters for perch and live bait tackle for the pike. My word it will go hard with *Esox Lucius* and *Percia Fluviatilis* on this out, there's not a dodge or trick but what we'll try".

You have secured the worms and dace "Bellario" all right? asked "Dubrush" "No—sorry—Richardson says at last moment—dace none; None you say? Then we are done for, for one of our best baits, oh! this is bad, well certainly the worms will be right: Splendid, some hundreds of lively fellows, no perch will refuse them, but oh confound it, why! why! I've left them in the left luggage office, Oh! hang it this is too bad" cried they all, "Why what shall we do?" "Well said "Bellario", I am sorry, but they are indeed a splendid lot, and you'll say so, "Hang it man what's the good of that, we want them here, but they are in the left luggage office and good ones too" we shall get them again—clearly remonstrance was of no use. Ah "Bellario" one for you "order good government, method blow the order growled "D. Where's the worms, where's the dace? These worms—like a famed curly tailed pup, "were, but now are not" that ^{to say} ~~is not~~ any angler curious to know the verity of this story will inquire of the clerk of the L & N. W. left luggage ^{office} he will doubtless be told more, than the writer knows or dare enquire after, for the fact was, that several days of the fearful tropical heat that followed the expedition passed before these worms were thought about. Then, oh fearful thought! what the state of that left luggage office, or the temper of the usually courteous Sharratt might be, and the reception the anglers might get, has resulted in the worms being left there to this day.

Change here, ^{to} "Choke" "Shorttown", The Lotteries, dirty carriages and no dividends cries "Carbon", come out old fellows come out of this. Change here gentlemen" cries the guard, bait all right Sir, shall I give them water Sir? &c &c. What polite fellows these guards are. Oh! Thoughtful, he is a good angler I'll be bound, Oh! Now Master "Bellario" you look after the luggage, "Dubrush" mind those live bait; away went "Dubrush" and found the porter just in the act of re-filling the can, when "Stop him stop hold on" "Why wots up" said his mate, "Why that's the water that killed the fish the other day, try tother tap" and the fact is true at this station there is water so impure taken directly from the canal that Lady de Trafford the other day, with a lot of valuable fish for store purposes had the water replenished here, with the loss not only of these store fish but also of many that lived in the stream, where the impure water was poured into, so much for modern pollution.



A sight met our anglers view before entering the Station, just spoken of, that caused many expressions of sorrow over the junction of the head waters of the Bollen, one tributary, issuing forth from the town bearing all the defilements + impurities that bad government in these days allows, its waters black, thick and uninviting, and its many music hushed as if for very shame, as it glides silently and slowly by, to where its bright sparkling sister descends from the hills, singing its cheering song. Truly it seemed like the rivers' better angel, coming with light + love, and by its example, endeavouring to win back its erring, fallen sister to the paths of purity and life, which indeed it succeeds in a great measure in doing, for to this pure refreshing rivulet may be placed the credit of making the Bollen, fit for fish life.

On a Staffordshire Mere.

"Bye the bye have you seen the new boat that has been built for us to use on this occasion for the first time?" "No not yet" cried they all - "Well it's a beauty, the right thing for us, and named the Swan of Alderley" - aye and she glides to her name with perfection - "Aha! sweet name - old fellow!" Very appropriate chimed in the "Prior" - "I say 'L' you've been dropping into poetry again - yes Carbon" - "Yes, I own the soft impeachment" blushing replied our "Bellario" - "Well done old chum does you credit. I'll start a 'Nautilus of Wilmslow'!" exclaimed Carbon - "Good! Good! Good!" said they all.

The train now speeding its way after passing through the country famed for lads, lasses, Volunteer Regiments, and cricketers - is now at full speed, careering across the cheese making country and soon enters the shire that surpasses all others in one of its parts, for blackness, ruin, and desolation - treeless - grassless - and birdless - and also the saddest phases of human degradation, most fitly called the black country. But yet, has in some of its corners the loveliest bits of mountain, meadow and Mere, that ever delighted an artists vision or ministered pleasure to the angler. It was to one of these favored places that our anglers were now approaching. Soon they pass the head waters of the Dane, here a most splendid and prolific trout stream, and in a few minutes they view their Mere - a heap of as beautiful a bit of nature as could be desired. The Mere is about three miles long and about half a mile broad; its margin beautifully broken up into bays, small headlands, and miniature precipices, combined with shelving gravelly shores, receding fields and meadows, now beginning to show promises of a rich and bountiful harvest. One end of the Mere (the narrowest) is banked up with romantic broken hills and rocks, quite a Rhinelike view on a small scale, or better still, some bit of Western Highland scenery. The gum and picturesque Scotch fir on the crags, lending grandeur to the scene; rich green woods

from the waters edge climbing to the top, anon here and there a dwelling, and more artistic still an old ruin, here a broken and disused fountain, there a quaint rural structure on the margin green, the far off hills closing in the scene. The water of the Mere at its narrow part, deep black and dove; at the broad and deeper end it is dotted over with innumerable water plants; the white lily now in full bloom, the reeds, rushes and numberless kinds of wild plants, forming near the shore a fringe of beautiful pattern for the water are varieties of wild fowl in great numbers; in the air the wood notes wild of feathered songsters are heard. The whirr of the partridge, and the rush of the pheasant, fill up the scene, and down in the waters hidden from all save the angler's eyes of faith their quarry.

"Well what is to be the order of our fishing, 'Dulrush'?" "Good my brother, we will first of all try for the big ones, a twelve pounder or a few of them would not be amiss in our creels - Our first attack will be as follows - troll up the sides of the Mere, and then by zig zag across, alternately fishing deep and shallow; the baits to be a fine dace on one rod, the spoon on the other, if that won't do change to a phantom, and I will try the eel tail; then after this we'll to the top of the lake amongst the reeds and fish with line and bait, - and the 'pater', thus by one or other of these plans we shall catch fish - like Sir - then after this we will find out a nice sheltered shore and fish for perch, so shall we have variety of sport and also of basket.

"Here we are at last," and the train glides into "Reedsmere" Station - luggage all out & c. & c. here a cry from "Dulrush" calls the attention of the party to him, "Where's my carpet bag? no my Gladstone? where is it 'L'?" did you fellows not book it along with the other luggage? while I was looking after the bait? Oh, What! and the horrible truth revealed itself to them, it had not been taken out, and was now speeding on its way to Guston - That bag held all that was necessary to Dulrush's comforts be it wet or dry.

On a Staffordshire Mere.

- but worse still it contained the tackle for the whole party, all the special rig that had taken days to prepare - Bait tackle for Pike & Perch - Spinning and bottom fishing, boxes, books, every confounded item that was necessary for this fishing. The light and shade depicted on the faces of those four fellows was "curious", then the thunder that followed was fearful. The good old "Mor" raved, "I" danced with vexation, "Dulrush" was uncontrollable: while "Carbon" laughed, chafed and danced with fiendish glee. "Dulrush" swore that if ever again he relied on a lawyer or the profession "he'd be blowed", "talk about order, good government, method said he" - "Ah confound every one of you for beguiling me from my bag". Here was a state of things in a few hours. No dace, worms in Manchester, now tackle away to "Mugby" junction. Nothing left but the can with gudgeon: even they seemed to kick the livelier at the prospect of release. Jolly idea cried "Carbon", well have the bait fried for tea" on hearing which "Dulrush" vowed he would pitch any fellow into the Mere, who dared to touch a fish - "Ware Stafford! Rugby! Exton!" and that train was wired but nouse: seven days afterwards a note reached "Dulrush" that all was right.

If ever a mess was made on an angling out, here was one, but ingenuity fell soon to work, and a scratch rig was soon made up from what could be borrowed, stolen or given to them: and after a quieting and soothing cup of good tea, were afloat, and the fishing began. The programme was adhered to as well as the broken down kit would allow - Trolling brought one pike to the basket. ~~~~



Then the clouds that had been threaten-
 ing for some time began to lower, dark shadows
 came, and a thunder storm broke over the Mere,
 accompanied with wind that endangered the
 boat, so shelter was obtained, and after struggling
 against the elements for some time, Perch fish-
 ing at anchor, was decided on, which in a shel-

bay, soon proved successful. Some time was spent in this delightful way, accompanied by song and story, the waves
 kept up a lullaby motion of the boat, especially soothing and delightful to the Anglers. The fishing was good,
 lively, sparkling fellows from half a pound each upwards, were being at regular intervals hauled aboard. And
 so evening came on. Then the pull home, the Supper, the pipe, and the after-chat "The Angler's evening"
 Congratulations on the successful ending of a day of such disaster, then the

"Prior of Walsingham"
 took his "Nap"

and very refreshing it seemed to be. After counting up his treasures, off to bed for three A.M. was the
 rising hour, and the whole four kept time like true anglers.



SS

The early morn, need we describe it? Tho

but the angler knows the true delight of early morn? Our friends were woken by the lark's sweet song, the cooing of the dove, the music of a thousand throats, The morning meal was ready for them and after refreshment, soon were afloat. The plan of attack was followed as well as the elements would allow, for the early part of the day, heavy driving rain with wind compelled shelter.

On a Staffordshire Mere.

Good trolling ground was tried with success. "L's" rod soon showed life. the top nodded intelligence. and the reel gave sweet music, but alas the learned "Bellario" lost his case (which was a good one); ^{and} after fighting hard - decree absolute - was pronounced, and all costs to pay. Then a fine perch took the spinning gudgeon after which capture, they settle down for the day at the perch, and the fun began in earnest, thus the pleasures of the day were enjoyed in fullness, until the sun pasted the meridian. The afternoon drew apace and the evening shades came on. The pleasures of a quiet day were realised to the full, surrounded by all that was enjoyable and elevating to the mind. Anecdotes were told and gradually the Waltonian feeling (always present with anglers when they are in the spirit) prevailed. Conversation ensued, eg. Fly versus Bait fishers, Trout v Perch and Pike fishers, and it was unanimously voted that there is much false sentiment anent bait fishing that trout fishers are guilty of. "Truly quoth the "Prior" I maintain that the kind of pleasures we are now enjoying are more in keeping with the contemplative man's recreation, than at full speed thrashing a river, floundering over rocks and stones, and with alas, how many times poor results". Methinks he continued, there is more refreshment to body and mind in the golden mean than choosing the great extremes. I mean not to disparage trout fishing so called for 'tis a noble sport in all senses, but trout fishing and real sportsmanlike pike and perch fishing may well go together. I need not recall to your memories my brethren the numberless delightful pictures of this sport, from our common Father's writings. We should all remember that the most beautiful fishing idyll ever written viz the "Complete Angler" had its inspiration absolutely from ground or bait fishing, and this leads me to tell you my brethren, that our friend and brother "Carbou" ~~has~~ in praise and thankfulness and in honour of these few hours, we have so happily spent together has offered to illustrate some of

these scenes and incidents of fishing by his pencil which shall be devoted to the embellishment of our "M.S. Magazine, an offer which does credit to his heart, and we shall be much beholden to him for the same."

The sport now became grand, no uncommon thing for all four rods landing fish at the same time. "Carbon" beat them all, and the fun of the thing was "Carbon" getting hold of a rod despised the top piece altogether. "Tis too long he said, the butt and middle piece will do well enough" so tying a half length of gut to one of the rings he started fishing, and the biggest fish fell to his share. Anglers note this fact, the oscillation of the boat riding at anchor, first blown to the right, then to the left, but the fish were always found underneath, and they the larger ones too, and the most bites were obtained there: The shade of the boat doubtless for some cause or other offered attraction to the fish. "Landed Bill?" "Aye, landed, landed echoed all about". "What's the story about 'Landed Bill' Carbon?" Well, I'll tell you, walking one day on the banks of the canal at Worsley. I came across whole miles of Anglers having a match - they were pegged off say ten yards apiece, squatted down, some on stones, some on baskets; but all in earnest contemplation of their floats, watching for the faintest nibble. The men were of the poorest working class, some evidently colliers, but all clean & tidy and unmistakably quiet contemplation was their enjoyment at last a commotion that stirred the whole column with life. "Bill S. had a bite, better still it hooked, now for the tug of war. The fish wriggled right and left, down, up, here and there, but "Bill" had played it with the greatest skill, and at last had it in net, and landed it, a splendid gudgeon. "Landed Bill?" spoke his neighbours in whispered breath. A nod and ay from "Bill". "Ay landed" the words were passed along - "Bill's got one" he's landed one! "Bill's one: What Bill?" "Aye Bill, and landed, and so on" until the end of the line. You heard the word of rejoicing, then the next club took it up, and so on ad infinitum. Good story! Good story!

Landed Bill? "Aye Landed one".

What Bill?

"Aye Bill".



On a Staffordshire Mere.

"Seems to me friends" broke in L somewhat ridiculous, yet there is a phase in this picture of yours that is pleasing and to us commendable. I am reminded of a note in the Field of a few weeks ago, where a correspondent calls attention to the fact of a Bolton club numbering many members, having an out to some canal, and on their return waiting at the station for their train. The writer speaks in undisguised contempt of the whole thing. Now is there not something to be said for these men - consider how few their opportunities are, they cannot pay for preserved waters like ourselves, they are debarred therefore from nobler sport, and thus enjoy, as well as possible their fishing in a canal; and have their delight in capturing their dace or a gudgeon. Consider some hundreds hard handed sons of toil, out enjoying (say a Saturday afternoon) fresh air - away from the besotting influences of drinking, by the quiet water side. These then must breathe the inspiring breezes of heaven around them; they must see the beautiful in nature however little; they must hear the birds sing, they will therefore think and feel; reflection will follow, and so be made better men, and if they are satisfied with the simpler results of the angle; we more favored sons of the rod, should rejoice with them and bid them hail. All agreed with L and commended him for such brotherly sentiments.



The time of parting now came, the rods were packed, lines housed, up with anchor, and a pull for home. The catch was counted; seventy brace of good fine perch, including one pike; a very happy and successful termination to a day of pleasure - All were landed safely, including "Bill". The last catch of the day, was the home train. They landed "Bellario" at Prestbury; The "Prior" at Cheddle with "Carbon" in strict charge of his reverence, and "Bulrush" was also safely landed at London Road Station, but the greatest catch of that day, and what you who hear me will agree to I doubt not is the exquisite illustrations now before you - promised and fulfilled by "Carbon"; - and so again goes the cry, "Bills landed one."

Angling Memories.

Henry Vannan, M.A.



"Doctus nascitur non fit" says the Latin proverb, and this has pretty much the force of an axiom. ... Would it be equally true if for "Doctus," we substituted "Discator," and read it, "The Angler is born, not made?" ... We almost incline to the belief that this is the rule, and that it will be found on examination that the exceptions are not greater in proportion than they are found to be in the case of

mental and physical endowments or other features of character, which it is agreed are in a general way communicated or at least communicable by parents to their offspring. We not unfrequently find that clever parents have stupid children, and often the father's outstanding gift in some special direction is conspicuous by its absence in the son. Thus I have known the son of an eminent professor of mathematics, who was never able to master the simplest elements of Euclid, nor work correctly the most trifling algebraical problem; and for all that he was by no means deficient in ability of another kind. And I will concede that in the case of fishing you may find instances of a similar character. ... I personally however have never met with any; I mean, instances in which, when the paternal ancestor pursued the gentle art the love of the sport did not develop itself in one or other of the junior members. ... It would be interesting to know

Angling Memories.

27.

what is the evidence of an association like ours on the subject, and how many of us can boast of having anglers among our immediate or more remote progenitors. . . . It is no doubt true that circumstances tend very materially to fasten a love for the sport, as for instance, being brought up near some river well stocked with fish; but even here we meet with numbers who living in the midst of everything calculated to inspire the piscatorial furor, and having every opportunity of exercising it, will tell you they never handled a rod, or cast a line, in their life, somehow — they say, — they never had any time for it — they had not sufficient patience, and so forth. . . . My point then is, that the love for fishing — the turn for it as an art — the taking kindly to it when opportunities occur, — is to a large extent the result of inheritance, or apart from direct transmission by descent, is ^{at} all events inherent in the individual, an innate quality or rather gift, for which, its possessors should be profoundly thankful. . . . And just as we have been Astronomers, been mathematicians been musicians — been poets and painters, so we have, I maintain, been fishers. . . . It may be urged that there are men who take to the sport in middle life, and some even when considerably advanced in years, and that these men in their youth were never known to have any liking for it. . . . This may be so, but it will be found that, if such men turned out to be genuine and not spurious disciples,

above all, if they persevered and attained proficiency in the art, the germ was there from the beginning, and only waited a favourable opportunity for its lively development. . . . And it is to be observed that my previous remarks have no application whatever to any but true-blue Wallonians, and must not for a moment be supposed to include your weak-kneed, milk-and-water brethren whose only idea of fishing is to sit upon a camp-stool and watch the bobbing up and down of a green painted float upon a semi-stagnant canal. . . . I will confess that I may be somewhat biassed to the opinion I have advanced by being able to count quite a long list of keen and successful anglers on both sides of my own parent stem, and from casual remarks which I have heard made from time to time I strongly believe that many of the brotherhood of our Association stand exactly in the same position. . . . But however we may differ as to the origin of the love of fishing in ourselves or others, there is one point upon which I feel sure we all agree, viz, that the practice of the art has been to us a source of boundless delight — that its pleasures never fall, and leave no sting behind them — that its prospective preparations and actual exercise are alike enjoyable — that whether we sit by the red glow of "our ain fireplace", when the winter storm beats furiously against the window-pane and discuss with our friend the mysteries of which only cunning craftsmen can enter; or wander with the same congenial spirit and

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in hand by the side of lake or pool, when birds are flying and the time for the singing of birds is come, or when, the laden wains are leaving home the rich treasures of a beautiful harvest — in all its circumstances and surroundings our angling experience is full of healthful and innocent enjoyment, and its recollections early and more recent, such as will abide with us as green and restful spots, while life and memory remain. —

About two miles and a half from the southern suburb of a large and very beautiful University town some distance north of the Tower, there flowed and there still flows in unpolluted clearness, a beautiful stream, or as Barnes would have called it a "wimplie burn"; bubbling up among the hills which used always to look so far away, it comes down through a charming valley, in which, covering its channel and fed by its limpid waters, are two, if not three, immense ponds or reservoirs which supply the demands of the neighbouring town some ten or twelve miles distant. This stream and on that part less remote from home my apprenticeship to the gentle art began at the somewhat early age of seven or eight years. . . . The brook has a name, which is neither here nor there; but with us in those early days it was sufficiently described in our own circle as "the burn", because then, we knew no other. . . . At the spot where our fishing always commenced whether we went up

or down, there stood a 'Clachan' or small group of rustic houses of as quaint and picturesque a character as you might see on a summer day. Now the brook was crossed by the old and very rough road from the City, which branched off exactly the two portions known to us as "up the burn", and "down the burn", and which though immediately adjoining were as different in their aspects as can be well imagined. . . . Entering from the road and close to the bridge were the grounds and policies of the proprietor of the district, a gentleman of very extensive possessions but who seldom or never resided on the estate, a circumstance, no doubt much in our favour. The house usually spoken of as the Hermitage, stood about half a mile from the entrance in rather a low-lying situation, where however the trees had been pretty much cleared away on all sides of it, to admit the air and sunlight. Down to this point the grounds and carriage drive used to be fairly well kept, but close to the stream the foliage was very thick so that fishing with any other line than the worm was out of the question. . . . Below the house everything was left to nature. . . . From the banks of the stream the ground rose to a considerable height on either side, and the slopes were crowned to their summit with dense wooding. . . . This was the glen proper, and a more lonely one I have seldom visited. . . . Above the 'Clachan' the stream meandered for some miles through an open and undulating country, richly

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clad with green pastures and waving grain, but
 but here there were no trees on its banks and
 not anything like the amount of harborage for
 trout that existed in the Glen. The
 impressions left on my memory by these two
 contiguous regions, are necessarily as widely
 different as were their aspects. "Down the
 burn" all was gloom, silence, loneliness, and
 seriousness, for the place was haunted, and stories
 were current - which were likely enough true - of
 sealed presses, and locked rooms in the house
 into which for reasons best known to those whom
 it concerned, the light of day was never allowed
 to enter. This explained satisfactorily
 why the proprietor never lived there, and how it
 was that years afterwards, when a family, at
 a merely nominal rent, took the house, they
 were not able to endure their wretched existence.
 What with invisible beings scudding past them
 on the stairs, when with trembling steps, and
 candle held before them they were endeavouring
 to navigate their weary way to bed - what with
 unearthly noises in the chimneys - doleful
 moanings borne along the corridors, - strange
 tappings at the windows, and unexplained and
 apparently unexplainable nocturnal whistlings
 in the neighbourhood of the house, - servants
 left precipitately after one day's service, and
 master and mistress and sons and daughters
 were fain to hurry after them.
 On the other hand "up the burn" all was bright-
 ness, activity and cheerfulness, for the

shepherd kept us company with his collie
 and his flock, or the ploughman with his team,
 or the sower sowed his seed, or the reaper harvested
 his grain. It is not to be wondered at,
 that, in those early days we youthful fishers
 bestowed the most of our time and attention
 on the latter portion of the brook, and that we
 very seldom ventured within the precincts of the
 glen unless in company with some grown up
 relative, and then, not to fish ourselves, but
 to watch him at a little distance pulling
 out ever and anon the beautiful speckled trout.
 Well do I remember how intently I loved to see
 the spotted creatures, though I had no interest
 in them beyond their beauty, as I never cared
 to eat them. Since then I have fished
 in many a river and seen many a different
 variety of trout, but however you may explain
 it, I have never seen any to compare with
 these. It may not be true though we
 seem all to think so, that the skies were brighter
 and the fields greener on the sunny days of our
 childhood, and it may be only a delusion
 for me to suppose that the trout which came
 out of the glen burn were more beautiful
 than any I have ever seen since, but this is
 one of the occasions, when, "when ignorance is
 bliss 'tis folly to be wise" and I would rather
 not be wakened suddenly from my dream.
 The most notable man on the "Clackan"
 was the Smith, - not however, a "mighty-man"
 such as long-fellow describes, with the muscular

of his braavy arms as strong as iron bands." Old Arthur may have been in youth a fairly strong man but when first I knew him he seemed even then to be aged though probably not more than 55. . . . He looked small and was bent and somewhat shrunken, but for all that he kept the whip-hand of his two stalwart apprentices, and managed to get through a lot of work. . . . The most conspicuous part of his dress was his chimney-pot hat, without which he was never to be seen either in the house or out of it. . . . I used to wonder at this antediluvian appendage which it need not be added was worn, not to say threadbare, but worse than that, until all the hair was gone and there remained only the tall straight up and down framework. . . . When it reached this stage however, it was not yet thrown aside; there was a lower deep still, for finally it was placed on the head or shoulders of the beyle or scancroo which kept guard over Andrew's potatoe patch in the garden or "yard" as he called it, beyond the smithy. . . . It must be confessed that he did not speak the English language. . . . He spoke the broadest dialect of Doric that I ever heard, and his dry semi-sarcastic observations were full to the brim of the best humour you would find in Ivan Hanso's reminiscences. . . . Unfortunately however, Andrew was in the habit of using strong expressions - strong indeed on many occasions than there was any necessity for. . . . He put it mildly but plainly, he was in the habit of swearing, and seemed to be much of the

same opinion as the old highland wife whose son had been severely reprimanded by the minister for the like transgression. . . . This old lady was rehearsing the circumstances of the case to a neighbour, who however, instead of sympathising, upheld the authority of the clergyman, when the other who felt keenly for the position of her son replied, "Weel, awed, swearing may be wrong, but ye maun allow, that for a that, its a great ornament to conversation."





The Salmon Pool.

The original of this picture is framed and is in possession of the
English Association.

Sonnet

On seeing George Sheffield at
work upon the Drawings in this Vol.

O: to create is godlike, to reveal
To wondering eyes the potent power,
That in the compass of our fourth part hour,
Can 'er the paper as by magic shal
"A thing of beauty"; yea to watch it grow
From out apparent chaos, quickly we,
To all its full and fair accomplishment,
Was something more to us than wonderment.
And thus while I gazed with look profound,
On water, graceful trees, or flow'rs meand,
It seemed as though old Pan I faintly heard,
Blending his music with the swarming stream,
And the soft murmuring of some low bird,
Till all my soul seem'd wrapp'd in one fair dream.

George David

A MEMORY OF LOCH TAY BY C. H. NEVILL



Scrape, scrape, scrape
O'er thy cold false waves, O Tay,
And I would not my tongue should utter
The thoughts that arise to-day.

O sad for the Gillie who shouts
"Tis a fish", when 't's only a rock;
O sad for the frozen man
Who sits in his boat on the Loch.

And the weary men row home
To the landing under the hill;
But O for the rush of a goodly 'jush',
And the sound of a reel that is still.

Scrape, scrape, scrape
By thy desolate shores O Tay;
But the tender dream of my vanished youth
Has come, - and has passed away.

C. H. Nevill inventor of font