



**FOR USE IN
LIBRARY
ONLY**



THOMAS TEE.

Presented to Thomas Tate Esq
With the Respectful compliments
of George Nuttall



THE CHRONICLE OF THE
'COMPLEAT ANGLER.'



“ Magister artis docte Piscatoriæ,
Waltone falve! . . . simul bonus
Piscator, idem et Scriptor, et calami potens.
Utriusque necdum et iētus et tamen sapiens.”

JACO. DUP., D.D.

THE CHRONICLE OF
The 'Compleat Angler'

OF IZAAK WALTON AND
CHARLES COTTON.

BEING A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL RECORD OF ITS VARIOUS
PHASES AND MUTATIONS.

BY THOMAS WESTWOOD.

!!!



LONDON:
WILLIS AND SOTHERAN, 136, STRAND.
1864.

Z

8949

W38

1864

LIBRARY

750845

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



TO JOSEPH CRAWHALL, ESQ.

This Volume

IS DEDICATED IN REMEMBRANCE OF MUCH CORDIAL AND
FRIENDLY CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD
OF BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
RESEARCH.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation



Preface.



WILL the bibliopolist forgive me, if, partly with a view to readers not absolutely of his class, and partly for my own personal satisfaction, I have introduced into this *catalogue raisonné* of the editions of the 'Compleat Angler,' certain digressions, which, on strict bibliographical grounds, may be deemed irrelevant. The fact is, that the work in question lends itself, less than most, to a mere technical and matter-of-fact recapitulation. It is essentially a book to be loved, and to be discoursed of lovingly. The companion of our boyhood, the delight of our maturer years, England's one perfect Pastoral—it is difficult, in summing up its revivals, and telling the tale of its successes, not to be tempted, occasionally, out of the dusty highway of list-making, into those sinuous meadow-paths of gossip and garrulity, that seem so much more germane to the matter.

There are few lovers of old books, besides—nay, few readers of any kind, in whom the ‘Compleat Angler’ does not, I am fain to believe, excite some pleasant reminiscence, or touch the chord of some tender association.

It is so with me, at least. My first knowledge of the book connects itself with an early and happy epoch of my life, and with the memory of a great and good friend, long since gathered to his rest. I allude to Charles Lamb, at the feet of which Gamaliel, in the days of his Enfield sojourning, it was my frequent privilege to sit, a boyish but reverent disciple, and to drink in, with insatiate ears, the inspired talk of such a conclave of gossipers as has never, perhaps, been collected under one roof, since Shakespeare, and Ben Jonson, and Beaumont, and other demi-gods of that heroic day, made the rafters of the Mermaid ring with their divine wit and merriment.

Alas! that of that genial Enfield circle of choice spirits, not one should be left! Coleridge, Wilson, Wordsworth, Hazlitt, Barry Cornwall, Hunt, Hood—in the very enumeration of their names, I feel as if something of myself had died out with each—some warmth of life grown chill—some sunshine of the soul faded for ever!

“ All, all are gone, the old familiar faces !”

But to revert to Walton. In the ragged regiment of Lamb's book-tatterdemalions (a regiment I was permitted to manœuvre at will, though not much taller at the time than its tallest folio), was an early copy of the ‘ Compleat Angler,’¹ I believe (for those were not bibliomaniacal days,) Hawkins' edition of 1760. This was my chief treasure, my pearl of price ; and, perched on the forked branch of an ancient apple-tree, in the little overgrown orchard, and at an elevation from which I could almost catch a glimpse of the marshy levels of the Lea itself, it was my delight to fall forth with Pifcator, on that perennial² May morning, to dib with him

¹ In a letter to Coleridge, dated 28th Oct., 1796, Lamb says : “ Among all your quaint readings, did you ever light upon Walton's Complete Angler ? I asked you the question once before ; it breathes the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart ; there are many choice old verses interspersed in it ; it would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it ; it would Christianize every discordant angry passion : pray make yourself acquainted with it.”

² Speaking of the perennialness of great writers' conceptions, and referring more particularly to Chaucer, Mrs. Browning says finely : “ He knew the secret of nature and art—that truth is beauty,—and saying, “ I will make A Wife of Bath, as well as Emilie, and you shall remember her as long,” we do remember her as long. And he sent us a train of pilgrims, each with a distinct individuality apart from the pilgrimage, all the way from Southwark and the Tabard Inn

Preface.

for "logger-headed chub," to listen to his discourse, to learn his songs by heart, to store up his precepts, and to steep my boyish mind in the picturesque darkness of his manifold superstitions.¹

Though no angler himself, Lamb was a lover of angling books, and I well remember his relating to me, as he paced to and fro, a quaint, scholastic figure, under the apple-tree aforesaid, how he had pounced upon his early copy, in some ramshackled repository of marine stores, and how grievous had been his disappointment in finding that its unlikely-looking owner knew as much of its mercantile value as himself.

This is *my* association, dear Reader; doubtless you can pair it off with one, perhaps many, of your own.

And, having thus attempted to justify my discursiveness, by force of sentiment, if on no better grounds, I

to Canterbury and Becket's shrine: and their laughter comes never to an end, and their talk goes on with the stars, and all the railroads which may intersect the spoil earth for ever, cannot hush the "tramp, tramp," of their horses' feet."—*The Greek Christian Poets and the English Poets*, p. 112.

¹ Lamb also possessed a copy of one of Bagster's reprints, much esteemed by him on account of its plates, some clever copies of which, by his adopted daughter, Emma Ifola, (the "Ifola Bella whom the poets love," of Barry Cornwall's sonnet), ornamented the walls of his sitting-room.

will venture to make a few closing observations on angling books in general.

The popular acceptation of what would seem to be a special and professional class of literature, is, of course, accountable for only by the character of the works composing it, and the sterling merits of many of their writers. The sport, let its maligners say what they will, is eminently conducive to contemplation. While the huntsman gallops across country, heedless of everything save his horse's pace, and his hounds' scent, the angler follows the meanders of some woodland brook,

“Counting the dewy pebbles, lost in thought.”

His soul opens to all the influences of Nature, and he becomes aware (if he is not the worst of Cockneys), that under her high trees, and by her singing streams, she is evermore busy “inditing of many a lovely poem—her ‘Flower and Leaf,’ on this side—her ‘Cuckoo and the Nightingale,’ on that—her ‘Paradise of Dainty Devices,’ in and out among the vallies—her ‘Polyolbion,’ away across the hills—her ‘Britannia’s Pastorals,’ on the home meadows—her sonnets of tufted primroses—her lyrical outgushings of May blossoming—her epical and didactical solemnities of light and shadow.”

All these, while his creel is filling, or when he retreats

at noontide to the “dusky boskage of the wood,” the angler gathers in unconsciously, and stores up in his heart of hearts, and out of these, and such as these, are his books made. Hence their many-sidedness and power of adaptation to various tastes, so that, while the hunting or hawking treatise is usually but a mere *omnium gatherum* of recipe and formula, the book of fishing acknowledges no such ring-fence, and discoursing of baits and tackle on one page, on the next it dishes you up a favoury mess of philosophy or science, poetry or theology, as the case may be.

For a high and pure code of sporting morals, for instance, revert to that ancientest tome of all,¹ the “Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle,” in the brown old ‘Book of St. Albans.’ For poetry of great mark and likelihood, unclasp that precious and rare volume (one of the rarest, says Beloe, in English literature), the “Secrets of Angling,” by J. D[ennys], Lord of the Manor of Owlbury-sur-montem. Or, if you are a stickler for recent rhymes, croon to yourself as you wend streamward, while the lark winnows its way through silvery mist, and

“ From leaf to leaf the soul o’ the wind
Seems sliding with the dew—”

¹ In a piscatorial sense.

one or other of the "Newcastle Fishers' Garlands,"¹ a series of lyrics less known than they deserve, and which contain some as racy and lilting stanzas as any in our tongue.

¹ The collection of Garlands referred to have, as poems, a claim on our critical recognition, apart from their mere angling significance. They are hearty, genial, vigorous compositions, of a strictly local growth, and replete with local colouring and imagery—veritable north-country lyrics, both in sentiment and accentuation.

Though monotonous in subject, they are very various in treatment, and many are the chords struck in them between the extremes of the humorous and pathetic. As metrical essays, also, they have great merit; musical and harmonious in their cadences, when softer themes are touched, in stronger moods there is a rough bluster in their rhythm, as of a Northumbrian wind that has battled with crags and scars. Coquet is not more changeful than they. They ripple athwart the shallows, purl and prattle amongst the pebbles, grow steady and masterful in the deep pools, and rush, headlong, down the currents. "They are Coquet all over," says Doubleday, one of their writers—adding, too modestly, that it is their chief merit. The love of Coquet is, in fact, the motive spring of most of these poems, certainly of all the best of them, and even a stranger, who has never set eyes on that beautiful stream, is made to feel, through their stanzas, something of the witchery it exercises on those who haunt its banks.

That the habit of these annual lyrics should have fallen into desuetude from the year 1845 to the present time (when a new and improved edition, with continuations, is about to appear), must be matter of regret to every lover of the gentle craft and of the joyous science. It died out with the little knot of cheerful, enthusiastic, genial-minded men, its originators, men who sang the praises of Coquet as by simple vocation, and whose hearts pulsed to the pulsing of their favourite

For theology, on the other hand, have we not, *inter alia*, the work under review ; and for science, Davy and his "Salmonia ;" and Yarrell, angler and naturalist in one ; and our latest "angler-naturalist," Cholmondeley Pennell : to say nothing of the ancients—Aldrovandus of Bologna, and Roman Salviani, and Swifs Gefner, in whose ichthyological folios, a frequent chapter, "*capiendi ratio*," finds quaint insertion.

And if this be not enough, travels by sea and land, adventures, perils, "hair-breadth 'scapes"—you may find them all within the range of the angler's book-shelf, so that we cease to wonder at the fact, that, in almost every large and miscellaneous library (even where the owners are not professed Piscatorians), a nucleus of angling-books forms an important and esteemed feature.

Much more might be said on this topic, and indeed

stream, till death severed the union. Peace be to their memory ! and honour, and the love of all true anglers ! Coquet may be a brave stream, but they have enhanced its bravery ; about all its turns and windings, along its sheep-dotted haughs, amongst its rocks and boulders, wherever the trout dimples the eddies, and the midge and the "red-heckle" fall like thistle-down on its pools, shall linger, henceforth and for ever, the memory of their Garlands, lending a human charm and a new glory, neither "of wood nor water born," to the miracle of its fairness.

Preface.

the history of angling literature, which has yet to be written, would be neither an unprofitable nor untempting task, beckoning the student, as it does, away from the more beaten path of letters, and pointing to sequestered nooks, of the freshness and quaintness of which the uninitiated are little aware. Let us hope that at no distant epoch, some capable and persevering pioneer may undertake that pilgrimage, and summon us to tell our beads at shrines that have been too long forsaken.

It only remains for me to add, that I trust my little work may prove an useful manual to the Waltonian collector, to whose indulgence I appeal, as a shield for its shortcomings.

T. W.

May-day, 1864.





THE
Chronicle of the 'Compleat Angler'
of Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton.

THE apparition of the 'Compleat Angler,' in the year of grace and revolution, 1653, formed an antithesis in itself, to which the almost immediate sale of the entire edition gave increased point and emphasis. Corydon piping, you might say, *tenui avenâ*, amongst the horse-hoofs and athwart the lances . . . the most peaceful of Pastorals ushered into and accepted by the world at the

First Edition,
1653.¹

¹ "The Compleat Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation. Being a Discourse of Fish and Fishing, not unworthy the perusal of most *Anglers*."

"Simon Peter said, *I go a fishing; and they said, We also wil go with thee.* John 21, 3.

"London, Printed by *T. Maxey* for Rich. Marriot, in *S. Dunstons Churchyard Fleetstreet.* 1653."

The above title, as our readers are aware, consists of an engraved scroll, with dolphins above and below, and clusters of fish pendant on either side.

In the centre of the scroll is inserted, "The Compleat Angler or the Contemplative Man's Recreation."

The rest of the title, coming under the scroll, is printed.

The Chronicle of

stormiest and most turbulent of times! Quiet-hearted men there must still have been in England, whose feet never ceased to brush the dew from meadow and river bank—who, while house was divided against house, and hand raised against hand, still fought their pastime and philosophy in their accustomed haunts, and seated under honeysuckle hedges in the heat of the day, scanned the pages of the “Contemplative Man’s Recreation,” while the river rippled and the thristle piped, or fumbled up their sport at nightfall, in wayside hostels, such as the father of the craft was wont to eulogise, with a bucksome hostess to bid them welcome, “lavender in the windows,” and “twenty ballads stuck against the wall” . . . A pleasant side picture enough, if contrasted with the discord and desolation going on elsewhere—with the hurtling (almost within earshot, perchance,) of hostile squadron with squadron—the “thunder of the captains and the shouting,” and the “garments rolled in blood.”

It was about the merry month of May, the angler’s month, *par excellence*, that this book, the various phases and metamorphoses of which we have undertaken to chronicle, was advertised in the broad-sheets of the day as “newly extant, at eighteen-pence price.”¹

And we may picture to ourselves, if we will, the sober-

¹ In the “Perfect Diurnall” (Lond. 4to. p. 2716), it was thus announced, from Monday, May 9th, to Monday, May 16th, 1653:—

“The Compleat Angler or the Contemplative Man’s Recreation, being a Discourse of Fish and Fishing, not unworthy the perusal of most Anglers, of 18 pence price. Written by Iz. Wa. Also the known Play of the Spanish

coated fraternity of the angle wending, one by one, through the crowd of four-faced Puritans, up the great thoroughfare of Fleet Street, to purchase at Master Richard Marriot's the new treatise on a sport that had found few chroniclers' hitherto, but which was destined to date its royalty from that very epoch and that very publication.

Gipfee, never till now published. Both printed for Richard Marriot, to be sold at his shop in St. Dunstons Church-yard, Fleet Street."

In the "Mercurius Politicus" (Lond. 4to. p. 2470), from Thursday, May 12th, to Thursday, May 19th, 1653:—"There is newly extant a Book of 18*l.* price, called the Compleat Angler," &c. &c.

¹ Not so few, however, as is stated by Hawkins, who, in his first reprints, limits the number of antecedent angling works to four, and eventually to five, viz., "The Treatise of Fyfsfhyng wyth an Angle," forming part of the Book of St. Albans, 1496. Leonard Mascall's "Booke of fishing with Hooke and Line," 1590. Taverner's "Certaine Experiments concerning Fish and Frvite," 1600. Dennys' "Secrets of Angling," 1613, and Barker's "Art of Angling," 1651.

To these may be added Gryndall's "Havvking, Hunting, Fouling and Fishing, with the true Measures of Blovving," 1596. Dubravius's "Neue Booke of good Husbandry," 1599. "La Maison Rustique," 1600. The "Brieve Treatise of Fishing, with the Art of Angling," included in the "Jevvell for Gentry," 1614, and Markham's "Young Sportsman's Instructor," circa 1652.

But it must be borne in mind that of the above, the tracts, both of Mascall and Gryndall, and the "Brieve Treatise of Fishing," are but re-issues, with variations, of portions of the Book of St. Albans, and that Taverner and Dubravius limit their instructions to the treatment of fish in ponds.

That there may have been other treatises on the sport, since lost to the world, seems probable from the fact that Walton, in his letter to Venables, given in the "Experienc'd Angler" (1662), speaks of having "read and practised by *many* books of this kind before made public;" and in the 'Compleat Angler' (Chap. xii., p. 228, first edition), quotes what he calls "an old Rhime

The Chronicle of

A small square duodecimo, clad in a modest overcoat of brown calf—such were the form and fashion of the book as it first appeared. Not a noticeable book, amongst others, by any means, and yet superior to most of its class in point of adornment, by virtue of those plates of fish, which the author thought it just to endorse with his approval,¹ and which are, indeed, very daintily and delicately handled.

There is no name attached to these engravings, but they are ascribed, with a great show of probability, to the noted French engraver, Pierre Lombart, at that time resident in this country, and whose talent was mostly devoted to book illustration. Sir Harris Nicolas, though giving the preference to Lombart, suggests, at the same time, as possible candidates for the honour, Faithorne or Vaughan.²

The belief, current formerly, that they were wrought on

out of an old Fish Book," on the origin of which no light has hitherto been thrown.

John Hockenhull, on the other hand, in his "Pleasant Hexameter Verses in Praise of Mr. Barker's Book of Angling," asks,—

"Markham, *Ward*, Lawfon, dare you with Barker now compare?"

Can any modern *Œdipus* inform us who was *Ward*, and what his right to be associated with *Markham* and *Lawfon*?

¹ "And let me adde this, that he that likes not the discourse should like the pictures of the Trout and other fish, which I may commend, because they concern not myself."—"To the Reader of this Discourse." First Edition.

² For biographical and other particulars respecting these artists, see Bryan's "Dictionary of Painters and Engravers," Bohn, 1858.

Some mention of Lombart occurs also in Evelyn's "Sculptura, or the History and Art of Chalcography and Engraving in Copper," 1662.

plates of silver, seems negatived by the fact of their having served for no less than five editions of 'The Compleat Angler,' and the same number of Venables' 'Experienc'd Angler,' an amount of durability of which silver plates would hardly have been capable.

Sir John Hawkins, on the contrary, in his fourth edition (1784), says, "there is great reason to suppose that the plates were of *steel*."¹

The fish illustrated in this edition are the trout, pike, carp, tench, perch and barbel. The work consists of thirteen chapters, extending to 246 pages,² and the interlocutors are but two, Piscator and Venator.

Copies of this edition, though rare at the present time, seem to have been still more so, as far as available purposes went, at the period of Hawkins' first re-issues, for that Editor not only confesses that he had never met with the second edition,³ but leaves it to be inferred that the first and third had equally escaped his research. Thus he asserts erroneously, that "the 'Compleat Angler' *came into the world attended by laudatory verses by several writers of that day*," and fixes the date of the third edition at "about 1660."

The genus angling-book collector existed, in fact, at the

¹ "Life of Mr. Izaak Walton," p. xiii.

² Sigs. A 2 to R 3 in eights; 14 preliminary pages, consisting of Dedication, Address to the Reader, and Table of Contents.

³ "Life of Mr. Izaak Walton," p. xxviii. 1760. In the edition of 1784 the avowal in question is suppressed; but there is no internal evidence that he had been more successful in his search at that period.

The Chronicle of

epoch in question only in embryo, and not a few copies, we may suppose, were lying *perdu* on high shelves and in out-of-the-way corners, unappreciated, if not altogether forgotten.

Passing out of fashion, the book had also passed out of sight; but the divining-rod of bookseller and biblioplist was soon to do its work,¹ and whatever copies still exist have been transf-

¹ "It is a curious phenomenon in the old book trade," says Mr. Burton, in his amusing volume, "The Book-Hunter," "that rarities do not always remain rare; volumes seeming to multiply through some cryptogamic process, when we know perfectly that no additional copies are printed and thrown off. The fact is that the rumour of scarcity and value and of a hunt after them, draws them from their hiding-places. If we may judge from the esteem in which they were once held, the Elzevirs must have been great rarities in this country, but they are now plentiful enough—the heavy prices in the British market having no doubt sucked them out of dingy repositories in Germany and Holland, so that even in this department of commerce the law of supply and demand is not entirely abrogated. He who dashes at all the books called rare, or even very rare, by Clement and his brethren, will be apt to suffer the keen disappointment of finding that there are many who participate with him in the possession of the same treasures. In fact, let a book but make its appearance in that author's "Bibliothèque Curieuse, Historique et Critique, ou Catalogue Raisonné de Livres difficiles à trouver," or in Graeffe's "Trésor de Livres Rares et Précieux,"—let it be mentioned as a rarity in Ebert's "Allgemeines Bibliographisches Lexicon," or in Debure, Ommond, or the "Repertorium Bibliographicum,"—such proclamation is immediate notice to many fortunate possessors who were no more aware of the value of their dingy-looking volumes, than Monsieur Jourdain knew himself to be in the habitual daily practice of talking prose."—P. 211.

That copies of the early editions of the 'Compleat Angler' have been multiplied within the last thirty years, by some such agency as that suggested in the above extract, is all but certain. They have not ceased, however, to belong to the category of rare books, a fact for which their size and the familiar uses to which the work has been applied, account in a great degree. Employed

ferred, since then, to known hands, and promoted from dust and oblivion to a distinguished place among the crown-jewels of their possessors.

Their value has, of course, risen accordingly, and fine and perfect copies of this edition are estimated by Dr. Bethune (the editor of the American reprint) at twelve guineas and upwards; an appreciation, which the statistics of sale-catalogues do more than corroborate.¹

Learned commentators have cudgelled their brains perseveringly to discover out of what mine the author of this favourite work dug his ore. One of them suggests a certain "Treatise on the Nature of God," attributed to Bishop Morton, and published in 1599. Another points to Heresbach's "Foure Bookes of Husbandry," translated from the Latin by

as the angler's pocket companion, many copies have no doubt succumbed to the process of continual wear and tear, while others may have perished by mischance, dropped, unconsciously, by Piscator, in the high grass by the river side, or carelessly left behind on the mossy bank where he had indulged in his afternoon's siesta.

¹ These statistics are as follows:—Haworth, 892, 10*l.* 15*s.* Milner, 151, 15*l.* Higgs, 34, 11*l.* Pickering, first sale, 301, 11*l.* 11*s.* Nassau, pt. ii. 905, 3*l.* 10*s.* Bindley, pt. iv. 884, 6*l.* Jadis, presentation copy, Russia, 13*l.* 13*s.* Utterton, 11*l.* 15*s.* Gardner, 2326, mounted with guards and some words mended, 10*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* A fac-simile copy in manuscript, beautifully transcribed in imitation of the original, with the old plates inlaid, and with the Rev. Mr. Cotton's note on the fly-leaf, ("This copy of Izaak Walton's 'Compleat Angler' is true, accurate and faithful, *ad verbum verbo, usque ad maculam*"), was sold, at the dispersion of that gentleman's collection, for 4*l.* 4*s.*

There is an error in the paging of some of the copies of this edition.

The Chronicle of

Barnaby Googe in 1577.¹ And a third suggests Plutarch's dialogue on the problem, "Whether water or land Animals are most crafty," as Englished by Dr. Philemon Holland in 1602.

In our opinion the real mine was Izaak's fertile wits, and the pure gold he gives us, his *own* gold and nobody else's.

It had been the fashion, both in classical and mediæval times, to adopt the colloquial form in pastorals, and frequently to make the composition turn on a discussion between the various interlocutors as to the relative merits of the vocation of each. This fashion and frame-work Walton adopted, but wrought out his subject in a manner essentially original, and which it is impossible to identify, beyond a few mere superficial features, with the productions of any of his forerunners or contemporaries.

To give an analysis of a book which every reader is sure to possess *in extenso*, would be a work of supererogation ; and

¹ Why not rather to the same author's "De Venatione, Aucupio atque Piscatione" (appended to the Latin version of the 'Husbandry'), with which the 'Compleat Angler' has a far more intimate analogy. The treatise in question is in the dialogue form, and the interlocutors (five in number) have names significant of their several vocations. Accordingly *Philoberus* eulogises the sport of hunting. *Lagus* descants on the pastime of hunting the hare, the fox, the badger, and the stag. *Elaphorbous* passes in review the chase of the deer, the wild bear, the wolf, the boar, &c. *Ornithenta* treats of the sport of fowling, and *Halieus* describes the different modes of fishing, and varieties of fish. The identity of frame-work is self-evident, but I am not aware that this Latin tract has ever been Englished. A loose and garbled translation of it may be found in Liger's "Théâtre d'Agriculture," 4to. 1713.

the 'Compleat Angler.'

9

an appreciation of it at this present hour of the clock, seems equally uncalled for. It is enough, that fifty-three editions or reprints have, up to this date, issued from the press, and that there are few libraries in the land in which, in one shape or other, it does not hold a foremost and an honoured place.

The success of Walton's first essay in angling literature seems to have stimulated him to increased effort in preparing the second edition for the press. He all but re-wrote the work, in fact, adding more than one-third (109 pages) to its original bulk, and introducing many improvements. The interlocutors are three in this edition, Piscator, Venator (who takes the place of Viator), and Auceps. The work is extended to twenty-one chapters, and 355 pages,² the type, however, being larger. Some very slight variations occur in the Dedication, but several passages were added to the Address to the Reader, wherein Walton says, "that in this second impression there are many enlargements, gathered both by my own observation and the communication of my friends."

To the plates of fish are added the bream, the eel, the loach, and the bull-head; and the commendatory verses³ appear in this edition for the first time.

Second Edition,
1655.¹

¹ "The Compleat Angler or the Contemplative Man's Recreation. Being a Discourse of Rivers, and Fish-Ponds, and Fish, and Fishing. Not unworthy the perusal of most Anglers. *The second Edition, much enlarged.*

"John 21, 3., *Simon Peter saith, &c.*

"London, printed by T. M. for Rich. Marriot, and are to be sold at his Shop in St. Dunstons Church-yard, Fleet street. 1655."

² Sigs. A 2 to Q 10, in twelves; 25 preliminary pages, and 1 blank.

³ By seven different eulogists.

The Chronicle of

Mr. Bindley, the eminent book-collector, was of opinion that perfect copies of the second edition are rarer even than the first, and we believe he was right. The book, nevertheless, does not command the same high prices.¹

The third edition was issued in 1661. Some copies are dated 1664, but are of the same impression, no other variation being discoverable. Strangely enough, however, most commentators, from Sir John Hawkins downwards, and most compilers of Angling-book Lists (Ellis, Pickering, and others), associate the bulk of the edition with 1664.

Although the work is stated, in the title page, to be “much

¹ Haworth, 895, 3*l.* 15*s.* Milner, 152, 6*l.* 15*s.* Higgs, 36 and 37, 3*l.* 15*s.* and 3*l.* 9*s.* Cotton, 160 and 161, 3*l.* 6*s.* and 4*l.* 6*s.* Valentine, 229, 5*l.* 5*s.* Pickering, first sale, morocco, 303, 7*l.* 10*s.* (Seven copies were disposed of at Pickering's second sale, but of these five were imperfect.) Nassau, pt. ii., 906, 2*l.* 8*s.* Bindley, pt. iii. 1933, 2*l.* 10*s.* Towneley, pt. i., 804, 2*l.* 15*s.* Jadis, morocco, 6*l.* 10*s.* Heber, pt. viii., title inlaid, 3*l.* Utterson, morocco, 6*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* Gardner, 2327, 2*l.* 17*s.*

² “The Compleat Angler or the Contemplative Man's Recreation. Being a Discourse of Rivers, Fish-ponds, Fish and Fishing. *To which is added* The Laws of Angling: with a new Table of the Particulars in this Book. *The third Edition, much enlarged.*

“London, Printed by J. G. for Rich. Marriot, at his shop in St. Dunstons Church-yard, Fleet-street, 1661.”

Sigs. A 2 to S 8, in eights. 14 preliminary pages; body of the work 255 pages, and 1 blank. Laws of Angling and Table (8 leaves) unpagged.

Haworth, 897, 1*l.* Milner, 153, 4*l.* 7*s.* Higgs, 38 and 39, 3*l.* 15*s.* and 2*l.* 12*s.* Valentine, 230 and 231, 2*l.* 6*s.* and 2*l.* 9*s.* Walth, 89, 3*l.* 16*s.* Pickering, first sale, 304 and 305, 4*l.* and 3*l.* 5*s.* Taylieurc, 233, 2*l.* 6*s.* Haslewood, 1498 and 1499, 3*l.* 16*s.* and 2*l.* 3*s.* 6*d.* Jadis, 4*l.* 3*s.* Skegg, 3*l.* 6*s.* Utterson, 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* Gardner, 2*l.* 18*s.* Blifs, 3*l.*

the 'Compleat Angler.'

I I

enlarged," this must apply rather to a comparison with the first edition, as the changes in the body of the work are but few and unimportant, with reference to the second. In the Dedication a few phrases are altered, the Address to the Reader is rehandled, a new Table of Contents is given, Alex. Brome's Commendatory Verses are omitted, and the chapter on the Laws of Angling (as indicated in the title) appears for the first time.

In the fourth edition, published in 1668, we have a mere paginary reprint of its immediate forerunner, with the exception of the "errata," which are here corrected.

It was followed, in 1676, by the fifth, which sometimes bears the title of "The Universal Angler," when consisting of

Fourth Edition,
1668.¹

Fifth Edition,
1676.²

¹ The former part of the title the same as the preceding.

"*The fourth Edition, much corrected and enlarged.* London, Printed for R. Marriot, and are to be sold by Charles Harper, at his Shop, the next door to the Crown, near Sergeants-Inn, in Chancery-Lane, 1668."

Haworth, 899, 1*l.* 19*s.* Milner, 154, 2*l.* 15*s.* Higgs, 41, 3*l.* 1*s.* Cotton, 163, 3*l.* 17*s.* Valentine, 232, 3*l.* 3*s.* Pickering, first sale, 306, 4*l.* Bindley, pt. iii., 1934, 15*s.* Taylieure, 234, 1*l.* 5*s.* Haslewood, 1500 and 1501, 3*l.* 1*s.* and 1*l.* 12*s.* White Knights, 4361, 1*l.* 2*s.* Jadis, 4*l.*

² We give the titles and collation of the collective work:—

To the engraved title is added, "The first part," and underneath (printed) "Part I. Being a Discourse," &c. "Written by Izaak Walton. *The Fifth Edition, much corrected and enlarged.* London, Printed for Richard Marriott, 1676."

After which comes the collective *printed* title: "The Universal Angler, Made so, by Three Books of Fishing. The *First* Written by Mr. Izaak Walton; The *Second* By Charles Cotton, Esq; The *Third* By Col. Robert Venables. All which may be bound together, or sold each of them severally.

The Chronicle of

Walton, Cotton, and Venables in conjunction. Twenty pages were added to the work in this edition, and further improvements introduced.

The union of Walton and Cotton has been perpetuated in

London, Printed for *Richard Marriott*, and sold by most Booksellers. MDCLXXVI." On the next page is a half-title: "Part I. Being a Discourse of Rivers, Fish-ponds, Fish and Fishing. Written by Izaak Walton. *The Fifth Edition, much corrected and enlarged.* London, Printed for *R. Marriot*, and are to be sold by *Charles Harper* at his Shop, the next door to the *Crown* near *Sergeants Inn* in *Chancery Lane*, 1676." 22 preliminary pages, of which 1 blank; body of the work 275 pages. Laws of Angling and Table, 5 leaves. Sigs. A 2 to V 3, in eights.

Title to Second Part: "The Compleat Angler. Being Instructions how to Angle for a TROUT or GRAYLING in a clear stream. Part II. (Underneath, engraved, the interlaced cypher of Walton and Cotton.)

" Qui mihi non credit faciat licet ipse periculum :
Et fuerit scriptis æquior ille meis.

London, Printed for *Richard Marriott*, and *Henry Brome*, in *St. Pauls Church-yard*, M.DCLXXVI." 4 preliminary pages; body of the work 112 pages. A 3 to H 8, in eights.

To Venables' Treatise is also prefixed an engraved title: "The Experienc'd Angler, or, Angling Improved." In a scroll surrounded with tackle, a pike, &c. Underneath, "Sold by Rich. Marriott."

Printed title: "The Experienc'd Angler: or, Angling Improv'd. Being a *General Discourse* of Angling. Imparting the Apest ways and Choiceest Experiments for the taking of most sorts of Fish in *Pond* or *Riever*. By Col. Robert Venables. *The Fourth Edition, much Enlarged.* London, Printed for *Richard Marriot*, 1676. 12 preliminary pages; body of the work 96 pages, not including Index, 6 pages. Sigs. from A 3 to H 3, in eights.

Haworth, 906, 2*l.* 6*s.* Milner, 156, 2*l.* 16*s.* Higgs, 43, 3*l.* 3*s.* Valentine, 233, 2*l.* 8*s.* Pickering, first sale, 307, 4*l.* 8*s.* Lynch Cotton, 122, 2*l.* Prince, 3*l.* 6*s.*, and with Walton's autograph, 35*l.* White Knights, 1*l.* 6*s.*

all subsequent reprints, but Venables' treatise, which, though meritorious, belongs to another order of composition, has since been excluded.

The illustrations in the latter were, as before observed, duplicates of those given with the 'Compleat Angler.'

Here the series of editions published during the life-time of the author comes to a close. Seven years later, and the old man laid down his pen, as he had already laid aside his rod, for ever; and, full of years, and of such honours as befitted his meekness and his piety, was gathered to his rest.¹ And long and dreary was the interregnum that followed, and barren as "from Dan to Beerseba,"—something of the grave's silence and oblivion seeming to have fallen both on Walton's memory and on his work.

He had set up a high standard in angling literature, but it found neither rivals nor imitators. During the seventy-four years that elapsed between the date of the fifth edition and that of the first revival, only five names of any note are met with in this field, Chetham, Franck, Howlett, Bowlker and Brookes. Of these, four were mere makers of manuals, more or less praiseworthy, and the fifth (Franck) stands out in ludi-

Bindley, 2176, with Walton's autograph, 2*l.* 14*s.* Towneley, 4*l.* 8*s.* Harrott, 1*l.* 7*s.* Utterston, 2*l.* 10*s.* The first, second, third, and fifth editions, sold at the dispersion of Cotton's collection, 156, for 53*l.*, and the first five at Prince's sale, 129, for 50*l.* 10*s.* The same at Harwood's sale, in 6 vols. (the sixth being Walton and Cotton, 1676, without Venables), for 42*l.* afterwards resold—Ferguson, 44*l.*

¹ Alas! that no friendly and reverential veto interposed to cancel the doggerel graven on his tomb!

The Chronicle of

crous relief, self-pilloried by his own ponderous pomposity of style and arrogance of judgment.¹

Was it through the decline of faith, and the waning of the

¹ “Richard Franck, Philanthropus,” he styles himself. He was author of “Northern Memoirs, calculated for the Meridian of Scotland” (1694), in which he estimates Walton thus :—

“Arnoldus. Isaac Walton stuffs his book with morals from Dubravius and others, not giving us one precedent of his own practical experiments, except otherwise, when he prefers the trencher before the trolling-rod ; who lays the stress of his arguments on other men’s observations, wherewith he stuffs his undigested octavo ; so brings himself under the Angler’s censure, and the common calamity of the plagiarist, to be pitied (poor man !) for his loss of time in scribbling and transcribing other men’s notions. These are the drones that rob the hive, yet flatter the bees they bring them honey.

“Theophilus. I remember the book, but you inculcate his *errata* ; however, it may pass muster among common muddlers.

“Arnoldus. *No truly, I think not.*”

Curt and conclusive, of a surety ! So by no stress of courtesy, may this despised and muddling abortion of poor Isaac’s be permitted to pass muster ! And thereupon, one falls to thinking of the very many editions through which the condemned work has, after all, contrived to pass. How it has been illustrated by great artists, annotated by learned professors, been loved by readers of all classes, in all times, and treasured up as one of the most precious literary heirlooms of the age that produced it, while the pretentious ‘Northern Memoirs’ can now hardly be had for love or money, and are ticketed ‘very scarce’ in the catalogues of antiquarian bookfellers. Curt and conclusive too, if thou couldst but have foreseen it, Master Richard Franck, *Philanthropus* !

That there are some good points, however, about ‘Northern Memoirs,’ cannot be denied. Its author was no cockney angler. He had gone further afield than pastoral Thames, or suburban Lea ; he had thrown his fly on the waters of the great lakes, and had done battle with *salmo ferox* in his fatnesses. But his book, on the whole, is as heavy and indigestible a lump of turgid rhetoric as ever encumbered the angler’s book-shelf, or perhaps any book-shelf whatsoever, if the truth be told.

old superstition that, during this intermediate period, the angler and his lore were alike dethroned from their high places? Piscator, in the good old times, trod (in a figure) the dais, and wore cloth of gold, as a follower of the "Pleasure of Princes." He stood apart from the *profanum vulgus*, by virtue alike of his grave and dignified demeanour, and of the cloud of spirituality and recondite erudition with which he surrounded his art. He was *sui generis*. *Piscator nascitur, non fit*, was his cool assumption, even Parnassus' hill not seeming too lofty to serve him for a parallel.

In his decadence, on the contrary, all was changed. Cloth of frieze became the fashion of his raiment, and his position the common every day-level (or perhaps a degree lower), with the implied obligation of giving the wall to any hunting or hawking passer-by. And having descended from his pedestal, the *oi polloi*, as usual, began to pelt him, with their jeers, and even a few, indeed, who were not of the *oi polloi*, and should have known better, stuck their burrs on him; and his literature, as we have just said, was dethroned with him, and lost, altogether, its ancient tone and standard.

An angling writer (to establish a comparison) of this latter period, was apt to enter on the subject with a penny whistle prelude of apology and deprecation. Smarting, it may be, from the sting of the Johnsonian definition of his sport, he wasted much mean and servile pleading to prove the injustice of the insinuation. He crept through his treatise on all fours, as it were, and backed out of it at the close, ungraciously and disgracefully—shrinking, often enough, from affixing his sign-

manual to his work, through a latent dread (not altogether unfounded), of being identified with the lexicographer's memorable 'fool.'

The antique scribe's exordium, on the contrary, was in some such organ-note as this.

“ Since Pleasure is a rapture, or power in this last age, stolne into the hearts of men, and there lodged up with such a carefull guard and attendance, that nothing is more supream, or ruleth with greater strength in their affections, and since all are now become the sonnes of Pleasure and every good is measured by the delight it produceth : what worke unto man can be more thankfull than the discourse of that pleasure which is most comely, most honest, and giveth the most liberty to Divine meditation, and that, without all question, is the Art of Angling, which, having ever beene most hurtlesly necessary, hath been the sport or recreation of GOD's Saints, of most holy Fathers, and of many worthy and reverend Devines, both dead and at this time breathing. For the use thereof (in its own true and unabused nature) carryeth in it neyther covetousness, deceit, nor anger, the three maine spirits which ever (in some ill measure) rule in all other pastimes ; neyther are they alone predominant, without the attendance of their severall handmaids, as Theft, Blasphemy, or Bloudshed ; for in Dice-play, Cards, Bowles, or any sport where money is the goale to which mens minds are directed, what can man's avarice there be accounted other than a familiar robbery, each seeking by deceit to couzen and spoyle other of that blisse of means which God had bestowed to support them and their families ? . . .

But in this Art of Angling there is no such evill, no such finneful violence, for the greateſt thing it coveteth is, for much labour, a little Fiſh, hardly ſo much as will ſuffice nature in a reaſonable ſtomacke : for the Angler muſt intice, not command his reward . . . ſhewing unto all men that will undergoe any delight therein that it was firſt invented, taught, and ſhall for ever bee maintained by *Patience* only. And yet I may not ſay only *Patience*, for her other three Siſters have likewise a commanding power in this exerciſe, for *Juſtice* directeth and appointeth out thoſe places where men may, with liberty, uſe their ſport and neyther doe iniury to their neighbours, nor incur the cenſure of incivility. *Temperance* layeth downe the meaſure of the action and moderateth deſire in ſuch good proportion that no exceſſe is found in the overflow of their affections. Laſtly *Fortitude* inableth the minde to undergoe the travell and exchange of weathers with a healthfull eaſe, and not to diſpaire with a little expenſe of time, but to perſevere with a conſtant imagination in the end to obtaine both pleaſure and ſatiſfaction . . . And thus you ſee this Art is good, as having no coherence of evill ; worthy of uſe, in aſmuch as it is mixed with a delightfull profit : and moſt auncient as being the recreation of the firſt Patriarks."¹

Measure, if you can, the interval which ſeparates the pitiful puerility, characteristic of our angling lore in its intermediate period, and the above ſolemn laudation, wherein the praiſe of the art may be ſaid to culminate, aſſociated, as it is, with all

¹ "The Pleaſvres of Princes, or Good mens Recreations." Small 4to., 1635. Chap. 1.

The Chronicle of

things that are "lovely and of good report," named in a breath with the great, the wise, and the reverend, and for an audacious and half profane apotheosis, caught up, as it were, in a glory, with the Saints of God! To measure the interval between these two, is, alas! to fathom also the depth of the fall.

But literary tastes, antecedently to this period, had undergone signal changes in a general sense, and not in the angling department solely. Artifice had too often been allowed to take the place of art, and "gilding refined gold" and "painting the lily," had ceased to be the heresies they were once esteemed. To be simple and natural was a rule disused, in fact, whether in literature, or in life; nature had exchanged roses for rouge, and simplicity had acquired a *penchant* for powder and patches.

And at the acme of all this came Moses Browne (formerly

Moses Browne's
First Edition,
1750.¹

¹ "The Compleat Angler: Or, Contemplative Man's Recreation. In Two Parts. Containing, I. A large and particular Account of Rivers, Fishponds, Fish, and Fishing: Written by the ingenious and celebrated Mr. Isaac Walton. II. The best and fullest instructions how to angle for a *Trout* and *Grayling* in a clear Stream. By Charles Cotton, Esq.; and published by Mr. Walton. Comprising all that has been accounted Valuable, Instructive, or Curious, that has ever appeared on this Subject. Interspersed with a Variety of practical Experiments; learned Observations; beautiful Descriptions; philosophical, moral, and religious Reflections; Pieces of innocent Mirth and Humour; poetical Compositions, &c., so as to render it entertaining to Readers of every Taste and Character whatsoever: with Exact Representations of all the Fish, and the Addition of several Copper Plates, designed as an Embellishment to the work. Carefully and correctly published, from the best editions, with a number of occasional Notes. By Moses Browne, Author of Piscatory Eclogues. To which are added, The Laws of Angling;

pen-cutter, afterwards ordained priest, and the right man at the right time, in his own estimation . . .), bent on endowing the world with a new edition of the 'Compleat Angler' enhanced with some finishing touches of his own. And by dint of oil and emery, elbow-grease and self-sufficiency, a new edition *was* produced in such an advanced state of French polish, as was considered creditable alike to the parts and patience of the manipulator. Old Izaak's "inaccuracies" and "redundancies" were pruned away with an unsparing hand, and his "absurdities" suppressed altogether. His "rough places," not to speak it profanely, were "made smooth," and his "high places" brought, perhaps, a little low, by the same process. We acknowledge our obligations to Moses Browne for his revival of a book that had too long fallen into desuetude, but we mutter, *anathema maranatha!* in a mild sense, nevertheless, over such priggish impertinence.

and an Appendix, shewing at one View, the most proper *Rivers*, particular *Haunts*, *Baits*; their *Seasons*, and *Hours* in the Day of Biting; *General Directions in Practice*, for every kind of *Fish* that is to be angled for; alphabetically disposed, in a Method peculiarly useful, and never yet attempted. With short Rules concerning the *Tackle*, *Baits*, the several ways of *Fishing*, and *Weather* proper for Angling.

London: Printed and Sold by Henry Kent, at the Printing-office in *Finch Lane*, near the *Royal Exchange*, MDCCL."

16 pages preliminary; 320 pages including Index. Frontispiece and five separate illustrations besides cuts of fish.

Haworth, 908, 11s. Haslewood, additional illustrations, 2l. 2s. Valentine, 235, 2s. 6d. Cotton, 165, 1l. Taylieure, 235, 3s. 6d. Edwards, 6s. 6d. Milner, 157, 7s. Stace, 83, 2s. 6d. Bindley, 6s. with Bowlker. Higgs, 19, 1l. 3s. Pickering, 308, 4s. and 6s. White Knights, 9s.

The Chronicle of

Moses Browne's first edition appeared, as has been shown, in 1750. It was small octavo in size, and its general appearance indicated but little typographical progress during the hundred years that separated it from its first prototype. The woodcuts of fish are especially coarse and inferior to the corresponding plates in the edition of 1653, and the praise to be awarded to the more ambitious scenic illustrations, must be restricted to the choice of subject,—a choice that has been ratified and accepted as a rule by all after-illustrators, up to the present time.

The work is also adorned with a frontispiece, in the foreground of which a languid-looking fine gentleman, in a cocked-hat and bob-wig, with a fish between his fingers, and a couple of rods, or rather pokers, lying at his feet, is seen seated, *sub tegmine fagi*, by the side of a stream, in a pensive posture, while, in the middle distance, sits just such another fine gentleman, with just such another bob-wig and poker, his back turned to the spectator, and his legs, apparently, dangling in the water. These two love-lorn Adonises represent, we presume, the ideal angler of the day, as he appeared in his court costume, in the suburban purlieu of Putney or Islington, more engrossed with his ruffles than his sport, and in the habit of inditing a sonnet to his "Mistress' eyebrow," when the bleak left off biting.

Browne's edition was precluded by an "Editor's Preface," in which he certainly evinces much enthusiasm for his author. But how little he was acquainted with the incidents of Walton's life, and how very gradually, in this respect, he flounders out

of error into truth, may be judged by the fact that, while adverting to Cotton's contribution of the second part, he states that he (Cotton) MARRIED WALTON'S DAUGHTER; an error which he repeats, nine years after, in his second edition, and only corrects in the third (1772), when he opens his eyes at last (thanks to Hawkins' Memoir), to the adoptive character of the relationship. This blunder is now pointed out, we believe, for the first time.

The "Appendix" and "Short Rules," supplied by Browne, were useful additions to the original work.

Browne's second reprint appeared in 1759, all but coming into direct collision with Hawkins' first edition, published in the following year, and giving rise, as it was, to certain heart-burnings and jealousies on both sides. He announces it, in the title-page, as "very much amended and improved."

One of the improvements (not an infelicitous idea) was the enclosing "within particular marks, the parts which treat merely of Directions for the Sport, that they may be passed over, and nothing but the entertaining parts of the Book present themselves for those to whom those other might appear

Moses Browne's
Second Edition,
1759.¹

¹ There are some unimportant modifications in the title, to which the original quotation from St. John is restored.

Twenty-four pages preliminary; 348 pages, including Index.

Higgs, 44, 1*l.* 1*s.* Cotton, 166, 10*s.*, and with an autograph of Moses Browne, 1*l.* 4*s.* Taylieure, 237, 5*s.* Donovan, 902, 3*s.* Milner, 158, 7*s.* 6*d.* Stace, 84, 3*s.* 6*d.* Lowndes, 714, 4*s.* Walfh, 74, 2*s.* 6*d.* Haslewood, 10*s.* 6*d.* Pickering, first sale, 6*s.* White Knights, 1*l.* 3*s.* Bindley, 1*l.* 17*s.* Skettell, 2*l.* Stanley, 3*l.* 5*s.* Towneley, 3*l.* 15*s.* Strawberry Hill, 3*l.* Utterton, 1*l.* 5*s.* Crawford, 1*l.* 19*s.*

The Chronicle of

dull and unpleasant; at the same time that it will answer the double purpose that such who want more immediately to peruse the aforefaid Directions, &c., may find them more readily by these marks and follow them (as in a chain) through the several pages.”

The above is extracted from the “Editor’s Preface,” which, for this edition, had been re-written, giving a few more details of Walton’s career, but perpetuating, as we have already shown, the old error touching his relationship with Cotton.

Some new engravings (three in number) are also added to this reprint, from the same hand, that of H. Burgh.

Browne’s spurious revival was now to be succeeded and super-

Hawkins’ First Edition, 1760.¹

¹ “The Complete Angler: Or, Contemplative Man’s Recreation. Being a Discourse on Rivers, Fish-Ponds, Fish, and Fishing. In Two Parts. The First written by Mr. Izaak Walton, The Second by Charles Cotton, Esq.; To which are now prefixed, The Lives of the Authors. Illustrated with Cuts of the several Kinds of River-Fish, and of the Implements used in Angling, Views of the principal Scenes described in the Book. And Notes Historical, Critical, and Explanatory.

London: Printed *only* for Thomas Hope, at the *Bible* and *Anchor*, opposite the North-gate of the *Royal Exchange*, *Threadneedle Street*; and sold by him and Sackville Parker, at *Oxford*; Richard Matthews, at *Cambridge*, and Samuel Trimmer, at *Derby*. 1760.”

First Part, 78 pages preliminary; 304 pages. Second Part, 58 pages preliminary; 136 pages, including Index. Frontispiece, and 12 separate Illustrations, including 3 plates of tackle; also engravings of fish.

Haworth, 912, 2*l.* 11*s.* Higgs, 46, 1*l.* 15*s.* Valentine, 237, 1*l.* 4*s.* Cotton, 168, 1*l.* 7*s.* Strawberry Hill, in old red morocco, 15*l.* Taylicure, 238, 17*s.* Milner, 159, 2*l.* 14*s.* Haslewood, 3*l.* 3*s.* Walfsh, 71, 12*s.* Bindley, 1*l.* 17*s.* White Knights, 1*l.* 3*s.* Skettell, 2*l.* Stanley, 3*l.* 5*s.* Towneley, 3*l.* 15*s.* Utterfon, 1*l.* 5*s.* Crawford, 1*l.* 10*s.*

feded by another and more permanent one, that of Mr. John Hawkins, in 1760, and the announcement of which in the prints of the day gave rise, as we have just said, to sundry skirmishes and passages of arms between the rival editors.

We hardly know whether the triumph of the 'Compleat Angler,' on its first advent, in the thick of the great Roundhead and Cavalier struggle, was an incident more paradoxical in its kind, than the re-establishment of the pastoral as an English classic in

" The tea-cup times of hood and hoop,
And when the patch was worn."

Perhaps we may infer from the fact, that the tide of affectation and false graces in literature was already beginning to ebb, and that the public taste was returning to a sounder and saner class of appreciations.

At all events, in this new edition, the original text was restored to its primitive purity; the pruning-knife was laid aside; all poetical tinkering repudiated, and old Izaak's "redundancies," "superfluities," and "absurdities," brought back to light, and left to stand or fall on their own merits or demerits.

It was a gage thrown down to Vandalism, whereat Vandalism, in guise of Moses Browne, was no doubt mightily astonished.

Browne's recriminations, and the charges he brings against Hawkins of plagiarism and appropriation, seem to us quite unfounded. That Wale, in Hawkins' reprint, adopted the same series of subjects for his illustrations as Browne's designer, is a fact, but these subjects rather forced themselves on the

The Chronicle of

choice of the artist, than were sought for by him, and were certainly the most salient, for artistic purposes, the work contained. This interpretation has been confirmed, in recent times, by the example of Stothard and Abfolon, both artists of unquestionable originality, but who have worked in precisely the same grooves as their predecessors. Apart from this, the treatment of the subjects by Wale was altogether dissimilar; he avoided the anachronisms into which the former designer had fallen, and with the exception of the allegorical frontispiece, which, like most allegories, was mere "leather and prunella," his series of drawings assuredly bore away the bell from those of his competitor.

As to Browne's asseveration that Hawkins' life of Walton was merely borrowed from his own, the charge is simply absurd. Browne wrote *no* life of Walton worthy of that name. He merely swept together some loose litter, in the course of his editing, but took no pains either to sift or to enlarge it as the years went by.

Hawkins was the first biographer of Walton in any tangible sense, and it is on his foundation that after workers in the same field have built up the fabric to fuller and more complete dimensions. That his memoir is meagre, insufficient, sometimes inexact, is true, but to judge justly of it, we must judge leniently, remembering how many and great were the difficulties that beset the task and baffled the seeker. How essentially private, tranquil and unobtrusive, for instance, Walton's career was, from first to last; how, though associated with some of the greatest and wisest of his time, he took no rank

with them in public places, under the eyes of men, but fought them out in their retirement, sitting meekly at their feet, in their shadow . . . meekly, not servilely ; how, at a comparatively early age, he withdrew to his country retreat, hiding himself still more effectually in the seclusion of his study, and in those pastoral pursuits which were his chief delight ; and how, finally, he lived, for the most part, at a period of great political ferment and convulsion, and in the midst of such doing and undoing as is apt to sweep away the traces of secondary events, and of the routine of ordinary existences.

Writing biography under such circumstances, is like deciphering the characters on a tomb, that the rains of centuries have channelled, and that moss and lichen have overgrown. A word here, a line there, may be made out, but the most patient effort, the most unflinching sagacity, are required to produce a continuous and perfect transcript of the whole.

The life of Walton, as we possess it now, is, in fact, a mosaic by many hands ; but to Hawkins accrues the merit of having been the earliest worker in the quarry, if not the most consummate and successful one.

His edition of 1760 was in demy octavo, and of a goodly aspect, printed on fine paper, and with bold, legible type. Of the figures in the plates, it was stated in a note, that they were "dressed in the habit of the time," and the plates themselves were declared in an advertisement to have "cost upwards of a hundred pounds."

The work was also announced as being "the only correct and complete edition."

The Chronicle of

The biography of Walton extends to fifty-six pages, and that of Cotton, by W. O[ldys], to forty-eight. The annotation is copious, and has been, for the most part, retained in subsequent reprints.

Hawkins' second edition, in 1766, was but a paginary reprint of the first, and requires, therefore, no special description here.

In proof that Browne's version had not fallen into absolute disfavour, a third and last edition was produced in 1772, "greatly improved in a number of places above any of the preceding ones, by the addition of twenty pages and of several useful notes of Directions for the Sport. The Songs," he adds, "that are simple and natural, wrote with humour and character, I have endeavoured to make still more agreeable by indulging myself in an inclination I found of setting each to music, as they now for the first time appear, and are my

Hawkins' Second Edition,
1766.¹

Moses Browne's
Third Edition,
1772.

¹ "London: Printed for J. Rivington, at the *Bible and Crown*, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*; T. Caflon, in *Stationers Court*; and R. Wither, in *Cornhill*. MDCCCLXVI."

Milner, finely bound, 160, 5*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* Higgs, 48, 1*l.* 5*s.* Valentine, 238, 8*s.* 6*d.* Pickering, 309, 1*l.* 1*s.* Haslewood, additional illustrations, 1*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* Walth, 73, 1*l.* 13*s.* White Knights, 4364, 18*s.* Bindley, pt. iii., 1936, 9*s.*

² "The Eighth Edition, with the Addition of all the Songs set to Music. London: Printed and Sold by Richard and Henry Causton (Successors to the late Mr. Henry Kent), at the Printing Office, No. 21, *Finch-Lane*, near the *Royal Exchange*. MDCCCLXXII."

24 pages preliminary; 372 pages, including Index.

Haworth, 909, 6*s.*; and 911, 13*s.* Valentine, 236, 5*s.* 6*d.* Higgs, 45, 2*l.* 3*s.* Bindley, 9*s.* White Knights, 15*s.* Edwards, 6*s.* 6*d.*

only public and perhaps my last attempt in which I shall aim to please myself or others in this way."

There is no life-belt like vanity in literary aquatics, and armed with this accoutrement, Browne strikes out, persistently, in a sea that had grown over rough for him, and appeals, as before, to the public for support and commendation, on the primitive and offensive ground of his tinkering and tampering. "I shall be pleased," he says, "to have the closest comparison made between us, with the acutest eye of the candid and judicious, especially the *Poetical Parts*, that cost me much labour, and indeed (the italics are ours) *of necessity required my indispensable help.*"

That the public did not respond very cordially to this pathetic and positive appeal, may be inferred from the fact, that our irreverent editor's Walton-done-Browne seems to have funk like a stone, soon after this, into the depths of Lethe, to be fished up therefrom no more.

But while we are severe on the editor, let us be just to the man. Browne was a *parvenu* it is true, but a *parvenu* in the most honest and honourable sense. From a very low rank in life, he made his way upward, by dint of energy and talent, and through much penury, neglect, and vicissitude, to the dignified position of Vicar of Olney, and afterwards Chaplain of Morden College, in Kent. In the record of his chequered career, no noticeable blot is to be discovered, and that he was infected with the prevailing literary foibles of the time, is by no means to be visited on him alone.

Even on Waltonian ground, it is well to accord him what

The Chronicle of

praise we may. That Hawkins was the reviver, *de facto*, of the 'Compleat Angler,' is undeniable; but how far he was stimulated thereto by Browne's sham revival, is a question we will leave open to the latter's advantage, if advantage there be. That Browne was really fond of the work he maltreated, is evident from his affectionate praise of it; and it is possible that out of that very fondness sprang the errors of judgment that have drawn down on him the strictures of Walton's more respectful admirers. *Requiescat in pace!* then, let us say, in farewell.

Hawkins' third edition was again a paginary reprint, and in the same form. Copies of this issue, as of the first, are scarce.

The fourth edition was published in 1784, "with large additions." In the editor's (now Sir John Hawkins) advertisement, he states that he had revised the work, and inserted

Hawkins'
Third Edition,
1775.¹

Hawkins'
Fourth Edition,
1784.²

¹ "The Third Edition. London: Printed for John and Francis Rivington, (No. 62) at the *Bible and Crown*, in *St. Paul's Churchyard*; and T. Caflon, in *Stationers Court*. MDCLXXV."

Stace, 8s. 3s. 6d. Taylicure, 239, 3s. Valentine, 239, 3s. Cotton, 169, 15s. Haslewood, 8s. 6d. Bindley, 9s. Lowndes, 5s. 6d.

² "The Complete Angler, or Contemplative Man's Recreation; Being a Discourse on Rivers, Fish-Ponds, Fish, and Fishing: in Two Parts; The First written by Mr. Isaac Walton, the Second by Charles Cotton, Esq; with the Lives of the Authors, and Notes Historical, Critical, and Explanatory. By Sir John Hawkins, Knt. The Fourth Edition, with large Additions. London, Printed for John, Francis, and Charles Rivington, (No. 62), at the *Bible and Crown*, *St. Paul's Churchyard*. MDCLXXXIV."

Part I. 82 pages preliminary; 268 pages. Part II. 34 pages preliminary; 122 pages, including Index.

Lowndes, 719, 3s. Haworth, 913, 7s. 6d. Stanley, 11s. Bliss, 3s. 6d.

“sundry such facts, discoveries, notices, authorities and observations, as he flattered himself would greatly tend to improve it.” He then goes on to explain that he had enlarged the *Life of Walton*, and substituted a “new account of Mr. Cotton, extracted, chiefly from his own writings, less diffuse and desultory than that which accompanied the former edition.”

The rejected memoir, as we have already intimated, was the work of Oldys, whose initials are appended to it, and who died the year after its publication. The new biography was by Hawkins himself.

Modern commentators have been slow to acknowledge the value of Hawkins' editorial services. They pooh-pooh his piscatorship, carp and cavil at his science, and put on double spectacles to discover his enthusiasm—and fail. That he had weak points, and that these were of them, we do not deny; but as a pioneer, in his department, he has, we repeat, a claim on our regard and recognition, which it would be ungracious to repudiate.

Five years, however, after the date of this fourth edition, the 'Compleat Angler' was orphaned of both its editors. Moses Browne departed hence in 1787, at the ripe age of eighty-four; and in 1789 Hawkins also, though a much younger man, rested from his labours.

That there was no cause for despondency on this ground, we know; and looking from that epoch, down the long vista of the coming years, we see editors, many and able—editors, and still editors, in ever increasing numbers, flocking to the rescue. What, if in a perverse mood, we were to start a heresy and

The Chronicle of

with the procession had been less multitudinous ; not that there had been fewer reprints, but fewer editors,—What, if we suggested that something less of heavy learning and abstruse research would have been a more merciful dispensation—that the Pelion of Erudition, piled on the Ossa of Science, is an overwhelming accompaniment under the circumstances ! What—to throw aside all reservation—if we were to opine that Walton's pretty pastoral had been hardly dealt with, and that it may be neither good taste nor sound judgment to flood the obscurity of our antique literature with the garish noonday of the nineteenth century—to bring the two into collision—the stained oriel, on the one hand, with its beautiful dappings of many coloured lustre, and the broad, white casement on the other, dazzling, without fleck or flaw ! What, again—but our heresy may be running away with us, it is better we should draw rein. We have not *averred* these things—we have merely dropped them, with a 'peradventure'...have our readers anything to say ?

One avowal we will make, however, 'out and out.' Modern critics there are, who have indulged in many thin-lipped sneers at old Izaak's superstition and fond credulity. Against this we put in our protest, lined and underlined. Walton was essentially a man of his time, walking by the lights of his time ; we have no right to exact from him the wide-awake knowings and scepticism of later days. Superstition, besides, struck its roots deep in the organization of the angler of that period ; it was lord and master over him, in fact. It made choice of the time when he should fish, and of the path he should take. It had something to say of the ordering of his apparel, and much

of the appliances of his tackle ; it crept into his bait-box ; it was kneaded up with his paste ; it even twisted itself into the links of his line, and made marvellous havoc of the fish he took. It was parcel grotesque, parcel ghastly. It tampered with mummy's dust, and dead men's fat ; it dabbled in mystical oils and occult chemistry ; it was astrological, necromantical, diabolical ; it was anything and everything, in short, save simple and matter-of-fact and sensible.

But it must be acknowledged, as an offset against this, that certain of the old-world writers on the sport were little short of heroic in their fashion of building up to his complete stature, their ideal Angler.

Something in this way the structure rose.

He must have simple-mindedness—(that was the raw material, and indispensable enough, Heaven knows !) He must be a general scholar, skilled in all the liberal sciences ; and a grammarian, to know how to discourse fitly of his art. He must have sweetness of speech “ to intice other to share his delight ;” and “ strength of arguments to maintaine and defend his profession.” Knowledge, too, of the sun, moon, and stars, he should possess. He should be well versed in geography and practised in navigation. He should also be an adept in music that “ whensoever eyther melancholy, heavinessse of thought, or the perturbation of his own fancies, stirreth up sadnessse in him, he may remove the same with some godly Hymne or Antheme.”

In addition to all this, he must be well grounded in faith, patience, moderation and charity. He must be very humble,

The Chronicle of

and, at the same time, strong and valiant, so as “neither to be amazed with stormes nor affrighted with Thunder.” He must be generous, “not working for his owne belly, as if it could never be satisfied,” and of “a thankfull nature, praising the Author of all goodnesse.” And to wind up, he must be of a perfect memory, and of a strong constitution of body, “able to endure much fasting, and not of a gnawing stomacke.”¹

In a word, this consummate angler must be able to square the entire circle of the sciences, combine the various perfections of the philosopher, the stoic, and the Christian, and be an “admirable Crichton” to boot, in general accomplishments! No wonder such men, or any faint approach to such, were styled ‘*gentlemen* anglers,’ and one may picture their dignified gait, and the grave, scholastic pensiveness of their countenances, as they paced, angle in hand, the shaven lawns of Thames, or traced the meanderings of classic Dove, finding in the pauses of their sport,

“ Books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.”

These, surely, were not the men to *apologise* for the practise of their art, as we have shown to have been done by certain of their degenerate descendants. Johnsonian jokes, Byronian sarcasms, or the jeers of the critics aforesaid, would have bounded off them like hailstones from a slate roof. No vulnerable heel had they for such puny shafts to gall. To

¹ “The Pleasures of Princes, or Good mens Recreations.” 1635. Chap. 3.
“Of the Anglers apparrell, and inward qualities,” p. 15.

them angling was as much a matter of praying as of playing, for was there not an entire series of pious ejaculations for the devout angler's special use and benefit? Ejaculation the first, when he crossed his threshold in the morning twilight; ejaculation the second, when he first dipped line in water; ejaculation the third, when the fish took the bait, and ejaculation the fourth, when he was fairly landed. Apologise, forsooth! not they. The pastime was *ars nobilis* to them, in the broadest sense. They magnified their vocation, seeking to raise it above all other sports, by stress of much subtlety of argument and considerable scope of fancy, almost putting the shoes off their feet the while, as if it were, in some sort, holy ground.

And time and the world have dealt gently with these men, and with their works, keeping the memory of the former green, and storing up the latter in lavender, as Izaak's hostess stored her sheets. In spite of new lights and wide-awake knowledge, we cling to the old books still, loving them for their *naïveté*, their single-heartedness, and that unfading freshness of country life which hangs persistently about them, and which even now brings back to our ear the leaves' ripple and the river's murmur, as we thread their lines and turn their pages.

Whereupon, re-issuing out of that Egyptian darkness, into the full modern daylight once more, do we bring back with us on our lips a smile or a sneer? Not the latter, surely, O worshipful critics—there is no need. We are wiser, it is true, than our forefathers, more scientific, less credulous, but that we are better men, or even very much better Anglers (which is one of the chief points in question), is not proven.

The Chronicle of

Hawkins' Fifth
and Sixth Edi-
tions, 1792¹ and
1797.²

Recovering from this digression, we find Mr. John Sidney Hawkins standing in his father's shoes, and presenting us, in 1792 and 1797, with two further editions of our favourite book. In the former he calls attention to certain "corrections and additions of the last editor found in the margin of his copy of the fourth edition, which, though not many, have been all made use of on this occasion, from a wish that the book might receive the advantage of his last corrections. I have in no other respect," he adds, "varied from the last of the former editions, excepting when it was warranted by some memoranda of my father's, being wholly unacquainted with the subject."

The plates in this reprint are reduced in number, the remainder being worn out; but the book, we are told, is "printed with a better type, and on better paper, than could otherwise have been afforded."

These latter improvements appeal, we are bound to confess, more to our faith than our sight.

¹ "The Fifth Edition, with Additions. London, Printed for F. and C. Rivington, G. G. J. and J. Robinson, W. Goldsmith, J. and J. Taylor, R. Faulder, Scatcherd and Whitaker, and E. Jefferey. MDCXCII."

Part I. 82 pages preliminary; 268 pages. Part II. 34 pages preliminary; 122 pages, including Index.

Haworth, 914, 6s. and 1l. Valentine, 240, 1s. Cotton, 170, 5s. Tayleure, 24, 1s. 6d. Stace, 86, 4s. Lowndes, 721, 3s. and 4s. 6d. Bindley, 1l. 8s., large paper.

² "The Sixth Edition, with Additions. London: Printed for F. and C. Rivington, G. G. and J. Robinson, J. and J. Taylor, R. Faulder, W. Bent, J. Scatcherd, E. Jefferey, and T. N. Longman. 1797."

Valentine, 241, 3s. Haworth, 915, 5s. Hallewood, 8s. 6d. Bindley, 15s., fine paper. Only fifty copies of the latter printed.

... printed for J. S. and C. Robinson (No 62) St. Paul's Church-yard
1791. 2

The edition of 1797 is again a paginary reprint, the engravings (with the exception of the tackle plates) being now suppressed altogether. The renewed assurance of better type and paper becomes, this time, a fib of the first magnitude. Very shabby and feedy specimens, in fact, are these last of the direct Hawkins series, which they close unworthily. The circumstance of Mr. John Sidney being "wholly unacquainted with the subject," and therefore as wholly devoid of zeal and enthusiasm, accounts, we suppose, in some degree, for their threadbare and declining condition.

But the age is declining also, and a new era is about to dawn. Presently, we cross the threshold of the nineteenth century, and have presentiments of better and grander things.

The better come first, in the shape of a handsome octavo

Bagster's First Edition, 1808.¹

¹ The title the same as in the edition of 1784. "London: Printed for Samuel Bagster, in the Strand. 1808."

512 pages. Frontispiece and 14 plates; 17 plates of fish.

In the half-title is a woodcut vignette (an angler), and under it, "The Complete Angler. The Seventh Edition. With Improvements and Additions, both of Matter and Plates."

Haflewood, in the "Censura Literaria," speaks of this edition as having been disclaimed by Mr. J. S. Hawkins, and refers to the "Gent. Mag.," January 7, 1809, p. 6.

Valentine, 242, 4to., 1*l.* 6*s.* Higgs, 49, with extra illustrations, 63*l.* Lowndes, 722, 8*s.* 6*d.* Taylieure, 243, 4*s.* 6*d.* Haworth, 916, 1*l.* Haflewood, 4to., with MSS. and additional illustrations, 5*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* Bindley, 1*l.* 8*s.*, large paper. Prince, 7*l.*, 4to., with extra illustrations. Drury, 19*s.* Brockett, 1*l.* 10*s.* Stowe, 1*l.* 1*s.*, large paper. Utterton, 2*l.* 5*s.* extra illustrations. Strettell, 7*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*, 4to., with proofs of the illustrations of the edition of 1815 inserted. Baker, 4*l.* 4*s.*, with duplicate set of plates.

The Chronicle of

reprint, by Bagster in 1808. This is the "tallest" edition we have seen hitherto, overtopping, as it does, by a whole head and shoulders, its little duodecimo ancestor of 1653. But the pigmy, as our readers are aware, was destined to become gigantic in its later growth.

Bagster's present version was also printed in royal octavo and quarto,¹ and was, in all its forms, of a very comely presence. It is Hawkins *redivivus* as regards the notes and biographies, but the new editor (Bagster himself, we believe,) revised and made some additions to the former. The engravings are still those of Ryland from Wale, but executed afresh from the original drawings, by Audinet, and in a very creditable style. The plates of fish are finely finished, and faithful, and are the best associated, hitherto, with the work. Dr. Bethune, indeed, doubts whether they have since been surpassed; but this is an injustice both to the series that illustrated the following edition, and to the very fine set by Inskipp in Pickering's edition of 1836.

Portraits of Walton, Cotton, and Hawkins, as well as of Sanderfon, Hooker, Wotton, Herbert, and Donne, were given in this re-issue, for the first time.

Much enthusiasm has been lavished on Bagster's first edition. Mr. Symonds Higgs' quarto copy was illustrated with above two hundred and seventy prints and drawings, consisting of copies of rare portraits, proof impressions of plates of fish, topographical prints, monuments, &c. It was bound for him by Gosden, as we learn from a note in Higgs' sale-catalogue,

¹ The quarto copies were published at five guineas, and are now very rare, great part of the stock having perished in the fire at Bagster's warehouse.

at five guineas price ; the bands of the book being made of wood from the door of Cotton's fishing-house, taken off by Mr. Higgs near the lock, where he was sure old Izaak must have touched it. It sold for 63*l.* at the dispersion of that gentleman's library.

Mr. Higgs, by the way, proved himself, in this latter instance, to be a singular mixture of the worshipper and the iconoclast.

"Godden's own illustrated copy," says Dr. Bethune " (if I make out correctly a pencilled note appended to the above), unbound, single leaves, in a portfolio, was disposed of at 110*l.*!"

It was probably about this period that angling-book collecting first took shape and consistence. At all events, the earliest record of it, that has come under our observation, occurs in a sale-catalogue of the library of Philip Splidt, Esq. (1814), in which attention is specially invited to a "very rare collection of books on angling." But that the taste was not then what it was destined afterwards to become—one of the manifold phases of bibliomania—is evident from the circumstance that this so-called rare collection consisted of but twenty-seven volumes, and that scarcely a single work amongst them merited the designation in any serious sense.

How little zealous research had, hitherto, been brought to bear on the question, is shown by Mr. Ellis's "Catalogue of Books on Angling, with some brief notices of several of their authors," which he contributed to the "British Bibliographer" in 1811. This earliest register of the literature of the sport contains but eighty-six works, although it *should* have included nearly twice that number.

The Chronicle of

Of the amount of labour accomplished since then, and of the large increase of angling-books, within the last fifty years, our readers will have an idea when we inform them that the latest list, the "New Bibliotheca Piscatoria,"¹ for the compilation of which the present writer is responsible, includes no less than six hundred and fifty works on angling, and has since been considerably extended.

As regards the modern multiplication of such books, there can be little question that it is to be attributed less to the numerical increase of anglers, than to the improved character of the works themselves, and to the wider range of subjects which they now embrace. Recent days have, in fact, brought back to the angler and his literature, a reaction and a rehabilitation. With Sir Humphrey Davy and Christopher North was ushered in an era of sound, practical, philosophical, and manly writers, who have succeeded in raising the art to a fair average level, as remote from the mystical assumptions of the earlier epoch, as from the maudlin feebleness that stamped the period of its decadence. And with this position we have every reason to be satisfied.

Mr. H. R. Francis, in his clever Cambridge Essay,² entitled "The Fly Fisher and his Library," recommends the association of a collection of angling-books with the plant of every angling club in the kingdom, a motion which we second most cordially, recommending it, in particular to the adoption of the 'Walton and Cotton Club,' on which body corporate, from

¹ London. 'Field' Office, 346, Strand, 1861.

² London: J. W. Parker and Son, 1856, pp. 233-60.

its more metropolitan position, would seem to devolve the right of initiative.

By way of amendment we would suggest that such libraries should be cosmopolite in their character, and not exclusively British, as collections of the kind have hitherto been. So long as the English angler plied his craft within his insular limits alone, his farthest-falling line never reaching beyond John o' Groat's house on the one hand, and the Land's End on the other, it was natural he should be indifferent as to what foreign professors might have to say of his sport. But now, that he may cry with Ulysses,

" I have become a name,
For always roaming with a hungry heart"—

Now that *Ultima Thule* knows the ripple of his fly on its boreal waters—that the banks of Pyrenean streams keep the track of his footprints—that Superior and Erie and Ontario have yielded to his skill their gigantic broods—that India and Africa have paid him tribute, and that, at last, even Australian rivers are likely to be peopled by his instrumentality—now, in short, that he has "whipped all creation," though not in the bellicose American sense, surely it is time that his library doors should be opened to the contributions of other lands and other languages.

These contributions, as far as our inquiry has gone, form barely one-third of the whole and are distributed thus: America supplies fourteen works, Denmark two, Holland nineteen, France ninety-five, Germany a hundred and fourteen, Italy

The Chronicle of

twenty-three, Norway one, Spain four, and Sweden five. While, on the other hand, the United Kingdom yields, for its quota, six hundred and four, proving, if indeed such proof were needed, how far more deeply than elsewhere both the sport and its literature have taken root among us.¹

Bagster's Second
Edition, 1815.²

To return to the 'Compleat Angler,' we have now to take note of Bagster's second edition, issued in 1815, and printed in two sizes, octavo and royal octavo.

The editorship, on this occasion, was confided to Mr. Henry Ellis, of the British Museum, and whom we have just cited as the compiler of the first list of angling-books. His additions to the rapidly accumulating body of notes are mainly bibliographical and biographical, and require no special comment at our hands.

A fresh series of plates of fish was given with this reprint, and they are, in our opinion, superior to those of 1808. A portrait of Walton, from the picture by Houfman as before, was also added.

¹ The above statistics are taken from a MS. copy of the 'New Bibliotheca Piscatoria,' revised and greatly extended. The English department, however, includes the series of works and pamphlets on the Fisheries.

² Title (preceded by fac-simile title,) the same as in the foregoing edition. "London: Printed for Samuel Bagster, in the Strand, by R. Watts, at Broxbourne, on the River Lea, Herts, MDCCCXV."

534 pages, including Index; 50 illustrations. Published at 1*l.* 4*s.*, and in royal octavo at 2*l.* 2*s.*

Valentine, 243, 13*s.*, large paper. Cotton, 171, 1*l.* 7*s.*, large paper. Haworth, 917, 15*s.*, large paper. Haslewood, with additional illustrations, 4*l.*, large paper, and with rare portrait by Bovi, &c., 6*l.* 10*s.* Stace, 11*s.* Walfsh, 78, 11*s.*, large paper. Higgs, 51, 3*l.* 12*s.* Pickering, 15*s.*

Great is our leaning, we confefs, to this edition, which was printed in the village of Broxbourne, by the river Lea, and in the very footprints of old Izaak. The river itself meanders down the opening page, and feated under a pollard-willow, by Lea-side, with this book on our knee, we drop, readily, into a reverie. We cease to *read* the page—we seem to *hear* the quiet monotone of the old man's voice, and are startled, presently, by the plashing of the water as he plays and lands his fish . . .

“ Look you, there is a tryal of my skill ! there is that very chub that I showed you, with the white spot on his tail.”

And the broad-leaved water-flags flap to and fro, as the wind stirs them, and the swallow dips, and the dragon-fly rustles by, and from a neighbouring copse, a bird sets up a mellow, joyous trill, whereat the quiet undertone resumes' . . .

“ Lo ! there, the nightingale ! another of our airy creatures, which breathes such sweet loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight (when the very labourer sleeps securely) should hear (as I have very often) the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth and say, Lord, what musick hast thou provided for the Saints in Heaven, when thou affordest bad men such musick on earth.”

Pleasant, too, for its own sake, and dear to all anglers, is

¹ Speaking for Aucess.

The Chronicle of

that pastoral, fedy Lea. Pleasant always, as we see it mapped out in our memory of the long ago, with its broad reaches of pasture land on either side, outspread in the morning twilight, white with dew, and dappled with kine; here and there, in the distance, a round-shouldered hill, or a clump of trees, tipped with a village spire—the gleaming of the river, broken, at intervals, with rustic bridges, and its banks girt with a thick belt of sedge, out of which the God Pan might have plucked reeds manifold for his piping. We have learnt that river by heart, in a double sense; it was the haunt of our boyhood, and we know every bend, and tumbling-bay, and pool in it. We could show you where that chub, with the white spot on his tail, was taken; we could lead you blindfold to the pool, where Piscator fishes out for Peter that opportune trout; and we could feat you (so unwavering are our illusions) under that very honeysuckle hedge, where master and pupil sat discoursing of holy Mr. Herbert, and reciting his quaint, curious verses, while the pattering of the spring shower died off among the leaves.

Many are the years since we trod those familiar paths, and many the waters we have fished since then. Now, all things are changed. Our feet brush the Ardennes heather as we hurry to our sport, and instead of the level lowlands, we have red, precipitous walls of rock, thick forests, and a tossing and foaming mountain river. We fill our creel fuller than we ever filled it of yore, but we are faithful to the old love still, and were the choice given us, far rather would we be catching “logger-headed chub,” in that Lea-water of our youth, than the most

speckled of trout, or silver-sided of falmon, in other, though immemorially famous streams.

Between the two foregoing Waltons, Bagster issued in 1810 a so-called fac-simile of the edition of 1653. We say so-called, because, though the plates are in close imitation of their prototypes, and were engraved on silver, in conformity with the common credence on the subject, there is no attempt at identity in the general getting up of the work. A portrait of Walton, engraved by Scott from the picture by Houfman, is prefixed.

The stock of this edition shared the fate of that of 1808, and was partly consumed in the fire at Bagster's.

In 1822, Gosden, the sporting bookbinder, presented the world with *his* reprint of Walton, an octavo volume, with Hawkins' notes and biographies, and no other innovations than a new set of plates, and a preface, not written, we presume, by Gosden himself, who, though an enthusiastic lover of angling literature, was possessed of little education.

Bagster's Fac-simile, 1810.¹

Gosden's Edition, 1822.²

¹ Title and collation of this edition the same as in that of 1653.

Half-title: "The Compleat Angler, by Isaac Walton. London: MDCCCLX. Printed for S. Bagster, in the Strand."

Valentine, 228, 4s. Milner, 162, 1l. 1s., thick paper. Grace, 1076, 7s. Stace, 87, 5s. 6d. Lowndes, 723, 4s. 6d. Bindley, 14s. Cotton, 159, 5s. 6d. Walfh, 68, 4s. Pickering, 6s. Harward, 13s.

² Title the same as in Hawkins, 1784. "London: Printed for James Smith, 163, Strand, 1822." Some copies are dated 1825.

60 pages preliminary; 383 pages. 15 plates. Lowndes (1864) states erroneously, 21.

Tayleure, 243, 5s. Cotton, 177, 2l. 5s. Milner, 161, 2l. 16s. Haslewood, additional illustrations, 1l. Grace, 1080, 2l. 12s. 6d. Walfh, 79, 1l. 7s. Lowndes, 724, 2l. 14s. Duke of York, 16s.

The Chronicle of

The new plates are practical in their bearings, but scarcely in unison with the quaint character of the book. They are, in fact, anachronisms. They did triple duty, being offered for sale, in a separate shape, and employed to illustrate the reprint of Zouch's *Life of Walton*, in 1823, and later. They were accompanied by portraits of Walton and Cotton, in mezzotint, the former from Housman, the latter from Sir Peter Lely.

Gosden was a collector, as well as a trader; and there are few angling libraries, at the present day, that do not possess works adorned with one or other of his book-plates, and sometimes enriched, besides, with his very ungrammatical annotations.

The following year must be marked with a white stone, as a turning point in the fortunes of the 'Compleat Angler.'

The work had held a high place, hitherto, in the esteem of the judicious and discerning, but was destined, through the publication, in 1823, of Major's first edition, to attain to a wider

Major's First
Edition, 1823.¹

¹ "The Complete Angler of Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton: Extensively embellished with Engravings on Copper and Wood from original Paintings and Drawings, by first-rate Artists. To which are added, an Introductory Essay; the Linnæan Arrangement of the various River-Fish delineated in the Work; and Illustrative Notes. London: John Major, Fleet-Street, adjoining Serjeants'-Inn. MDCCLXXIII."

60 pages preliminary; 411 pages. 14 plates, and 77 woodcuts. Price 18s., or large paper, 1l. 12s.

Taylieure, 244, 1l. 1s., large paper. Valentine, 246, 10s. Cotton, 173-4, 8s., and 2l. 14s., large paper. Prince, 135, 1l. 8s. Haslewood, duplicate proofs, 3l. 15s. Stace, 90, 1l. 4s. Lowndes, 725, 19s. Walsh, 80, 1l. 12s., large paper. Higgs, 54, 2l. 19s. Brockett, 2l. 9s. Utterton, with Zouch's *Life of Walton*, 2l. 7s.

range of circulation, and a greatly increased popularity. Dazzled as our eyes are with the splendour of our recent typographical successes, we may wonder at the amount of admiration excited, forty years ago, by this pretty book, which was looked upon as a marvel in its kind, pointed out as such on the shelves of libraries, or passed from hand to hand, amidst the encomiums of delighted connoisseurs. And a pretty book it is, even now, the old drawings by Wale having been engraved for it, in more finished style, by Cook and Pye, the woodcuts of fish skilfully executed, and the editing performed by a practised and competent hand.¹

Unfortunately, its publisher, not content with these advantages, thought it incumbent on him to add an "Introductory Essay," from his own pen, the effect of which is to mar the unity of the work. The writer, though worthy and inoffensive, was vain, vulgar and silly, and his essay is precisely what we should expect from a shopkeeper turned man of letters, for the nonce. It is, in fact, a farrago of twaddle, from end to end. In one passage, he attempts to gloss over Walton's humble position in early life, and establish a claim for consideration, not so much on his own intrinsic merits, as on the ground of his high relations and fine acquaintances; a piece of snobbishness, which draws down on him the justly indignant rebuke of Dr. Bethune:

"Impertinent is not a word strong enough to characterize such an attempt to put honest Izaak's worth on another footing

¹ Mr. R. Thomson, Author of the "Chronicles of London Bridge," 1827.

The Chronicle of

than his own pious virtue and unaffected talent. If the simple-minded angler and writer of plain, artless English, could rise from his grave, not all his meekness, nor even Major's beautiful edition, could prevent him from giving the man a fillip for thus putting tawdry on his decent garments. Especially is such a folly out of place in a preface to the 'Complete Angler,' throughout which, the humble author, unspoiled by association with learned, dignified clergymen and others who had heaped praises on him, represents himself as a foot-traveller, content with a wayside inn . . . nay, ready to share his bed with the companion of his walks by the river side. Cotton was a gentleman, and put his collocutors on horseback; Sir Humphrey Davy invites his friends to go an angling in a light carriage with him, as befitted a knighted philosopher; let it be our comfort to know that good father Walton was the ready friend of the angler who goes afoot. Gentleman he was by orthography and spirit, but gentleman in any other sense, he cared not to be. As he himself says, 'I would rather prove myself a gentleman, by being learned and humble, valiant and inoffensive, virtuous and communicable, than by any fond ostentation of riches, or, wanting those virtues myself, boast that these were in my ancestors. And yet I grant that where a noble and an ancient descent and such virtues meet in any man, it is a double dignification of that person.' We should not like him more—we could not like him less, if he had had 'all the blood of all the Howards.'¹

¹ "The Complete Angler." New York, 1847, pp. lv-vii of the 'Bibliographical Preface.'

the 'Compleat Angler.'

47

The above castigation is not a whit too severe, and we marvel that no contemporary critic was found to punish with the knout this wretched Essay, which is not only fawning and fervile in its tone throughout, but has a click of the counter, besides, that is especially distasteful.¹

So great was the success of Major's publication, that a fresh issue was called for, in the following year, and a new set of plates, still from Wale, given with it.³ It was distinguished

Major's Second
Edition, 1824.²

¹ To the edition of 1844, Major adds certain notes, which we quote here, that our readers may have the measure of the man's fatuity.

"On the appearance of the first Edition in 1823, Mr. D'Israeli, who somewhere speaks of the Doric sweetness of Izaak Walton, observed to me—'One often sees a pretty book which is interesting to a *particular class*; but you have hit on a work that *pleases everybody!*' And Mr. Alexander Chalmers was pleased to say that I had given quite a new tone to the subject, and had 'Waltonized the land!'

"For my own part I can only say that I had long been asking myself in the language of Abraham Cowley, 'What shall I do to be for ever known?' And my good Genius whispered, 'Give your days and nights to *emblazon* the worth of Izaak Walton.'"

It is to be regretted that this good Genius did not, at the same time, point a prospective veto in the direction of the Introductory Essay.

In another note he says: "The bantling is, in truth, my own, but its sponsors are innumerable; one kind patron, a gentleman of fortune, used to say to his friends, 'You *must* have *this* edition, for *I* have a share in it!' And a total stranger once assured me that he had bestowed no less than six guineas on the binding of the work, as a specimen of the skill of Charles Lewis!"

² Title the same as in the foregoing. Preliminary pages the same. Body of the work, 416 pages, the extension being in the notes. Price as before.

Cotton, 175-6, 2*l.* 9*s.*, and 1*l.* 1*s.* Lowndes, 726, 6*s.* 6*d.* Walfsh, 81, (foiled) 14*s.*

³ The old plates "*rebit*," says Bohn's Lowndes (1864), but a difference of

The Chronicle of

also by a copy of verses from the pen of the editor, which were very properly suppressed in the fourth edition. Like its predecessor, it was printed in two sizes, crown-octavo and octavo, and in the latter form the engravings were proof impressions. Both these books have maintained their place in public estimation, although far surpassed by the reprint of 1844.

Dove's Edition,
n. d.¹

We shall now have to chronicle, *currente calamo*, and without close analysis, several consecutive editions. A revival of Hawkins, in 24mo., with portraits of the authors, printed by Dove, *circa* 1825.

Whittingham's
Edition, 1824
and 1826.²

Another, prettily printed by Whittingham, 2 vols., 24mo., in 1824, and again in 1826. This is also a verbatim reprint of Hawkins, 1797.

Cole's Edition,
n. d.³

An edition in 12mo. (no date), published by Cole. It has indifferent portraits of Walton and Cotton, and brief original biographies. This is ignored by Lowndes' recent editor.

size, and other variations, negative this statement. The new ones were engraved by W. R. Smith.

¹ "The Complete Angler of Isaac Walton and Charles Cotton. London: For the Proprietors of the English Classics." On the last page: "Printed by J. F. Dove, St. John's Square." 420 pages. 4s.

² "The Complete Angler of Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. Chiswick: Printed by C. Whittingham, College House. Sold by Thomas Tegg, 73, Cheapside; R. Jennings, Poultry, London: and Richard Griffin and Co., Glasgow. 1824." 551 pages, and 8 preliminary. 9s.

To the edition of 1826, some woodcuts of fish were added, and one or two vignettes.

³ "The Complete Angler; or, Contemplative Man's Recreation. By Isaac Walton and Charles Cotton. Embellished with Portraits of the Authors,

the 'Compleat Angler.'

49

Also, Pickering's first edition, in 32mo., 1825. With a frontispiece by Stothard, and an engraved title (both of which were enlarged for the edition of 1836), and abridged biographies.

Pickering's
First Edition,
1825.¹

This was followed by Pickering's second edition, 1826, 24mo., with a portrait of Walton (dated 1827) and a vignette in the title-page (the milkmaid scene), also afterwards enlarged for the edition of 1836.

Pickering's
Second Edition,
1826.²

In the last three editions, the annotation is suppressed.

In 1833, we have Professor Rennie's first edition (12mo.), which, though published under cover of a scientific name, is, perhaps, the least respectable of the entire series. Flippancy and trashiness characterise most of the notes that bear the editor's sign-manual. The rest of the work is a reprint of Hawkins, with a catch-penny portrait, and some coarse woodcuts of fish added.

Rennie's First
Edition, 1833.³

Owing, we presume, to the low price of the book, it has

Rennie's seven
further reprints,
1834, 1835,
1836, 1847,
1849, 1851,
and 1857.⁴

and Engravings of the River-fish described in the work. London: Printed for William Cole, 10, Newgate Street." 314 pages, and 20 preliminary.

¹ "The Complete Angler; or the Contemplative Man's Recreation. Two Parts. The First by Izaak Walton, The Second by Charles Cotton. London: William Pickering. MDCCCXXV." 318 pages, and 16 pages preliminary.

² Title as in the foregoing. "London: William Pickering. MDCCCXXVI." 330 pages, 25 preliminary.

³ First part of the title the same as in the edition of 1661. "With Lives and Notes. By Sir John Hawkins, Knight. Edited by James Rennie, A.M., Professor of Zoology, King's College, London. Edinburgh: Published, for the Proprietors, by W. and R. Chambers, Edinburgh; W. Orr, London; and W. Curry, Jun. and Co., Dublin. MDCCCXXXIII." 328 pages.

⁴ Edit. 1834, "Published by Allan Bell and Co., and Simpkin and Mar-

The Chronicle of

gained a certain currency, and no less than seven reprints have been issued by different publishers, at the several dates given in the margin. As they were all identical with the first, the duty of revision and improvement never seeming to have presented itself to the professorial mind, we shall not deem it necessary to refer to them again.

Major's Third
Edition, 1835.¹

In 1835, Major issued his third edition, but shorn of its ancient glories, the plates of all kinds being much worn and deteriorated. A portrait of Dr. Wharton, the "good man that dares do anything rather than tell an untruth," was its only new feature.

Lewis's Major,
1839.²
Washbourne's
Major, 1842.³

A reprint of Major, by Lewis, appeared in 1839 (cr. 8vo.), and another, by Washbourne, in 1842.

In these the 'Introductory Essay' was replaced by the old biographies of Walton and Cotton, by Hawkins.

shall; Frazer and Co., Edinburgh; and W. Curry, Jun., and Co., Dublin."

Edit. 1835, "London: Thomas Tegg and Son, Cheapside; R. Griffin, and Co., Glasgow; Tegg, Wife, and Co., Dublin."

Edit. 1836, "London: Allan Bell and Co., Warwick Square."

Edit. 1847. This I have not met with.

Edit. 1849. "London: John Johnson, 30, High Holborn; Thomas Johnson, 22, Livesey Street, Manchester."

Edit. (no date, but probably 1851), "Thomas Johnson, Livesey Street, Manchester."

Edit. 1857, "Halifax: Milner and Sowerby."

¹ "London: J. Major, Great Russell-Street, Bloomsbury. Printed by W. Nicol, 51, Pall Mall. MDCCCXXXV."

² "London: L. A. Lewis, 125, Fleet Street. MDCCCXXXIX."

³ "London: Henry Washbourne, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street. MDCCCLII."

Price of this and the foregoing, 12s.

the 'Compleat Angler.'

51

Here we may flip in, at a venture, an anonymous edition, with a reduced fac-simile, cut in wood, for sole title, and without date, printer's or publisher's name.

Anonymous
Edit. n. d. (circa
1836).

In 1836, we do obeisance to Pickering's third edition, in which Walton's simple work puts on the purple of an unaccustomed sovereignty, and is scarcely to be recognised in its new and splendid investiture. The result of seven years' continuous labour, and of much patient research and fostering care on the part of its publisher, this edition requires, more than most, our mature and critical consideration.

Pickering's
Third Edition,
1836.¹

It is in two tall volumes, the form being imperial octavo. Paper and type, as might be expected from a publisher pre-eminent for the beauty of the books issued by him, are both admirable in their kind, and the title-page, as Mr. H. R. Francis rightly remarks, is of a perfection that might "trouble the ghosts of the Aldi."

The illustrators are Stothard and Inskipp, the former being charged with the scenic plates and the views of the localities,

¹ "The Complete Angler; or the Contemplative Man's Recreation. Being a Discourse of Rivers, Fish-Ponds, Fish, and Fishing, written by Izaak Walton; and Instructions how to angle for a Trout or Grayling in a clear stream, by Charles Cotton. With original Memoirs and Notes, by Sir Harris Nicolas, K.C.M.G. (Underneath, an adaptation of the Aldine mark, with "Aldi Discip. Anglvs.") London: William Pickering, 1836."

214 pages preliminary; body of the work, 436 pages. 61 illustrations.

Prince, 5*l.* 18*s.*, and with 580 ancient and modern portraits, &c., 24*l.* 10*s.*
Lowndes, 3*l.* 19*s.* Walfsh, additional illustrations, 14*l.* 10*s.* Sotheby, 5*l.* 10*s.*
Harwood, 5*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* Bernal, with extra portraits and proof plates from Major's and Bagster's Editions, and from other works on Angling, 3 vols. elephant size, morocco, 40*l.* Utterfon, extra illustrations, 14*l.*

The Chronicle of

and the latter, principally, with the fish. The engravers are Fox, Cooke, Richardson, and other eminent hands; and the editor, Sir Harris Nicolas, assisted by several competent authorities, whose names he designates in his Preface.

The biographies extend to two hundred and twelve pages. The notes are of a most elaborate character—pedigrees of Walton, Cotton, and others are given, and a comprehensive index is added, extending to thirty-six pages.

Such are the materials that go to make up these very noticeable volumes, which were issued¹ at the patrician price of six guineas for ordinary impressions, and ten guineas for proofs.

The sentiment inspired by a cursory survey of them is, no doubt, one of pleasure and admiration; but the after and more permanent impression results, we are pained to confess, in a sense of comparative failure. The book, sooth to say, is a pompous book, and with much that is overdone in it. We seek for our modest king-cups and pimpermels, and find them buried beneath a heap of learned and heterogeneous lumber. We turn the pages over with a feeling of disproportion, a perception of incongruity and unfitness. Inskipp's fish, indeed, have all the force and freshness of nature, and rejoice the eye; but Stothard's plates seem to us weak and silly, insignificant, as regards the size of the work in which they figure, and unworthy, alike, both of it and the artist.

Stothard was probably selected for this task less for his eligibility, than from the fact of his being the painter *à la*

¹ In numbers, commencing 1835.

mode of the day. Of his graceful services as a book-illustrator, we have a lively remembrance, but the 'Compleat Angler' seems to have lain beyond his beat, his genius being of that Watteauish character, that luxuriates more in Arcadian revels and the *fêtes champêtres* of conventional life, than in the embodiment of the simple English pastoral. He was no angler, besides, and the fact betrays itself, as might be expected, in many minute, but conclusive points. That his costumes, in these plates, are archæologically correct, in a general sense, we doubt not, but that they are correct in their application to the angler, we refuse to believe. All frill and frippery, Piscator and his associates are attired as if for a stroll, snuff-box and cane in hand, among the scented exquisites of the Mall, rather than for rough encounter with brake and briar by the river side. Their faces, throughout, are weak and meaningless, and Piscator, in the salutation plate, were it not for the rod he carries, might be mistaken for a beggar, in easy circumstances, imploring an alms.

The views of the localities, also, fall short of the mark, for though truthful and precise, they are flat and meagre in the execution, and have an awkward knack of sprawling across the page.

The biographies, on the other hand, present the reader with several new facts, are very conscientious and laborious, and leave but little in the way of *data* for any future gleaner in the same scanty field. But here, again, we have an editor who is no angler, a deficiency that is painfully felt as we peruse these dryly written, matter-of-fact, unsympathetic pages, in

The Chronicle of

which no semblance of colour or vitality is given to the lay-figures they place before us. As raw material, parts of them (for there is much extraneous matter, and many points dilated on of infinitesimally small interest), may be usefully employed by some future biographer of Walton, who, we trust, will treat his subject from the angling, as well as the antiquarian and genealogical point of view, and pen his record, not in any dusky retreat of study—in air heavy with erudition, but under the green leaves and by the gurgling water—at Broxbourne, for instance, or pleasant Amwell on the Hill.

This fine book, in a word, is over-dressed. It is Maudlin, the milkmaid, tricked out in a gown of brocade, with a mantle of cloth of gold. Pretty Maudlin were comelier far in her own artless attire, with a posy for sole adornment. But this is a sin to be judged gently and tenderly, springing, as it did, from over-love; Pickering's wish was to raise a worthy monument to Walton's fame, but, by a common error of judgment, he lost sight of the relation that should always exist in such a case between the memorial and the man, or his work commemorated.

On Corydon's grave we plant flowers amongst the grass—

“Purple narcissus, like the morning rays,
Pale gander-glass and azure culverkays.”¹

We do not crush it beneath a weight of marble magnificence, pedestals, with their votive urns, or a colossal genius with gilded tears.

Nevertheless, as this monument *has* been reared, let us

¹ Denny's "Secrets of Angling," 1613.

accept it for what it is—one of the handsomest publications of modern times, an ornament to the Angler's Library, unique of its kind, and perhaps destined to remain so.

As for the huge amalgam of note upon note, and comment upon comment, we plead guilty, with no 'peradventure' this time, to a heathenish longing for a sweeping and final clearance, such as would give us the 'Compleat Angler,' illustrated and annotated, if you will, but by the artist's pencil alone, and in which we should have Walton *solus*, not Walton baited and badgered by fifty learned professors, all catechising, criticising, and cavilling at him at once.

In 1837, we have a miniature reprint of Walton, by Tilt, in two volumes (24mo.), with neither notes, portraits, nor illustrations. This we register and set aside.

In 1844, appeared Major's fourth edition (the two by Lewis and Washbourne not having been published under his superintendance). It was printed, as before, in two sizes, crown-octavo and octavo. The obnoxious "Introductory Essay," aggravated by the absurd additions we have quoted, still sticks to the work, like a burr; but with this our censure exhausts itself; in other respects the volume approaches more nearly to

Tilt's Edition,
1837.¹

Major's last
Edition, 1844.²

¹ "The Complete Angler. By Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. London: Charles Tilt, 86, Fleet-street; I. Menzies, Edinburgh; T. Wardle, Philadelphia. MDCCLXXXVII." 301 pages.

² "Edited by John Major. Fourth edition. London: D. Bogue, Fleet-Street; H. Wix, New Bridge Street. MDCCLXIV." Price 12s., or large paper, 1l. 4s.

60 pages preliminary; 418 pages. 12 steel engravings; 74 woodcuts. Prince, 1l. 6s., large paper. Pickering, 1l. 2s.

The Chronicle of

our ideal of an edition consistent in all its parts, than any of its predecessors or successors.

Wale's designs, repeated *ad nauseam*, are here suppressed, and a new series, by Absolon, substituted, embodying the same subjects, indeed, but conceived in no plagiaristic spirit. They are quaint, unaffected, and picturesque, and have the signal merit of seeming an emanation from and efflorescence of the book itself, rather than a set of artistic notions grafted on it.¹ The difficulty of a capable and conscientious book-illustration is, in fact, great; renouncing his own individuality, at the outset, the artist must make himself one with the author, must clothe himself with his genius, put on his moods, penetrate into the inner heart of his conceptions, and from thence transmute them, by the alchemy of his art, into form, colour, and expression. Without this identity between author and artist there may be the association of pictures with books, but no book-*illustration*, properly so called; and our readers do not require to be told that ninety-nine out of a hundred of the pretty picture-books of the day belong to the former and defective category.

The woodcuts of fish, in Major's new issue, give the varying tones and surfaces with great success; and the vignettes of scenery, by Creswick and others, leave far behind them those

¹ "The new designs by Absolon," says Major, "form the crown of my present efforts; nothing could exceed his zeal whilst they were on his case; skilful anglers stood for the men, and fair and handsome ladies volunteered for the females; the result, I warmly anticipate, will come with a pleasing surprise upon the minds of the most affectionate admirers of our author," p. xxxix.

of former editions. Some of these, indeed, are so charming as to suggest the idea of a more extensive illustration of the 'Compleat Angler,' confined entirely to this department of art, which seems specially adapted for the adornment of books treating of country pursuits and pastimes, and which possesses a freshness, freedom, and artlessness that we seek for in vain from the more ambitious burin. Vignettes we possess by the Fosters and the Crewicks of the day—sketches of sylvan scenery, in which we almost *see* the leaves lifted by the summer wind, and *hear* the plashing of the waterfall as it tumbles, all froth and foam, over the weir. Thus our bosky dells and dingles, our green English lanes, our silver-threaded brooks, our wood-openings, with their delicate tracery of boughs against a pale sky, and their intricate network of leaves and spray, are subjects that have passed of right into the hands of the artist in wood, as their fitting interpreter. While, on the other hand, in cases demanding greater depth of tone and treatment—the savage austerity of bare rock and windy ravine, the ruggedness of immemorial forests, with their gaunt and blasted trunks, or the chaotic tumult of a sky blurred and blackened with tempest, a modern instance, in Gustave Doré's illustrations of Dante's 'Inferno,' prove that appeal may be made with equal success to the same school of engraving, a school that, from its recent development, seems destined to rule paramount over all others.

The next addition to our rapidly lengthening list is the

¹ "The Complete Angler; or, the Contemplative Man's Recreation. By Isaac Walton. And Instructions how to angle for a Trout or Grayling in a

The American Editions, 1847,¹ 1848, and 1852.

The Chronicle of

American reprint, published at New York in 1847, under the editorial auspices of Dr. G. W. Bethune. Could we admit the necessity of erudition in this case, we should be disposed to assign to Dr. Bethune's version a foremost rank in the annotated series.

The wisdom he brings to bear on his task is of the benevolent order, cordial, reverent, and sympathetic, and his criticism has nothing in common either with the flippant or dry-as-dust school. For the lover of angling-books, and for the collector especially, there is no edition so useful as this. In his "Bibliographical Preface," the editor gives an extended *catalogue raisonné* of the earlier literature of the sport, and in the Appendix, we have his "Waltonian Library," or list of angling books, including some three hundred works, besides many on ichthyology.¹ He gives us also an enlarged list of

Clear Stream. By Charles Cotton. With copious Notes, for the most part original, a bibliographical Preface, giving an Account of Fishing and Fishing-Books, from the earliest Antiquity to the time of Walton, and a notice of Cotton and his writings, by the American Editor. To which is added an Appendix, including illustrative Ballads, Music, Papers on American Fishing, and the most complete Catalogue of Books on Angling, &c., ever printed. Also a general Index to the whole work. New York: John Wiley, 167, Broadway. 1847."

Part I., 112 pages, preliminary; 249 pages. Part II., 29 pages preliminary; 210 pages. Some copies were printed on large paper.

Prince, 1/. 5s., large paper. Sotheby's, with duplicate set of woodcuts, 15s. Puttick, also with duplicate set, 12s.

¹ In Mr. J. Wynne's "Private Libraries of New York," we find the following mention of Dr. Bethune and his Angling Library:—

"During the darker seasons of the year, when forbidden the actual use of his rod, our friend has occupied himself with excursions through sale catalogues,

the authorities referred to by Walton, another of the books formerly belonging to him, (and containing his autograph inscriptions,) in the Cathedral Library of Salisbury—a third, of those which have been attributed to him; and a fourth, of the works of Cotton. These *addenda* are gathered, of course, from various known sources, but no where else do we find united so complete a body of angling-book statistics, and so large an accumulation of collateral data.

Of the getting-up of the volume, we cannot speak with praise. It is behind the time; the type, blunt and blotty, the illustrations, (a few worn-out plates, borrowed from Major, 1844,) a disgrace. The intrinsic merit of the work, however, is so great, that we hope some day to see it taken up by a more liberal publisher on our own side of the Atlantic, and re-issued with all the honours. Two further editions appeared in 1848 and 1852.

In 1851, we have to notice an edition, in crown octavo,

Caulton's Edition, 1851.¹

fishing out from their dingy pages whatever tends to honour his favourite author and favourite art, so that his spoils now number nearly five hundred volumes of all sizes and dates. Pains have been taken to have, not only copies of the works included by the list, but also the several editions; and when it is of a work mentioned by Walton, an edition which the good old man himself may have seen. Thus the collection has all the editions of Walton, Cotton and Venables in existence, and, with but few exceptions, all the works referred to by Walton, or which tend to illustrate his favourite rambles by the Lea or the Dove. Every scrap of Walton's writing, and every compliment paid to him, have been carefully gathered and garnered up, with prints and autographs, and some precious manuscripts. Nor does the department end here; but embraces most of the older and many of the modern writers on ichthyology and angling."

¹ "With a new Introduction and Notes; and embellished with eighty-five

The Chronicle of

published by Henry Kent Causton, who, on the strength of his descent from the Richard and Henry Causton figuring as printers and publishers of Moses Browne's revival (1772), finds it incumbent on him to attempt a quixotic rehabilitation of Browne's editing, and even to perpetuate some of his "expurgations," and all his notes.

In a distracting-looking, but not ill-written "Introduction," he gives a summary of Walton's career, and examines the various and conflicting evidence brought to bear on the subject, dealing about him the while some heavy blows, especially in the direction of genealogical editors.

He perpetuates, also, we are sorry to say, Wale's series of drawings borrowed from Major, and which in this, their last stage of evaporation, look ghastly and impalpable as ghosts at noon-day. Shabby in its externals, this book seems to have enjoyed but a neglected existence and has already passed out of sight.

Two years later Messrs. Ingram and Cooke present us, in their "Illustrated Library," with the 'Complete Angler,' edited by 'Ephemera' (Fitzgibbon), of 'Bell's Life,' who grafts on it, in notes and appendices, his own system of the

Engravings on Copper and Wood. London: Henry Kent Causton. MDCCLII." 418 pages; 68 pages preliminary.

¹ "New Edition. Edited by 'Ephemera,' of 'Bell's Life in London.' London: Ingram, Cooke, and Co. MDCCLIII." 317 pages.

Edit. 1854. "Second Edition. London: Nathaniel Cooke, Milford House, Strand."

Edit. 1859. "London: Routledge, Warnes, and Routledge, Farringdon Street. New York: 56, Walker Street."

'Ephemera's'
Editions, 1853,
1854, and
1859.¹

practice of the sport as expounded more fully in his "Hand-Book of Angling." This edition, on practical, working grounds, deserves commendation. It is adorned with some sketchy woodcuts and plates of fish and flies. A fresh issue was called for in 1854, and a third published by Messrs. Routledge and Co. in 1859. The two latter issues, however, are but paginary reprints.

Turning the various versions over in his mind, Mr. Edward Jesse, in 1856, considered himself called upon to add yet another to the number, and into this he 'shoots,' to use a carter's phrase, a heap of his own notes, on the top of the already vast accumulation. At this stage of the proceeding we have to stand tip-toe to see Walton at all. Mr. Jesse is known as a man of amiable manners, some knowledge of natural history, and a very elastic credulity, and we say grace over his notes . . . but partake not.

Mr. Bohn, on the other hand, as publisher of the work,

Jesse's Edition,
1856.¹

¹ "The Complete Angler; or the Contemplative Man's Recreation, of Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. With Lives of the Authors, and variorum Notes, historical and practical. Edited by Edward Jesse, Esq. To which are added, papers on Fishing Tackle, Fishing Stations, &c. By Henry G. Bohn. London: Henry G. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden. MDCCCLVI."

496 pages; 29 pages preliminary. Price 7s. 6d. with the extra steel engravings, and 5s. without. Post 8vo. According to Bohn's Lowndes (1864) the copies with extra illustrations were only issued in 1861.

The Biographies are a *refacimento* of those by Hawkins.

We may mention here that the reprint of the "Bibliographer's Manual" just cited, registers but forty-two editions of the 'Compleat Angler,' instead of fifty-three.

The Chronicle of

drives into it *vi et armis*, 'neck and crop,' and in other forcible fashions, an indiscriminate swarm of woodcuts, line-engravings, &c., recruited from various sources, and making up a patch-work of illustration to keep in countenance the patch-work of notes. Reading the 'Compleat Angler' under such circumstances can only be compared to the study of 'Bradshaw,' in its effect on the brain. *Caveat lector et emptor!*

In 1858 we have Groombridge's miniature reprint, (24mo.), in two volumes, apparently a re-issue of Tilt's edition (1837), and acceptable on the same grounds, namely, the absence of all tags and tassels, and the merit of a plain and unperplexed text; while, in the following year, we are startled by a German translation (octavo, published at Hamburg) of 'Ephemera's' edition, in which we find the translator apologising to his readers for old Izaak's lengthiness, wordiness, and heaviness. He professes to esteem the work, indeed, but in a professional sense alone, and this narrowness of appreciation gives us the measure of his capability.

In France, Walton has met with even less recognition; the only translation that we have encountered (and that a very garbled and unfaithful one) of some brief portions of his dialogue, appears in "Le Pêcheur à la Mouche Artificielle," by Charles de Massas, and is contributed to that publication

Groombridge's
Edition, 1858.¹

German Trans-
lation, 1859.²

¹ "London: Groombridge and Sons, Paternoster Row, 1858." 301 pages.

² "Der Vollkommene Angler von Isaac Walton und Charles Cotton, herausgegeben von Ephemera, übersetzt von J. Schumacher. Hamburg: P. Salomon & Co. 1859."

308 pages; 12 preliminary.

the 'Compleat Angler.'

63

by a certain 'Alfred d'Angleville,' who accompanies it with the collateral assurance that Walton's work is quite unworthy of French readers, and will be very properly replaced by de Maffas' performances.

In 1860, we have to notice Messrs. Nattali and Bond's re-issue of Pickering's edition of 1836, in two volumes, imperial octavo, at a reduced price, and with sundry other reductions consequent thereupon; inferior paper, for instance, worn plates, and a general decadence of style.

The text remains unaltered, even one or two notable blunders being left uncorrected.

Finally, in 1863, we take note of a pocket edition by Messrs. Bell and Daldy; the simple text alone, but praiseworthy for its faithfulness and the beauty of its typography.

Here our task ends—the ultimate milestone on the long road of more than two hundred years being reached at last. Through our window, as we write these closing lines, streams cheerily, (and with a shimmer of young leaves and buzzing of insect wings,) the May sunshine—that sunshine that, of yore, gladdened Piscator on his way through the Lea-side meadows to his sport at matin-song, and that broods, we are fain to believe, with a softened radiance now, on his honoured grave in the grey pile of Winchester. Peace be to his ashes!—for his fame we have no fear; the bygone centuries have given their consecration to his work, the centuries to come will ratify that

Nattali and Bond's re-issue of Pickering's Edition of 1836, 1860.¹

Bell and Daldy's Edition, 1863.²

¹ "Second Edition. London: Nattali and Bond. 1860."

² "London: Bell and Daldy, 186, Fleet Street; and Sampson Low, Son, and Co., 47, Ludgate Hill. 1863." 304 pages.

The 'Compleat Angler.'

consecration anew. How much of good and great the future may have in store for it, it is not our province to predict. Suffice it that looking up to the shelves of our Angling Library and to the FIFTY-THREE several editions chronicled in these pages, we may say already for the Father of Fishermen, what he were too modest to say for himself could he return amongst us—

“ Si monumentum requiris,
Circumspice ! ”

FINIS.



Z Westwood, Thomas
894.9 The chronicle of the "Compleat angler".
W38
1864

University of Toronto
Library

DO NOT
REMOVE
THE
CARD
FROM
THIS
POCKET

FOR USE IN
LIBRARY ONLY

Acme Library Card Pocket
LOWE-MARTIN CO. LIMITED

